



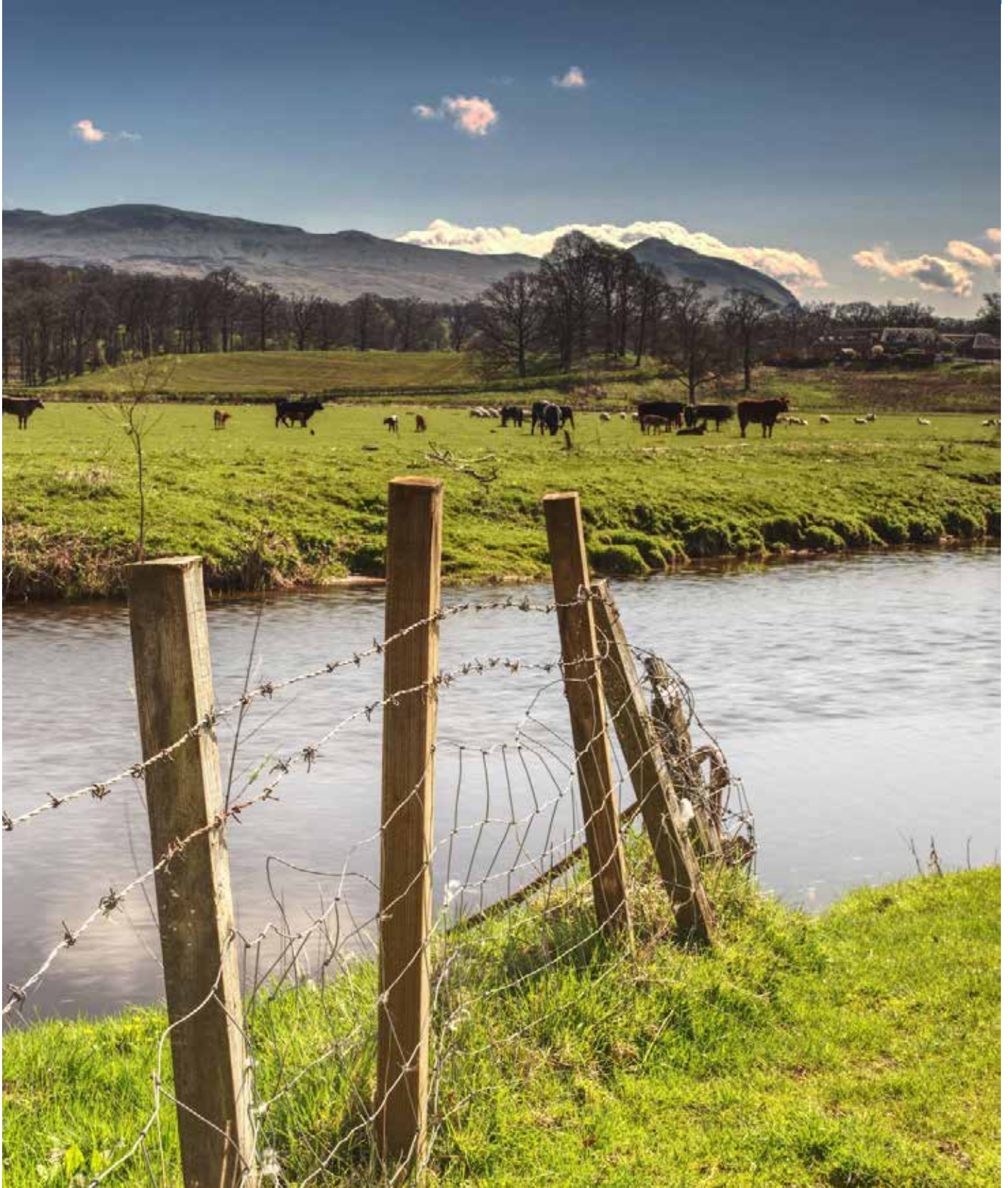
# Killearn. Courier



ISSUE 54

WINTER 2022

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# Noticeboard

13 Nov	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Remembrance Service. War Memorial, 10.45am followed by a service in the church; Sanctuary Service for those who have lost loved ones, 3pm.	21 Dec	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Killearn Primary School or over Zoom. 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com">fiona.rennie@btinternet.com</a> ).
15 Nov	<b>Strathendrick Stitches</b> illustrated talk by Susie Finlayson, 'One More Stitch Along the Road I Go' plus a chance to add stitches to the Galashiels Interchange Tapestry Panel Project. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members welcome. Visitors £3 per session; first visit free. Contact Susan Rhind ( <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitches@gmail.com">strathendrickstitches@gmail.com</a> ).	22 Dec	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> lecture by Amina Wright, 'Joseph of Nazareth'. Over Zoom or at the Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. <a href="http://theartsocietystirling.org.uk">theartsocietystirling.org.uk</a>
16 Nov	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Killearn Primary School or over Zoom. 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com">fiona.rennie@btinternet.com</a> ).	24 Dec	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Christmas Family Service, 6pm; Christmas Eve Service, 11pm; Carol singing and watchnight service.
17 Nov	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> lecture by Tobias Capwell, 'Mars and the Muses'. Over Zoom or at the Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. <a href="http://theartsocietystirling.org.uk">theartsocietystirling.org.uk</a>	25 Dec	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Christmas Day service, 10.30am.
18 Nov	<b>Killearn Malawi Group</b> An Evening with Alan Parker. Village Hall, 7.30pm–midnight. Tickets £15, in aid of the school hostel for girls at Nkhande Secondary School. For tickets and more information, contact Shona (07882 981235) or Doreen (07764 588190).	26–27 Dec	<b>Killearn Health Centre</b> closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.
22 Nov	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> meeting. Lindsay Kirk – Rwanda's road to recovery with help from their Scottish friends. Sales Table. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.	1 Jan	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Songs of Praise, 10.30am.
24 Nov	<b>Killearn Golden Years' Club</b> Bingo Evening. Kirk Hall, 6.30pm for 7pm. <b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> talk by David Simpson 'William Roy's map and the '45 Rising'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. <a href="http://www.drymen-history.org.uk">www.drymen-history.org.uk</a>	2–3 Jan	<b>Killearn Health Centre</b> closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.
24–26 Nov & 1–3 Dec	<b>FADs</b> pantomime <i>Babes in the Wood</i> . Menzies Hall, Fintry, Thurs–Sat, 7.30pm and matinee Sat, 2pm. Email <a href="mailto:tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk">tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk</a> .	14 Jan	<b>West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers</b> illustrated Zoom talk by Irene Evison and collaborators of the Waterline Project. New members and visitors welcome. First visit free. Visit <a href="http://www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk">www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk</a> or contact the secretary ( <a href="mailto:weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com">weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com</a> ).
3 Dec	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon. <b>Colourful Killearn</b> putting up the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Contact (550962; <a href="mailto:mike@kcfc.co.uk">mike@kcfc.co.uk</a> ).	17 Jan	<b>Strathendrick Stitches</b> New Year, New Stitch. Also bring your own projects; progress exhibition pieces. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members welcome. Visitors £3 per session; first visit free. Contact Susan Rhind ( <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitches@gmail.com">strathendrickstitches@gmail.com</a> ).
4 Dec	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Communion Service, 10.30am; Sanctuary Service for those who have lost loved ones, 3pm.	18 Jan	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Killearn Primary School or over Zoom. 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com">fiona.rennie@btinternet.com</a> ).
9 Dec	<b>Strathendrick Film Society</b> showing <i>The Incredible Journey</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.	19 Jan	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> lecture by James Butterwick, 'Oleksandr Bohomazov, Lost Futurist of Ukraine'. Over Zoom or at the Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. <a href="http://www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk">www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk</a>
11 Dec	<b>Strathendrick Singers</b> Christmas Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7pm. The Singers will be joined by musicians from Douglas Academy and Balforn High School to sing Chilcott's 'On Christmas Night', as well as other carols, old and new. Tickets (£10 for adults, £3 for children) on the door, from choir members, or email <a href="mailto:hello@strathendricksingers.org.uk">hello@strathendricksingers.org.uk</a> .	26 Jan	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> talk by John Aitken, 'The Maid of the Loch'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. <a href="http://www.drymen-history.org.uk">www.drymen-history.org.uk</a>
13 Dec	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> Guild Christmas Lunch. Fintry, 12 noon for 12.30pm.	31 Jan	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> meeting. Duncan Shelton – Home for Good. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
		3 Feb	<b>Strathendrick Film Society</b> showing <i>The Dressmaker</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.
		11 Feb	<b>West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers</b> (am) Craft-along; (pm) Silk spinning workshop with Deb Gray. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am–4pm. New members and visitors welcome. First visit free. Visit <a href="http://www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk">www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk</a> or contact the secretary ( <a href="mailto:weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com">weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com</a> ).

## Noticeboard continued

- 14 Feb **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Ronald Sandford – Tale of Two Cities. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
- 15 Feb **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School or over Zoom. 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; [fiona.rennie@btinternet.com](mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com)).
- 16 Feb **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Cindy Polemis, ‘Hogarth and Europe’. Over Zoom or at the Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am.
- 21 Feb **Strathendrick Stitchers** illustrated talk by Maggie Murray, ‘Eco-printing’. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members welcome. Visitors £3 per session; first visit free. Contact Susan Rhind ([strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com)).
- 23 Feb **Drymen & District Local History Society** talk over Zoom by Ruth Johnston, ‘Glasgow Necropolis’. Watch at home or at Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. [www.drymen-history.org.uk](http://www.drymen-history.org.uk)
- 28 Feb **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Pioneers – Chocolate – Heaven. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
- 3 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society** Whist Drive. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry £2 at the door including refreshments. Raffle. **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.
- 7 Mar **Colourful Killearn** spring meeting. Village Hall, 8pm. Contact (550962; [mike@kfc.co.uk](mailto:mike@kfc.co.uk)).
- 11 Mar **West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers** illustrated talk by Christine Borland, ‘The Flax Project’. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am–1pm. New members and visitors welcome. First visit free. Visit [www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk](http://www.weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk) or contact the secretary ([weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com](mailto:weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com)).
- 14 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Ann Roy – Travellers’ Tales. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.
- 15 Mar **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School or over Zoom. 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; [fiona.rennie@btinternet.com](mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com)).
- 16 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by David Wright, ‘History of Wine’. Over Zoom or at the Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. [theartsocietystirling.org.uk](http://theartsocietystirling.org.uk)
- 18 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon.
- 21 Mar **Strathendrick Stitchers** talk and demonstration by Heather Wright ‘Capturing Memories’; plus a workshop led by Marjorie Thomson at 12.30pm. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. New members welcome. Visitors £3 per session; first visit free. Contact Susan Rhind ([strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com)).

If you have dates of events for the spring 2023 issue of the Noticeboard (end of March until mid August), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; [heather.mcarthur@virgin.net](mailto:heather.mcarthur@virgin.net)).

## Editorial

Hello and welcome to this, our final issue of 2022, which I hope you enjoy. In it, we introduce Hattie Graham who we are delighted to welcome to the *Courier* team. You can read Hattie’s first article on page 13.

I think the death of Queen Elizabeth was something that affected most of us one way or another and triggered our recollections of her long reign. It certainly did with me.

I clearly recall the day of her coronation. We kids had the day off school and had been given a slim tin box emblazoned with photographs of the Queen which contained a bar of chocolate.

The owner of the farm we were on at the time gave every worker time off to celebrate the coronation and supplied a television set for the Land Girls’ hostel. It was a wooden cabinet with a screen which was a wee bit bigger than your average postcard. We children snuggled up with the land girls on the huge sofas and stuffed ourselves with sandwiches, cakes and tea, all supplied by the Hostel Matron and watched, enraptured, the whole coronation in grainy black and white.

When the ceremony was over, it was back to work for everyone.

The other abiding memory I have from that time is of the funeral of the Queen’s father, King George VI. On the morning of his funeral, I was staying at my aunt’s farm in Dumbarton. I was spreading dung (farmyard manure) in what we called the top field which afforded a panoramic view of the town. I was working alongside Davy Haining, the farm hand along with Bobby, the Clydesdale cart horse.

At precisely 11 o’clock, the bells and sirens of the town rang out, and we both stopped what we were doing. We took our bonnets off and stood to attention for two minutes with our heads bowed. I’m sure Bobby bowed his head as well. After two minutes, the sirens sounded once more, and we went back to work.

Anyway, enough reminiscing. This issue is of the usual high standard of editing and layout; neither of which would be achievable without the hard work and dedication of the *Courier* team, so my thanks go to them, to our advertisers and to our delivery elves, and I hope that they, as well as you, our readers, have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ian

### Cover

The cover photo of Dumgoyne from across the Endrick Water was taken by Jim Thomson and remains his copyright.

### News in brief

**D**ean Lockhart will no longer be representing our area in the Scottish Parliament. He has resigned to pursue a career in the private sector. Roz McCall will now join the Conservatives in Holyrood representing Mid Scotland and Fife, having previously served on Perth and Kinross Council and unsuccessfully stood for the Dunfermline seat in 2021.

**D**on't throw out those crisp packets! They can't go into your home plastic recycling, but they can go into the Co-op's blue bin located just inside the front door. You can recycle most soft plastics, like plastic film, pet food pouches, plastic bags, and – of course – crisp bags. Don't let these useful plastics go into landfill... take them to the Co-op!

**E**nergy issues and the rising cost of living are understandably at the top of many domestic worry lists at the moment. National newspapers have been offering reams of advice both in their physical and online publications; even the banks are sharing tips. Ranging from the obvious (wear a jumper) to the useful (block those draughts) to the expensive (install solar panels), you can actually find lots of really helpful information online. One is Martin Lewis's Money Saving Expert household bill section and the links provided there ([tinyurl.com/2p8a52h9](https://tinyurl.com/2p8a52h9)) (I've no dog in that race). Net Zero Scotland also has a useful website ([www.homeenergyscotland.org/worried-about-rising-energy-bills-we-can-help](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org/worried-about-rising-energy-bills-we-can-help)), with additional useful links. Remember, if you find yourself in difficulties with energy bills, contact your provider straightaway. They are obliged to help you work out a plan you can afford.

**A** number of changes and improvements have been made to local health services across Forth Valley Health Board to help people get the right care in the right place, as quickly as possible. A wider range of healthcare staff (like physios, mental health and advanced nurse practitioners) are now working in many GP practices across Forth Valley to help you access more services and support locally. Our local pharmacist can also provide healthcare advice and treatment for many common health problems. If you need urgent healthcare advice and treatment for an injury or illness, including minor injuries, but it's not something life-threatening, call NHS 24 on 111 anytime. But never underestimate an emergency. If you suspect someone is having a heart attack, stroke or has severe breathing difficulties, don't hesitate: go directly to A&E or dial 999. For more information, visit [www.NHSinform.scot/right-care](http://www.NHSinform.scot/right-care).



The wedding of Carolyn Thomson and Peter Burns took place in the Rockies, near Golden, British Columbia on 22 July. Carolyn grew up in Killearn, attending Killearn Primary, Balfour High and Glasgow University, obtaining a doctorate in immunology in 2014.

In 2017 she relocated to Canada to take up a post as a researcher at the University of Calgary, to be joined by Peter some months later. Peter has successfully transferred his career in Scotch whisky from Scotland to Canada.

The wedding was attended by close members of both families, including parents from Killearn, Mae and Jim. The ceremony was held outdoors in hot sunshine and the reception in a Dutch barn, where 45 guests had a thoroughly good time!

### Our new *Courier* team member

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Hello, my name is Hattie Graham. I am 23 years old and I have lived in Blanefield since 2012. I was born in Stirling and went to Kelvinside Academy in Glasgow.

I graduated this year with a BA in English Literature from the University of Leeds and in September I moved to Berlin to study an MA in American Literature and History at the Freie Universität Berlin. My hobbies include reading, crocheting, being in nature and learning German, of course! I hope to be a writer when I finish my studies.





The Killearn Advent Window Trail is a delightful fixture in the run-up to The Big Day, and the good news is that it will be on the calendar for 2022! Not only is it a chance for you to see exactly how creative your neighbours are, but it's also an opportunity for you to help those who don't have homes, never mind windows, to decorate.

Michael Hamilton, Shelter Scotland's Community Fundraiser (Glasgow), explains the situation: 'With over 35,000 homeless applications made in the last year in Scotland, as well as 8,635 children stuck in temporary accommodation, it is crucial that at Shelter Scotland, we have the support in our communities to help change this. We wouldn't be able to assist the many thousands of people struggling with or at risk of homelessness without that amazing support.'

He continues, 'Thankfully, over the past few years, the Killearn Advent Window Trail not only raises awareness of our cause, but also much needed funds. We are incredibly grateful for this support from the community. It is a fantastic fundraising event and it is great to see people coming together at this time of year. Funds raised support our work, which includes free homelessness and housing advice services for those who need it, as well as outreach work and awareness campaigns. With the current economic situation, this support is needed more than ever. Thanks to all organisers in Killearn and donors, too, for their generosity. It's great to have you as part of the Shelter Scotland Community.'

Donate online at [giving.give-star.com/online/shelter/killearn-advent-collection-2022](https://giving.give-star.com/online/shelter/killearn-advent-collection-2022).

## Would You Like to Help Build a Wildlife Website?

We're planning a project to develop the Killearn Heritage Trail website with a section dedicated to natural history. We aim to build a catalogue of local flora and fauna with descriptions, information and photographs. The pages will be assembled by project volunteers and school pupils, and edited by Jackie Savery and Nigel Pope, wildlife documentary film makers.

To join in or to find out more, please email [heritage@kfcf.co.uk](mailto:heritage@kfcf.co.uk). Visit [killearnheritage.org.uk](https://killearnheritage.org.uk).



Holly Robertson and Jason Tennent were married on 12 March 2022 at Harburn Estate, West Calder, in the company of family and friends. Holly grew up in Killearn, and the happy couple met while at university. They have made their home in Cambridge.

**CHAS**  
Children's Hospices Across Scotland

### Killearn Christmas Post

Post your local Christmas cards at  
The Co-op  
The Pharmacy  
The Kirk  
from  
**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**  
to addresses within the village.

Please remember to put full name and address on the envelope (no post code required)

Please give generously to CHAS via the collection tins

**Final pick ups**  
Co-op & Pharmacy - 5pm Sat 17<sup>th</sup> December  
Kirk - 1pm Sun 18<sup>th</sup> December

Delivery from 19<sup>th</sup> December

[www.chas.org.uk](https://www.chas.org.uk)

## Killearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

### MONDAY

**Monday Club:** Main Hall and Garden Room. 1pm–4.30pm.  
Badminton and bridge.

**Dance with Julie:** Garden Room, 5.45pm–7.15pm. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; [jjsymmonds36@gmail.com](mailto:jjsymmonds36@gmail.com)).

**Yoga Class:** Main Hall, 7.30pm–8.30pm. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah Fleming ([sarahfleming99@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahfleming99@yahoo.com)).

### TUESDAY

**Badminton:** Main Hall, 9.15am–10.15am.

**Foot Health Clinic:** Committee Room 9.30am–2pm. Contact Jacqueline Morton for availability (07703 799112).

**Town Break Stirling:** Garden Room, 2pm–4pm ([www.townbreakstirling.org](http://www.townbreakstirling.org)).

**DIY circuits:** Main Hall, 6.30pm–7.30pm. All welcome. Contact Fiona ([fiona.rennie@btinternet.com](mailto:fiona.rennie@btinternet.com)) or Nick (07860 700928).

### WEDNESDAY

**Yoga Class:** Main Hall, 9.30am–10.30am. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah ([sarahfleming99@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahfleming99@yahoo.com)).

**Ear Wax Microsuction Clinic:** Committee Room, 9.30am–2pm. Contact Jacqueline Morton for availability (07703 799112).

**Tai Chi & Qigong:** Main Hall, 10am–11am. Contact Sukyee (07910 941497; [sukyee.tai@gmail.com](mailto:sukyee.tai@gmail.com)).

**Pre-school Dance Class:** Main Hall, 4pm–4.45pm. Contact Lynda (770390; [geolyn2000@hotmail.com](mailto:geolyn2000@hotmail.com)).

### THURSDAY

**Pilates:** Main Hall, 10.15am–11.15am. Suitable for all. Classes include a mix of exercises to mobilise, strengthen and tone the whole body whilst having a gentle workout, too. Contact Linda ([email@talltreesaberfoyle.co.uk](mailto:email@talltreesaberfoyle.co.uk)).

**Children's Music Class:** Main Hall, 11.30am–12.15pm. Contact Clare ([claremondaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:claremondaymusic@gmail.com)).

**Linda Turner School of Dancing:** Main Hall, 4pm–6.30pm. Dance classes for children of all ages. Contact Lynda (770390; [geolyn2000@hotmail.com](mailto:geolyn2000@hotmail.com)).

**Dance with Julie:** Garden Room, 5.45pm–7.15pm. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; [jjsymmonds36@gmail.com](mailto:jjsymmonds36@gmail.com)).

**Adult Jazz Dance:** Main Hall, 7pm–8pm. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837; [yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk](mailto:yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk)).

### FRIDAY

**Yoga Class:** Garden Room, 9.30am–10.30am. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah ([sarahfleming99@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahfleming99@yahoo.com)).

**Dancercise (adult 50+ fitness):** Main Hall, 10am–11am. Low-impact dance-based exercise and routines for over 50s, ladies and gents. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837; [yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk](mailto:yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk)).

**Dance for Parkinson's:** Garden Room, 1.30pm–2.30pm. Providing creative movement and dance to the Parkinson's and mobility disorders community. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; [jjsymmonds36@gmail.com](mailto:jjsymmonds36@gmail.com)).

**Buchanan Castle Bridge Club:** Garden Room, 2pm–5pm. Contact Lesley Nicholl (07720 978998; [lesleynic7@icloud.com](mailto:lesleynic7@icloud.com)).

## Killearn Village Hall News



We do love a wedding at the hall. And who wouldn't? Weddings bring happiness and smiles to the village and to the hall, and we hope that the wedding sows seeds – that people experience Killearn, the views, the warmth of welcome and come back again.

Are you reading this and thinking about your own wedding? Or do you have a family member planning their wedding? We're always here to chat to you and help.

And it doesn't have to be a wedding to bring smiles or happiness – we've been very lucky to be hosting bouncy castles and children's parties, and parties for adults, too. We helped celebrate an 80th birthday one weekend, and the very next weekend the bouncy castle, balloons and party games arrived for an 8th birthday party.

We're on your doorstep. We're keen to help. Come and chat, or email us at [killearnvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:killearnvillagehall@gmail.com).

## Endrick Blooms at Christmas



Christmas wreaths and house decor

Book yours now  
from £50 - £150

[www.endrickblooms.co.uk](http://www.endrickblooms.co.uk)  
01360 550404



## Coronavirus

As this gets distributed we should be right in the middle of the autumn/winter flu and Covid vaccination programme. Once again we are running clinics in the Health Centre. While this makes the surgery very busy, the feedback we get from our patients regarding the ease of local access is very positive.

Please be assured if you have not already received your vaccination we will be in contact.

## Appointment Update

We continue to offer our patients a choice of either face-to-face or telephone consultations. Telephone contact became important during Covid and indeed has remained popular with patients with conditions which do not necessarily require examination.

## Vaccination Update

We continue to offer Shingles vaccination to all patients aged 70 to 79, and pneumococcal vaccination as a one-off vaccination to those aged 65 and over.

## Staff Update

Dr Kathryn Green will be leaving us on 6 December 2022 following her four-month Foundation Year placement.

Dr Zack Slevin will be joining us on 7 December for a four-month Foundation Year placement.



Heather May and Shaun Smith were married on 17 September 2022 at Sherbrook Castle Hotel in Glasgow.

Heather, who grew up in Killlearn and studied at the University of Glasgow, is a senior clinical research associate. Shaun, who lived all over the world as part of a military family and studied at Glasgow Caledonian University, is a quantity surveyor. The couple have set up home in Kirkintilloch with their beloved collie, Lily.

CHRISTMAS CHEER AT  
KILLEARN PHARMACY  
AND GIFT SHOP

Please Join Us For  
**Christmas Shopping Weekend**  
Friday 25th and Saturday  
26th November ALL DAY  
DISCOUNTS ON ALL CHRISTMAS  
STOCK

KILLEARN PHARMACY, 13 BALFRON ROAD  
OPEN (M - F): 9 - 1 PM, 2.15 - 6 PM OPEN (SAT): 9 - 1 PM, 2.15 - 5 PM

## Active Travel Path

Some of you may have seen at the e-bikes and paths event or at Killearn Community Council (KCC) meetings that a working group from the village is investigating the possibility of an off-road Active Travel Path (for biking, walking, wheeling) to link the village to the growing community south of Killearn, the new Cala development and the West Highland Way.

The initial route under discussion follows land off-road down the side of Station Road and along the West Highland Way to Oakwood Garden Centre. In September, an application for funding for the Concept Stages 0–2



of the 'Active Travel Path to the South of Killearn' was submitted by KCFC to Sustrans, the UK's walking, wheeling and cycling charity and the custodian of the National Cycle Network. At the time of writing, the funding decision is still to be announced. If it is successful, there will be a series of consultations with the community and stakeholders.

As part of Cala's planning obligations, the housebuilder will be upgrading the current footpath on Station Road (B834) and installing a footpath along the A81. This must be done before they sell any houses. The Active Travel Path to the South of Killearn aims to create an additional, safer, alternative off-road path for everyday journeys made by biking, walking and wheeling to and from the village to the school, village amenities, local transport links, and recreation on the West Highland Way and beyond. It would also link the area south of Killearn to the proposed Active Travel Path from Killearn to Balfron and the proposed King's Highway from Drymen to Stirling.

The working group on this project currently includes local residents, our bike shop, Cala, KCFC and KCC members. The application also has the support of Killearn Primary School, local councillors and Stirling Council.

If you'd like to follow the progress of the Active Travel Path to the South of Killearn, please do check the KCC website, Facebook page or come along to a KCC meeting. If you have any questions in the meantime, want to get involved or have other ideas for Active Travel in the village, please get in touch with us at [ContactUs@KillearnCC.org.uk](mailto:ContactUs@KillearnCC.org.uk).

CAROLINE CARRICK

## Travelling Under Your Own Steam



On a bright, sunny day in late September, Killearn Primary School playground played host to an event promoting active travel (primarily cycling and walking, but including any form of non-motorised transport) in the Killearn area. With some 150 people of all ages attending, we can hope for a few less car journeys to the Co-op!

Community e-bikes were available to take a spin round the playground – once tried, they proved difficult to hand back! If you were persuaded, Country Cycles were on hand to give advice and show off the latest models.

For those who brought along their own bikes, then rattles, squeaks, slipping gears and ineffective brakes were all expertly fixed on the spot by Neil and Harry (aka Dr Bike from Stirling Active Travel Hub).

Helping to keep your machine safe from theft, Steven (one of our community police officers) was postcoding bikes and giving a steer to the National Bike Register.

Two proposed new path routes were displayed for continuing consultation by Killearn Paths Group and Killearn Community Council – one linking Killearn to Balfron ([www.killearnbalfronpath.org.uk](http://www.killearnbalfronpath.org.uk)) and the other attached to the development at the old hospital site (see left).

Thanks go to Crispin at Cycle Path Services for providing refreshments, though you had to work hard for the smoothies!

Finally, the wee-ones were catered for with a carefully laid out obstacle cycle circuit. Naturally everyone found their own unique way through it. Initiative at its purest...

If you would like further details on how to borrow one of the community e-bikes for up to a month, email Mike Gray ([mike@kfc.co.uk](mailto:mike@kfc.co.uk)).

Thanks to Cycling Scotland for funding the event, organised by KCFC and Killearn E-bike Loan Project, and supported by Killearn Primary and Nursery School and their fund-raising group.



# Killlearn Primary School News

P6 Study Timelines of the *Titanic* Disaster!

The *Titanic* sank in 1912, and it still remains one of the biggest blunders in history. But who was really to blame? Primary 6 are on the case. As part of their topic work, they have been studying timelines and reading books on the *Titanic*. So far, they have failed to come up with any definite answers. The search continues.

In other news, the current fixation with pop music has found its way into Primary 5. 'Yes, we're learning *Mamma Mia* on our glockenspiels', said one P5 pupil. Also, they are doing place value in maths, and Victorian children, architecture and history.

P4 are learning whole numbers and the 3x table and symmetry at the same time. Is this magic? Perhaps time travel? A miracle of science? Whatever it is, the P4 maths mystery will go down in school history.



Meanwhile, in P3, a rugby taster has proved to be popular; clear proof of the sport's influence nowadays.

And in P2, the stick insect eggs are soon to hatch, and the class will have a colony of these critters. Keeping track of them is extremely difficult, due to their cunning camouflage.

Also P1 have been asked by Arnprior Pumpkin Farm for help in scaring crows.

Lastly, P7 have been reading *Holes* and writing their own fan fiction stories. As part of their topic on Welcoming Refugees, they are writing 'Letters fae a local' for the charity Refuweege.



THE PRESS GANG

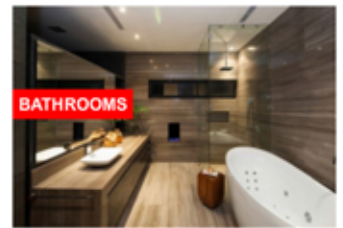
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## Bridge by Zorro

Now autumn is upon us, our thoughts turn to indoor activities – such as bridge! The Killlearn Club is now well into its 2022/23 session, with the first two championship nights behind us. This session, the first Tuesday of each month is face to face, while the other Tuesdays are online. To join us, please go to our website and register for any Tuesday club night. For the classes or any other query, please email us via the website.

In very early issues, I touched on the topic of competitive bidding. In this issue, I hope to provide specific guidance about overcalling, helped by the well-known and respected writer and teacher of bridge, Andrew Robson.

After opponents have opened the bidding, your bids are overcalls. By bidding you can disrupt their bidding sequence and/or indicate a lead to your partner. As an initial guide, you can bid with as little as six high-card points at the one-level (or eight at the two-level) so long as the suit is ‘good’.

This aspect can be assessed using SQOT (Suit Quality Overall Test). Add the number of cards in this suit (you need a minimum of five) to the number of honours in the suit. The total must be at least as high as the number of tricks your bid has to take. Some examples would be: AQ742 and KT832 have a SQOT count of seven, so suitable for a bid at the one-level, while KJT42 and AJ5432 have a SQOT count of eight, so suitable for a two-level bid if necessary. SQOT is still only a guide, as JT432 and AK987, both with a SQOT count of seven, are clearly different. Your other cards and the vulnerability will also play a part.

So what do you think might happen on this hand? See page 34 for the answer.

**Dealer: East Vulnerable: Neither**

	♠ A 7 5 4 3 ♥ K J 5 2 ♦ - ♣ 10 8 4 2 <b>North</b>	
♠ J 8 ♥ Q 10 7 ♦ A Q J 9 5 ♣ Q 9 7 <b>West</b>	<b>Z</b>	♠ 6 ♥ A 9 8 6 ♦ K 6 3 ♣ A K J 5 3 <b>East</b>
	<b>South</b> ♠ K Q 10 9 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 10 8 7 4 2 ♣ 6	

**Note:** The figure used in the Zorro article published in Issue 53 omitted the King of Spades and Ace of Hearts from North's hand. We apologise to Zorro and our readers for the error and any confusion that this may have caused.

## Christmas Dangers

Christmas is a magical time however it's not without its dangers for our pets... We've compiled a list of some of these to help you keep your pets out of trouble!

### Plants & Flowers:

- **Poinsettias** are a popular gift not many are aware that they are potentially toxic to dogs and cats when ingested!
- **Lillies** also can cause acute kidney damage so keep them out of reach of our feline friends.

### Food Items:

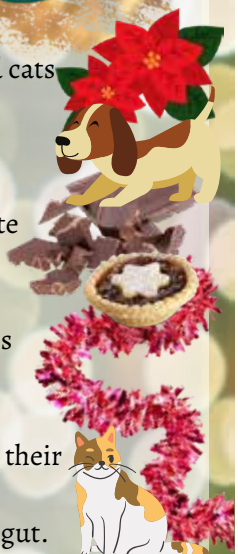
- **Chocolate** is a well known toxin in dogs and cats - keep those advent calendars and chocolate pennies to yourself.
- **Mince Pies** contain raisins which again can be very toxic.
- Your **Christmas Dinner scraps** also pose a risk of pancreatitis for your pet and cooked bones should be avoided at all costs for risk of constipation and obstructions.

### Miscellaneous:

- **Tinsel** & gift wrapping ribbons can seem pretty attractive to our furry friends to eat but their long length can cause problems when they attempt to pass these through the gut!
- **Batteries** from toys can be easily stolen and can cause pretty nasty upsets if they leak in the gut.

**If you are concerned your pet may have come into contact with any of these potential dangers get in touch on our usual number and speak to one of our Vets.**

*Happy Holidays when it comes from all at Jackson Vets x*



In my last weather report, I suggested that January continued the mild weather theme with temperatures throughout the UK 0.9°C above the long-term average. This increasing warmth continued throughout the summer with record temperatures that broke the 40°C barrier for the first time in July. The south and east of England had temperatures over 30°C for quite lengthy spells. I was in the Thames Basin area and then Norwich for three weeks and it was uncomfortable, especially when temperatures were still high at night.

The UK is a relatively small island (in global terms) whose weather is often determined by wind direction and its associated air masses.

We had a tropical continental air flow over most of the UK at the time of very high temperatures and this air mass originated over North Africa and the Sahara Desert. There was a lengthy spell of high pressure over northern or eastern Europe with surface winds blowing from the south or south east. The resulting air brought high temperatures, sometimes with poor visibility due to the air picking up pollutants over Europe and from sand particles blown into the air from Saharan dust storms.

Whilst record temperatures have made all the headlines, we should also be concerned about a recent lack of rainfall. Even in the wetter west of Scotland, we had dry months this year in January, March, April, June and July.

Green grass had disappeared this summer, as this photo I took at Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk shows. In the much drier south and south-east of England, hosepipe



bans are in use at the time of writing, as reservoir levels remain very low.

The Met Office recently announced that winter, spring and summer have all seen less than UK average seasonal rainfall this year. As a whole the UK received 56 per cent of its average July rainfall making it the driest July in 20 years. As those who live in Scotland are well aware, rainfall distribution is not uniform across the UK. Scotland had 80 per cent of its average rainfall in July, but Wales had only 53 per cent, Northern Ireland, 51 per cent and England a mere 35 per cent of the average rainfall.

If conditions do not change this autumn, look out for government messages about water wastage and what we can do at home to preserve a precious resource.

TOM RENFREW

## Summary January to September 2022 for Killlearn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
<b>Highest Temp</b>	12.6	10.1	17.9	20.3	19.6	22.7	28.7	26.6	21
<b>Lowest Temp</b>	-2	-3.1	-3.1	-2.4	3.9	5.2	6.3	6.9	4.2
<b>Mean Temp</b>	5.3	4.8	6.1	8.2	11.2	13.3	15.3	14.8	12.6
<b>Days Below Freezing</b>	5	4	8	6	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Highest Wind Gust</b>	43	48	22	23	35	18	29	19	26
<b>Monthly Rain</b>	61.2	189.4	47.3	29.8	70.2	58.8	39.2	75.6	83.5
<b>Most Rain in 24 hrs</b>	10.6	22.2	14.8	7.8	17.2	13.8	7.2	18.4	23
<b>Days without Rain</b>	13	1	16	19	8	11	16	10	9
<b>Cumulative Rainfall</b>	61.2	250.6	297.9	327.7	397.9	438.7	477.9	553.5	637

Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour

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## An Ode To Small Villages

I was asked to be part of *The Courier* and write about my experience of choosing to move to Berlin. I thought naively that I would immediately be writing about the excitement and energy of the city and be able to say wholeheartedly that I hadn't looked back once. However, my foreignness has been staring back at me like an angry pimple. I am more aware than ever that I am surrounded by strangeness.

On my first evening in Berlin I walked around Friedrichshain in full German cosplay – linen shorts, tote bag and Birkenstocks. This area of old East Berlin is a universally acknowledged cool neighbourhood to live in because the beer is cheaper than water and matcha lattes are more expensive than rent. I, of course, do not actually live in this area. I live in a tiny mezzanine on the point where the three districts of Wilmersdorf, Schöneberg and Charlottenburg meet. I spent this particular evening trying to forget the administrative labyrinth I was about to enter in order to be legally registered.

Instead I walked along happily swigging my Club Mate (the energizing elixir for partiers) and eating a 50 cent bretzel because my stomach still hasn't adjusted to the caffeinated effects of the drink.

Two weeks into September it was still warm enough to go bare legged, but not anymore. I betrayed my Scottishness by continuing to wear skirts when the whole city had switched to trousers overnight. Despite their cold and impersonal reputation, I believe Germans are really straightforward and uncomplicated. If you respect the bureaucracy, recycle religiously and don't have loud phone calls on the S-Bahn, then they will generally leave you alone. Regardless of your political persuasion, life in Western Europe is not so very different from the UK.

It's the smaller things that trip me up. The food politics, for example. While the climate-conscious youth are most likely to be resolutely vegan, older generations are ride-or-die meat eaters. I myself fall uncomfortably in between, with a dairy allergy and love of spaghetti Bolognese. During my time in Bavaria last summer, I mistakenly ordered the 'Wurst Salat', trusting my knowledge of

German enough to expect a salad and sausage. To my horror I was served a plate piled with large sausage slices drenched in white vinegar and pickles. I find the similarity between the German word 'wurst' and English 'worst' particularly fitting. In an attempt to allay those niggling feelings of homesickness my boyfriend decided to make me bangers and mash. However, being a native German he decided to add celery and nutmeg to the mashed potato instead of my preferred garlic and mixed herbs. He will not be doing that again.

Underneath the excitement of the unknown and funny anecdotes, I have really noticed

a change in myself. For so long I enjoyed big city life and being able to enjoy total anonymity. However, I've found myself more desperate than ever to meet fellow Brits. I eavesdrop the English speakers in supermarkets, wishing for the courage to say hello. When all the streets are humming with the unfamiliar consonants of German, Turkish and Ukrainian, being able to understand is very comforting. I had always associated my home in Killearn as something to move away from as fast as possible. It fed my ego to believe I was cooler and belonged somewhere bigger and more thrilling. However, whenever I leave, the homesickness sits in my chest like an anchor. If love and attention can be treated similarly, then I have loved my home all my life. The beauty I find in other places

is the same beauty I find at home. No matter where I am, autumn always reminds me of sunburnt apples, soggy yellow leaves and rolling hills engulfed by mist. I am managing to find small pieces of those in amongst the grey, which is reassuring. I think it is – and will always be – exhilarating for young people to leave the village in order to live a nomadic life in search of fame and fortune. However, now that I have also left, I am beginning to understand why people return.



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# Sustainable Killearn

A sustainability stall at the Jubilee Beacon event in June proved popular. It included a mini survey to gauge interest in different sustainability themes. The spread across each aspect was fairly balanced across the following themes:



Efforts are now underway to translate interest into action as we develop how Sustainable Killearn can best work. One of the first things to do is increase awareness of the great work that is already being done in the village. There are a range of food sustainability activities including the Hub G63, Neighbourfood Balforn, the G63 Growers and the seed library.

Killearn Primary School has a strong track record in sustainability. Not only has it held Green Flag award status for over a decade, but recently it also became recognised as a Cycling Friendly School.

We also want to ensure we are linked to the appropriate regional groups such as On the Verge, Treelink Stirling, Forth Environment Link and Transition Stirling. Hopefully in November, Stirling Council will adopt its Pollinator Action Plan and bring forward a range of initiatives including more widespread tree planting. We need to understand what opportunities there might be for Killearn, and decide as a community where we might want more trees.

Bringing all these strands together will help the development of each of the individual sustainability themes as we continue to map out an overall operating model for Sustainable Killearn.

Most importantly, we need to understand what you think and what is important to you. Through articles like this, we want to increase outreach to potential volunteers from within the community.

If you want to find out more or to help our village become more sustainable, please email [sustainable@kfcf.co.uk](mailto:sustainable@kfcf.co.uk), visit our webpage [www.kfcf.co.uk/sustainable.html](http://www.kfcf.co.uk/sustainable.html), join **Killearn Sustainability Group** on Facebook, or watch out for notices on the village noticeboards.

FRANK DEAS

## The Show Really Does Go On

After the two-year Covid break, Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society returned with our 156th Annual Show held in the Kirk, Church Hall and Village Hall. Once again exhibitors came, not only from Killearn and surrounding villages, but further afield to display their produce, baking, craftwork, art and photographic skills.

Chair John Phillips welcomed exhibitors and visitors to the Village Hall and introduced Margaret Campbell, principal early childhood educator from Killearn Primary School nursery, who shared her enthusiasm for the Show and encouraging youngsters to enter. She declared the Show open, and presented the trophies to the winners.

In the cut flower section, the Tom Robbie Trophy for most points in dahlias was won by Ian Turner. Mr Turner also had best exhibit in the cut flower section with a vase of three dahlias, which additionally won him the Quinloch Decanter for best exhibit in horticulture (Veg & Fruit – Cut Flowers – Pot Plant).

David Muirhead won the Sir George Wilson Rose Bowl for the best exhibit in roses. There was a fantastic display of gladioli this year, a lovely vase of three from Drew Watson won best exhibit. Drew also won best exhibit in sweet peas and herbaceous.

A beautiful vase of annuals rewarded Janice McLaren with a voucher for best exhibit in annuals.

Graham Gourlay won four of the five prizes in the vegetable and fruit sections: the Gordon Trophy for his basket of plenty, the Dunkyan Trophy for best collection of veg, the Society Trowel for most points in section, and the Glengoyne Cup for the best exhibit in section.

A tuberous begonia displayed by Sheila McIntyre won best exhibit in the pot plant section, while Grant Farquharson won the Battison Cup for most points in the pot plant section.

Outside, visitors could meet representatives from Colourful Killearn, RSPB, Barry Moore Bees, Frog Life and the 'Wee Spuds' – the youngsters from Blanefield Allotments – while inside the Kirk, Strathendrick Stitchers showed off their embroidery work, allowing young and old to try stitching.

Our musical entertainment for the afternoon was supplied by the Almost Credible String Band who played a relaxing mix of favourites.

In the craft and floral art section, the Millennium Quaich for most points in the craft section was awarded to Heather Wright, with Elizabeth Hay displaying the best exhibit in section.

A light-filled Church Hall foyer displayed the photographs to their best, with Douglas Neil winning the Jubilee Quaich for best exhibit and Alistair Ritchie snapping the most points in the section.

The Jubilee salver for most points in the baking section was won by Jean Pless, with the baking Quaich for best exhibit in section going to Cathy North. The prize for the given recipe, a marble loaf, was won by Gladys Farquharson, and the MacIntosh Cup in Section 'J' youth classes was won by James Wright.



Jan McDonald made it a second year for a Balfour clean sweep in the preserves section, winning both best exhibit with her raspberry jelly and most points (voucher) in this section.

There were 32 entries in the wine, beer and cordial section, and after much tasting the judge choose a bottle of rhubarb gin from Sara Rawlings as the best exhibit.

In Art, the Sandra Burt Quaich for best exhibit was won by Heather George – a painting of the Isle of Rhum – with Heather Wright receiving a voucher for most points.

The children from Killearn Primary classes had a colourful selection of paintings on display in the Village Hall. The rosettes for the prize winners were given out in the school by the head teacher.

The winners of the garden competitions were: Best Garden (Spring) Mr & Mrs Kingsley, 11 Birch Road; Best Garden (Summer) S. Bain, 5 Harpers Road; Best Garden (Hidden) Mr & Mrs May, 16 Main Street. The Hidden Garden competition was popular among the online classes from the Covid years and it was decided to retain it this year along with other online classes including My Veg Plot.

The full list of results and more photos of the day, are available at [www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk](http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk) or on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/killearnhorti](http://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti)).

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**EAR WAX MICROSUCTION CLINIC**

Quite a few of you may know me through The Foot Health Clinic which I have had in the local villages of Killearn, Buchlyvie and Torrance for over 12 years. From mid-February I shall be able to offer 'ear wax micro suction' at all the above clinics. Many GP practices and the NHS no longer offer ear wax syringing, and a lot of people in the local area have to travel quite a distance to access the now more common practice of ear wax micro suction. I am delighted to be able to offer this service locally. Please feel free to contact me on the following numbers 01360 550 374 or 07703799112 if you would like more information or to book an appointment. I look forward to seeing you.  
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# A Season For Everything

Of all the many virtues rightly ascribed to Her Late Majesty, I don't remember a sense of timing being mentioned. But to leave us in perfect early autumn, after a long and illustrious summer, would seem to suggest an innate understanding of the right time to go.

And wasn't her departure splendid? The colour, the spectacle, the military bands, the sound of cathedral voices and the beat of mile after mile of marching feet. Much has perhaps already been said on the subject, but it surely does no harm to reflect that, in a country where so much seems to be going wrong, the British still lead the world at ceremonial.

And wasn't it distressing to note, after the Event, how quickly things reverted to normal. In no time at all, we were back to the kind of political wrangling that is just plain dreary. For 10 days, the discord was suspended, the constant worry was put on the back burner, the cost of living was not the top item on the news at every bulletin. And then suddenly it was, and we were back with the daily tedium.

The one constant throughout the whole time was, of course, the autumn. Keats' season of mists and mellow fruitfulness was never a more accurate description, at least at the time of writing.

There may be trouble ahead, but at the moment it is perfect autumn, and our neighbour's plum tree is cascading its mellow fruitfulness into our garden. The morning mists have been magical and the afternoons sunlit. The rose hips have done their bit, but the brambles are still bursting forth with the promise of tangy jelly and winter pies. At the same time, of course, the leaves are turning, the grass is slowing down, and the flowers are looking scrappy.

There's no doubt about it, autumn is a clear indicator that summer is over and winter is approaching. And as if to confirm it, the Christmas catalogues are putting on the pressure. They've been coming since August, of course, but they're getting serious now. If you're not careful, they can panic you. Do not let yourself be seduced by snow scenes into buying the wrong thing. You've still got time.

Not only is autumn a time for things dying down, it is also the start of our social scene in the village. Meetings have convened, clubs have collected subscriptions, and syllabuses have been scrutinised.

The pressure on parking spaces is increasing, as I found out when I got the last space in the church car park when the Strathendrick Stitches foregathered. The member I spoke to through the car window was wreathed in smiles that the meetings she so much enjoyed were back to normal.

All this talk of autumn has brought Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* to mind, particularly the 'Autumn' section, which I find myself humming as I write. At least, I think it's Autumn. It could well be 'Spring'. I'll have to check on Google.

And I'm sure we would all agree that music is one of the lovely things about the upcoming festive season. There are the pantomimes and plays that so often use well-loved popular music, and there are concerts aplenty again.

The Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert is always a highlight. They are not Westminster Abbey Choir, but they are good, and you get to join in some of the carols.

But these delights are ahead of us. What still lingers in the memory this autumn is the soaring voices of choristers, the thrill of marching bands, and the haunting sound of a lone piper fading into the distance.

JOYCE BEGG



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## A KILLEARN HERITAGE TRAIL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Continuing our feature with recollections of some of Killearn's longest-serving residents, we meet Hugh Cameron who has lived in the parish throughout his life.

Hugh Cameron was born in Auchenibert Cottage in Killearn some 89 years ago. His mother and father both worked at Auchenibert House, as gardener and cook. Still fit, sprightly, and with a tremendous memory, Hugh can recall life and events in the village going back many years including World War II (although he was only five years old when war broke out) and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.

Auchenibert Cottage was tied to Hugh's father's job, and when war was declared and a law was rapidly passed guaranteeing work to soldiers returning from the front, the family was given one week's notice! They faced the prospect of being homeless, but they were moved into a hut at 'Dingley's' behind what is now the Outdoor Classroom. They then found accommodation at Finnich Toll House (now demolished) that had exactly the same design as the Toll House in Killearn.

Hugh has clear memories of the war. When France was occupied and Britain was on its own 'you could taste it,' he says. Hugh's father was called up in 1940. German bombers flew over Killearn on raids on Clydebank – creating the 'best firework show ever!' except the drone of the planes kept Hugh and his sister Ellen awake at night. During one raid, people were being evacuated rapidly out of Clydebank and, at midnight, Hugh's mother gave emergency shelter to 30 folk overnight. On another occasion, a stray stick of bombs hit the Stockiemuir Road, blowing a crater in the carriageway and blasting shrapnel onto the roof of the Toll House.

Hugh's mother grew fruit and vegetables in the garden, so the family didn't go hungry (although sugar and other essentials were rationed) and, through the WVS, she did washing and ironing for one of the Polish officers stationed at Killearn House. Hugh remembers the Poles being very friendly – one made him a toy Tommy gun out of wood – and tells the story of the young Polish drummer boy who joined up, underage, as his village was flattened by the Nazis. Many of the boy's family were killed, but he escaped with a triptych from the local church – the only memorabilia of his homeland that he could



The soldier, named Pallau, who brought the washing, was the officer's batman



KILLEARN HERITAGE TRAIL



Hugh vaguely remembers the Nissen hut at the camp entrance near the farm

take with him. When the Poles arrived in Killearn, they were tented near Killearn House and the Blane River flooded, washing away all their belongings, including the treasured triptych. But all was not lost: the troops all searched for this valued fragment of Poland and several days later it was found near the confluence of the Blane and the Endrick. A rededication ceremony followed.

Hugh went to Killearn Primary (in the old school off Main Street), then Balfour High (in its previous site, across Roman Road) before leaving, aged 15, to take up an apprenticeship in painting and decorating with Bob Campbell, later joining Brown's of Balfour.

Hugh doesn't recall much of King George VI's untimely death in 1952, but he does remember the coronation of Queen Elizabeth (the second of England but only the first of Scotland!) the following year. His mother, by then living in Crosshead Road, had one of the few televisions in the street, so all the neighbours crowded round to watch the pageantry before joining community celebrations on the Football Park and the dance at night.

Hugh enlisted in 1953 and enjoyed military service as a radio operator with Force 60 in postings to Catterick, the Middle East, Malaya, Aden, Kenya and Cyprus. Soon after being demobbed in 1956, Hugh met his wife-to-be, Betty, whilst on holiday in Germany. He returned to work as a painter and decorator in Strathblane, before moving on to become a signwriter and then an engineer for the GPO (General Post Office), where he spent the rest of his career. Betty and Hugh were married in 1959, when they moved into Graham Road (son Derek arriving in 1962) where they live happily to this day – awaiting the next coronation and hoping that war in Europe soon comes to an end.



# turnip the beet



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Killearn Community Council held its first meeting of the new session with a 'live' meeting in the Primary School on 21 September. This was the first face-to-face meeting for two and a half years.

It was good to see so many familiar faces again, and attendance by the police and Cllr Paul Henke, who is one of three new councillors who will represent us.

At the meeting, it was reported that there was further delay to the commencement of development on the former hospital site due to further issues between CALA and the land owner, which hopefully can be resolved in the near future.

Construction of flats on the former hotel site is now due for completion in the first week in November; 11 of the 16 flats have been sold. With removal of scaffolding and completion of roughcast, the development can be seen in its final form. With an appearance very similar to the old hotel, the character of this part of the village has been restored.

There is no further update on progress of affordable housing for Lampson Road. Given that there was a substantial developer contribution from these projects, the Community Council will seek to verify its extent and how much of this is to be spent in Killearn.

It was reported that work to Branshogle Bridge is due for completion by 11 November 2022. Catterburn Bridge is due to have one lane open by 10 March 2023, with a two lane opening likely from later in the month.

On other matters, Killearn Glen is to be designated as a 'Local Nature Conservation Area' which means it should be given more inspection, and hopefully maintenance, by the reinstated Ranger Service.

Following failures and complaints, Stirling Council is in discussion regarding bus services, and the new provider will advise of timetables if altered.

Provision of broadband improvement, especially for Killearn Primary School, will be taken up on our behalf by Cllrs McGarvey and Henke. An update will be given at the next meeting.

It was noted that a 'Handyman' service is available for residents over 55 or with physical difficulties in carrying out small repairs. Posters will be displayed at locations around the village.

You can keep up to date with the Community Council online at [www.killearncc.org.uk](http://www.killearncc.org.uk) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/KillearnCC](http://www.facebook.com/KillearnCC).

JIM PTOLOMEY  
KILLEARN CC

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# Broadband Update

As I write this in September, I have a mix of news, but it is mostly positive.

The series of communications with our MSP, Evelyn Tweed, has not produced any clarity regarding BT Openreach's plans around R100. However, another strand of pressure has resulted in the pent-up approval of the SBVS voucher scheme applications being released. This in turn has allowed Euan Shaw to complete several requested installations for his Ultrafast wireless service (see below).

A downside is that the status of numerous R100 upgrades around the village has changed to 'during the 2nd half of 2022'. But more positively, Openreach are now delivering FTTP connections overhead on telephone poles, making for a much simpler and faster delivery of a fibre infrastructure in many cases. Where new poles have to be erected instead of underground ducts, wayleave permissions will need to be obtained which might delay or even block the roll-out.

You may remember that BT are planning to close down the analogue phone system that we all know and love in 2025, with the appearance of Digital Voice as the digital replacement. If you take out a contract with a new supplier, then they will supply a SoGEA (or digital only service) unless you specifically request that the analogue line continues. Such a request might be necessary in the

short term for services such as a house alarm or Mex alarm. One consequence of the digital replacement is that to continue using your existing analogue phone, it will have to be plugged into the back of your router. An additional wireless adapter may be purchased so that existing analogue phones can be used in other rooms of the house apart from beside the router. The digital replacement phone will work anywhere within range of the router.

Euan's Ultrafast service is now fully live across much of the Trees estate and some parts of Beech Drive. While trees and other houses can prevent a clear line of sight to the mast (which is necessary for the wireless system to operate well), more installations have been made in Drumbeg Loan, and most premises in Branziert Road North are within coverage. September's fair weather enabled Euan to make good progress and he hoped to get the last few remaining SBVS voucher installations completed. As the SBVS interim voucher scheme is now closed, any further uptake of the service will have to be self-funded.

The broadband at Killearn Primary School is still using the mobile wireless solution introduced at the end of last session. The eagerly anticipated fibre installation has no clear date for work to begin as yet.

DOUG ASHWORTH, CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP



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# 10 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

## No... that's not a misprint!

Christmas and New Year are high points in a 12-day festival in which food and drink play an important part. We entertain, have family gatherings, pop round to neighbours, eat out or chill out big time with a TV dinner.

The menus on Christmas Day and New Year are fairly sacrosanct, and each family has its own traditions. But that still leaves ten days of the festive season to provide meals. So to give you some ideas for menu plans and tantalise your taste buds, we've asked our local eateries for their favourite recipes.

If your festive treat is to avoid cooking altogether (and who can blame you), look no further than our local hostelrys. Eat out at the Old Mill. Have lunch at Town & Country's Coffee Shop or at the Kitchen Window with those wonderful views. Treat yourself to a delicious 'heat at home' Asian or Indian meal from Turnip the Beet. Pick the ingredients for an easy-make meal at the Larder at Town & Country – it's not cheating.

In addition, our expert has some recommendations for wines to enjoy during the season.

Whatever you do this Christmas, enjoy a well-planned and budgeted foodie extravaganza, and support our local businesses.



## BEEF BOURGUIGNON



## WARMING WINTER WINES

At this time of year, red wine flourishes as we look for something comforting in our glass.

### Northern Syrah or Southern Shiraz

Syrah is a warming wine. Not only does it naturally tend to higher alcohol, but it also has warm ripe red and black berry characteristics with flavours of blackberry, blackcurrant, redcurrant and raspberry combined with a spicy warming peppery note.

### Northern Rhône Syrah

This is the benchmark by which all other Syrah wines are measured. The northern Rhône is home to the likes of Hermitage, Côte-Rôtie, Cornas and Condrieu. Hermitage famously allows producers to blend up to 20 per cent Viognier with Syrah, producing some of the world's most sought-after wines. Crozes Hermitage and St Joseph offer excellent examples without the eye-watering price tags commanded by some of the other appellations.

### Barossa Shiraz

This is a great festive wine that will please the majority of your red wine drinking guests. Full bodied and rich, it displays vibrant plum, cherry and blackcurrant aromas and flavours, layered with vanilla hints and spicy black peppercorn notes.

### Tawny Port

This is the perfect port for our festive celebrations. For ending the meal, great not only with the beautiful Apple Cinnamon cake, but also a Christmas pudding or a cheese board, Tawny Port is lighter in style and more accessible. It is a wonderful mouthful of notes of caramel, chocolate, dried fruit and nuts – a little glass of Christmas in itself.

ELAINE TAYLOR

See also Elaine's article on 'old vines' on page 24

## WINTER LENTIL SOUP

### INGREDIENTS

- ★ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ★ 1 large carrot, diced
- ★ 2 large stalks celery, diced
- ★ 1 small yellow onion, diced
- ★ ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
- ★ 1 cup dried red lentils
- ★ 4 cups water (or stock)
- ★ 1 whole bay leaf
- ★ 2 tbsps freshly squeezed lemon juice (½ large lemon)

### METHOD

**1** Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add the carrot, celery, onion, and salt, and stir to combine. Cover and let the vegetables sweat, stirring occasionally, until the onions are soft and translucent – about 5 minutes.

**2** Add the lentils, water or stock, and bay leaf and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, until the lentils begin to fall apart – about 20 minutes.

**3** Turn off the heat and stir in the lemon juice. Taste and season with salt as needed. Ladle into bowls and serve with toppings; if desired add seasoning blend to spice things up a bit. Just add the spices along with the lentils and broth.

RECIPE COURTESY OF TOWN & COUNTRY



## BEEF BOURGUIGNON

**PREP:** 45 minutes | **COOK:** 4 hours  
**SERVES:** 4

### EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- ★ Deep casserole dish with lid or foil to seal
- ★ Non-stick deep pan
- ★ Chopping board
- ★ Knife
- ★ Wooden spoon

### INGREDIENTS

- ★ 1kg diced braising steak
- ★ 1 tbsp rapeseed oil
- ★ 250g bacon lardons
- ★ 2 onions, diced
- ★ 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ★ 400g mushrooms, sliced
- ★ 6 carrots, peeled and diced
- ★ 2 tins chopped tomatoes
- ★ 1 bottle red wine
- ★ 3 bay leaves
- ★ 1 bouquet garni

### METHOD

- 1 Preheat oven to 200C (180C fan/gas 6).
- 2 Toss the beef in the oil.
- 3 Heat a non-stick pan and add the beef to brown. Once browned tip beef into casserole dish; now quickly flash the bacon lardons in the pan and also add to casserole dish.
- 4 Turn the heat down on the hob and sweat the onions for 10 minutes.
- 5 Add the garlic, mushrooms and carrots, and stir for a further two minutes.
- 6 Now add the tins of tomatoes and stir.
- 7 Pour the mixture into the casserole dish and mix into the beef and bacon, followed by the entire bottle of wine, bay leaves and bouquet garni.
- 8 Seal the casserole dish with a lid or foil
- 9 Place in the oven at 200C (180C fan/gas 6) for 30 minutes. Reduce heat to 160C (140C fan/gas 2) and cook for a further 3½ hours.

RECIPE COURTESY OF LAURA AT TURNIP THE BEET

## APPLE CINNAMON CAKE

**PREP:** 30 minutes | **COOK:** 35–40 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

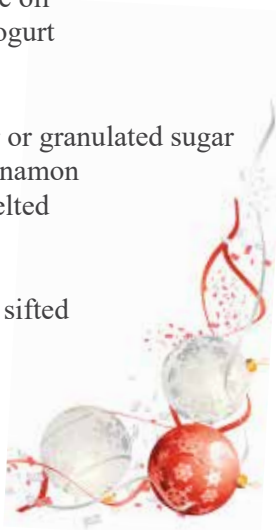
- ★ 210g self-raising flour
- ★ 2 tsps bicarbonate of soda
- ★ ¼ teaspoon salt
- ★ 150g caster sugar
- ★ 1–2 red apples, peeled and chopped
- ★ 2 large eggs
- ★ 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ★ 120 ml vegetable oil
- ★ 120 ml Greek yogurt

### Cinnamon topping

- ★ 50g caster sugar or granulated sugar
- ★ 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ★ 1 tbsp butter, melted

### Sugar glaze

- ★ 30g icing sugar, sifted
- ★ 1–2 tbsps milk



### METHOD

- 1 Preheat oven to 180C (160C fan). Grease and line a 20cm round cake tin with baking parchment.
- 2 Measure dry ingredients into a large mixing bowl and stir in chopped apple.
- 3 In a separate bowl, lightly whisk eggs together with vanilla, oil and yoghurt.
- 4 Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and gently mix with a wooden spoon until combined.
- 5 Spoon batter into prepared tin.
- 6 To make cinnamon topping, combine cinnamon, sugar and butter together until lumpy and wet.
- 7 Sprinkle over cake batter.
- 8 Bake cake for approximately 35–40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Transfer cake to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 9 To make the glaze, stir milk into sugar until smooth. Drizzle glaze over the cake.



Serve warm with fresh cream, crème fraîche or ice cream.

RECIPE COURTESY OF TOWN & COUNTRY

## Walking for Health



There can be little doubt that keeping active does you good, promoting both physical and mental wellbeing.

One of the best forms of exercise to keep us over 21s moving is the simple act of walking – and what better place to do it than the stunning countryside surrounding us here in Killlearn?

Once a week, on a Thursday afternoon, Active Stirling runs a local health walk in the Killlearn area. An hour in the fresh air walking at a gentle pace, ambling and (at the time of writing) brambling, sloe-ing (sorry!) for the final reward of coffee and cake at the finish. The walks are open to anyone, and will take into account any particular individual needs. To see if it suits you, join us by contacting [walking@activestirling.org.uk](mailto:walking@activestirling.org.uk) or visit the website [www.activestirling.org.uk/classes-programmes/walking](http://www.activestirling.org.uk/classes-programmes/walking).

If, for whatever reason, walking isn't your thing, then Active Stirling also offer balance and strength classes in Killlearn ([www.activestirling.org.uk/classes/strength-and-balance](http://www.activestirling.org.uk/classes/strength-and-balance)) as well as many other activities in the wider Stirling area.

MIKE GRAY, HEALTH WALK LEADER

## Scam of the Issue

The latest scam is potentially very serious, but can also be easily prevented. The scam relies upon 'Notifications' being visible when your mobile phone is still locked. This is convenient for you, but allows the scam to work.

The scam starts with the theft of your phone and bank card. The thief then uses their phone to register a new device with your bank or credit card supplier. To verify the validity of this, the bank sends a verification code to your (stolen) phone. If the code can be read without unlocking your phone, then the thief's device can be validated and they can then move on to steal lots of money from your account or use your credit cards.

The scam is easily foiled by only allowing 'Notifications' on your smart phone to be read when your phone has been unlocked. Go to 'Settings' on your phone, and only allow Notifications to be read once the phone has been unlocked. Simple!

DOUG ASHWORTH

## The Christmas Wine List

For most people, this time of year does not make them think about wine, but traditions that have been shared down generations and have become cherished through time are also the backbone of the world of wine.

That continuity, that history, is found in old vines and so this is a lovely time to celebrate the depth of flavour and complexity they bring to a wine. These rough, gnarly old vines bring something special to the wine, coping better with climate changes and disease, while concentrating flavours and adding layers to the taste of the wine.

Old vines are typically more than 25, but more often more than 50 years old. And the list of benefits is long: the fruit characteristics are more concentrated, they put down strong roots with a full root structure going as deep as six metres, the crop balances itself with time as well, which means less intervention in the vineyard or the winery.

Unlike younger vines, the tannins ripen more consistently, giving a balance to the structure of the wine without needing extra time, which in turn can lead to extra alcohol.

They may produce fewer grapes, but what they produce can be better. So, my recommendation this Christmas when choosing your wines to enjoy over the festive period is to look for 'Old Vines' printed on the label. Seek out Chenin Blanc from Stellenbosch, Lodi Zinfandel or Barossa Shiraz for a balance of quality and price.

And if you are planning your summer holiday to get you through the winter blues, the oldest known living vine in the world can be found in Maribor, Slovenia. This beautiful plant is now more than 400 years old.

ELAINE TAYLOR

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# Police Report



## Community engagement and reassurance

PC Graeme McNulty is a new addition to the Forth and Endrick Ward Officer role. Graeme has been in the police for 13 years, five years within Balfron, spending the last four as the school-based officer at the high schools in Balfron, Callander and Dunblane.

PC Steven Graham and PC Graeme McNulty are based at Balfron Police Office and can be contacted on 101 or at [ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk](mailto:ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk). Use this email address for local community email contact.

## Theft

Although no thefts have occurred within the Killearn area, there have been some in Blanefield. The earlier darkness gives rise to housebreakings, so please contact the police should you see anything suspicious.

Basic home security will help deter housebreakers. Use timer switches on lights and radios, ensure doors and windows are secure when you leave and have lighting at the front and back of your property. Keep garden tools and ladders locked away – don't give thieves the tools to break into your house.

## Fuel theft advice

Since the last report, there has been a rise in thefts from domestic and commercial fuel tanks, including one within the Killearn area. Consider putting measures in place to protect your fuel tank like fitting an alarm to your tank and have it secured with a good quality lock.

## Identity theft

Unfortunately, identity theft is on the increase. When criminals get access to someone's personal information,

they can steal their identity, leading to all sorts of unfortunate situations resulting in the victim losing money. A couple of simple ways to stop these people getting their hands on your accounts are:

- never open email responses you are unsure of
- check out suspicious telephone calls

If you think you might be a victim of identity theft, contact your bank or building society, and report the matter to the police.

## Vehicle safety

Prepare for the winter by keeping your vehicle well maintained. Ensure that brakes, tyres, lights, batteries, windscreens and wiper blades are in good condition, and washer bottles contain an additive to stop the water from freezing. Make sure your windows are clean, properly demisted, and clear of snow and ice before you drive, and keep your car roof clear of snow.

Consider having a winter emergency kit – an ice scraper and de-icer, a shovel for snow, a torch and spare batteries. Add a first-aid kit, warm clothes and a blanket as well as a drink and food for journeys.

## Contact

We regularly publish useful information and updates on social media, including appeals for information, updates about road closures and crime prevention advice.

The local Twitter feed can be found at [@StirlingPol](https://twitter.com/StirlingPol), and the local Facebook page at [Forth Valley Police Division](https://www.facebook.com/ForthValleyPoliceDivision).

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# Working With Refugees and People Seeking Asylum

**A Refugee:** in the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that an individual who has applied for asylum meets the definition in the Refugee Convention. They will ‘recognise’ that person as a refugee and issue them with refugee status documentation. Refugees in the UK are usually given five years’ ‘leave to remain’. They must then apply for further leave. Applications for refugee status can sometimes take years to be resolved.

**An Asylum Seeker** is a person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country, but whose application has not yet been concluded. In the UK, asylum seekers are not entitled to work; they are provided with accommodation and receive an allowance of £40.85 a week to cover food, clothing, travel, mobile and IT costs, etc.

## Ukraine

The war in Ukraine has brought an influx of refugees to the UK (115, 000 as of mid-August) and the British people have shown generous support for those fleeing their war-torn country. Of the 19,000 Ukrainians who have arrived in Scotland, some are housed on cruise ships in Glasgow and Edinburgh, but many are staying with host families.

In the Strathendrick area, 13 families (usually a woman with her children, as most men have to stay in Ukraine) live in a safe and welcoming environment. They are provided with accommodation and excellent support from their hosts, Stirling Council, schools and local networks. They are being hosted across Drymen, Balfron, Strathblane, Gartmore and Kippen, with a mother and teenage son, Tanya and Pasha (pictured right), housed in Killearn.



Tanya has a temporary job and Pasha is studying computing at Kelvin College. As part of an ‘extended family’, they eat with their hosts, who also help with travel arrangements for their guests – with whom they have formed a strong bond. Although now out of danger, each refugee family has its own harrowing tale of separation, uncertainty and fear. Hosts receive a monthly allowance from the UK government towards their additional costs (energy, laundry, food, transport, etc.), but taking in strangers for an indefinite period, although rewarding, is quite some undertaking.

Ukrainian refugees enjoy a special status as, once visas are granted (which is often not straightforward), they are entitled to work, study or claim universal credit. Most have limited English, however, so language classes or tutoring, together with advice on support services is available. Fewer refugees are hosted in rural areas than in cities as transport to school, college or work is a real challenge: hosts do a fair amount of taxiing!

Immigration has long been a contentious issue in the UK and with the Ukraine conflict ongoing, the future reception of refugees, and the provision of housing, health and education services, will undoubtedly be an issue – although not a new one.

## Glasgow

‘Scotland has a long history of welcoming asylum seekers and refugees from all over the world’ (Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government). Today Glasgow is, per head, the recipient of the largest asylum-seeking population in the UK (source: [maryhillintegration.org.uk/reports/](http://maryhillintegration.org.uk/reports/)).

The Scottish Refugee Council and other agencies help with front-line assistance, but ongoing support tends to be provided by the voluntary sector.

Maryhill Integration Network (MIN) is one such charity supporting refugees and asylum seekers in northwest Glasgow. It was founded 20 years ago in response to an influx of Kurdish and Middle Eastern asylum seekers. Since then, wars and crises in various parts of the world have resulted in waves of people from, for example, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan, Syria and Afghanistan seeking sanctuary from persecution in their own lands.

Public policy on immigration is a fraught and complicated topic – but each individual has their personal story of hardship, peril, deprivation, discrimination or abuse.

Although out of danger in Glasgow, many live in isolated and poor conditions. MIN seeks to create a safe and creative environment where individuals and communities can come together to share experiences and demonstrate the value of cultural diversity in Scotland.

Today Glasgow is, per head, the recipient of the largest asylum-seeking population in the UK

Immigration has long been a contentious issue in the UK



Activities include a Women's Group (public health advice, craft workshops, discussion groups, etc.), Men's Group (advice and discussion sessions; outdoor activities; skills workshops), a Gardening Group, Art Group, Choir, Dance Group, Family Nest, English classes, events and outreach.

Through lockdown, MIN provided essential services delivering food parcels, improving digital inclusion and providing online sessions. Increasingly, campaigning – raising awareness of issues facing refugees and asylum seekers – and lobbying for change is an important part of MIN's work. For example, asylum seekers are not permitted to work, even though many have valuable skills or professional qualifications. MIN has played a prominent role in the Right to Work and the Right to Vote campaigns in Scotland.

The people of Killearn have supported MIN generously on various occasions: sponsoring fundraising in the Glasgow Kiltwalk, and responding to appeals for bedding, furniture and children's clothing.

MIN arranges Christmas boxes for the children of its service users and this year is requesting donations of children's books. If you have some that you no longer need, please consider passing them on: contact [nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com](mailto:nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com). For further information, visit [maryhillintegration.org.uk](http://maryhillintegration.org.uk).

NH



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## Safely Home

In the '60s in the UK we had fog in the winters. Factory and power station chimneys belched out thick smoke all day long, and traffic fumes were unbelievably toxic. On television and on radio there were regular fog warnings. In London the word 'smog' was coined. Occasionally the forecasters would miss or misread the warning signs and fog would descend like a solid grey blanket, plunging traffic into chaos.

The two of us had set out from home one November Saturday to enjoy an evening at the theatre. When we left Killearn there was a slight mist, though nothing out of the ordinary. We hadn't seen the forecast, but we had theatre tickets. We had booked a table for dinner and a spot of bad weather was not going to spoil our evening. In Glasgow the mist had thickened a bit and the traffic was slow, but there was a comforting degree of artificial light from street lamps and shop windows. The restaurant was not very busy, the meal was delicious and our timing seemed perfect. We headed for the theatre.

When we emerged some time later we could scarcely see the other side of the street. City traffic was almost at a standstill. With some difficulty we located the car in the car park.

Finding the car turned out to be the least of our problems. As we drove slowly along we realised that the homeward journey was going to be very tedious and possibly rather dangerous. Fog muffled any traffic noise, so that any vehicles we encountered appeared to

be floating silently. From time to time one of us would recognise a familiar landmark. This was comforting – at least we seemed to be heading in the right direction!

By now it was probably 11 o'clock. Both of us were very tired and more than a little bad-tempered. I thought it would be a good idea to switch on the radio and listen to the weather forecast. I turned it on; Mr. Grumpy snapped at me to turn it off. Fair enough. He was trying to concentrate. In silence we progressed slowly along the empty foggy streets. We were utterly exhausted, straining our eyes, desperate to be back in familiar territory. Every now and again we were approached by faint watery orbs of light. There was no way of ascertaining what size of vehicle it was, so we would have to slow right down.

When at last we saw the 'Killearn' sign, it was a moment of pure joy. Carefully we turned off the main road into the safety of the side street where we lived, and shortly afterwards we turned right into our drive.

'Safely home,' said Mr. Grumpy, smiling happily. He switched off the engine and I reached for the door handle. The relief was incredible. We could turn on the lights, the kettle and the electric blanket. Suddenly though, Mr. Grumpy started the car again and reversed at high speed out of the drive onto Branziert Road.

'What on earth are you doing?' I squealed. 'We don't live here now,' he spluttered.

It was true. We had lived there for years, but moved to Greenend a few days earlier.

CB



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As you read this, we look forward to our winter events hosted again at Ross Priory on the second Thursday of the month, between November and April. For a contrast, we have talks on the development of John Deere Agricultural equipment and also of Aston Martin – David Brown might prove a neat link between the two – and our winter highlight is the annual Quiz Night in December.



The Stanley Steamer

Following the success at the Drymen Show, the highlight of the second half of our summer programme was the annual Car-BQ where this year a guest appearance was made by a Stanley Steamer motor car made in 1912 to add to the driving fun. The owners travelled from Inverness to join us, and luckily we managed to arrange for sunny weather on the day. We were treated to many rides allowing us to experience an alternative method of powering vehicles, the chuff-chuff engine sound as the car went up hill being particularly special. They generously donated their expenses to our collection for Strathcarron Hospice. See our website [www.strathendrickcareclub.uk](http://www.strathendrickcareclub.uk) for some video of the day.


The website also shows other events, including a visit to Broomhall House in Fife in support of the RAF Benevolent Fund. This unique mix of cars and aircraft started in very heavy rain, as several of us with elderly soft-tops would bemoan, but we were in short-sleeves by the end of the day. We saw a low-flying air display, as well as lots of interesting cars and

their chatty owners. Our charity support of Strathcarron in particular has been recognised in a competition run by *Practical Classics* magazine, where various charities were nominated. Strathcarron has been shortlisted in the final due to our efforts.

Our other late summer meetings have included outings by circuitous routes to St Andrews, Inveraray, Lochgilphead, Callander and Crieff for either lunch or evening meals and lots of chat. So if you would like to join us – you don't even have to have a car, just an interest in motoring – then get in touch by email at [SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com](mailto:SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com).

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## Rugby – The Inclusive Sport

The health and wellbeing benefits of exercise are well known, but team sports – and rugby in particular – can offer something over and above the pluses of physical fitness. Working with others as part of a group with a common aim, offering mutual encouragement and support, can be hugely stimulating and satisfying. ‘Lessons in life’ can be learned through training and playing with team-mates – respecting others ideas, accepting mistakes, sharing the highs and lows of collective endeavour.

Rugby – at community club level in particular – is an inclusive sport. Traditionally, it has a reputation for being very sociable (more so than most!), but rather macho with a drinking culture. But times have changed. Yes, senior players still enjoy a beer in the clubhouse after a game, and providing friendly hospitality to the opposition and the referee is an important part of the ethos. But mental as well as physical wellbeing is now a priority, as is growing the game, with increasing numbers of girls and women playing different forms of rugby.

Inclusivity in Rugby League was demonstrated by the recent Women’s and Wheelchair World Cups taking place in parallel with the Men’s Tournament.

For a fine example of the physical, mental and social benefits of rugby, listen to Kevin Sinfield’s ‘Desert Island Discs’ on BBC Sounds.

Good quality coaching and child protection are at the heart of a club like Strathendrick, based at Fintry Sports Centre. Strathendrick has Mini rugby teams at every age group from P1–P7, meeting on Sunday mornings for training, matches and festivals. Boys and girls play together in mixed teams at this age. At secondary school – Midi – levels the Club works closely with Balfon High School developing girls’ teams at U12, U14 and U16 age groups, with U18s still to come. The boys’ teams from S1–U18 play in the Midland Schools Conference.



Strathendrick Rugby Club raised £3,700 for RSABI in support of people in Scottish agriculture at its recent dinner dance  
Photo by Katie Stevenson Photography

In the last two seasons Strathendrick has been running regular Women’s Touch Rugby sessions on Monday evenings. From November to March this takes place on the astroturf at Balfon Campus. It is sociable, friendly and fun – no experience is needed and new players are always welcome.

Some people worry that there is a significant risk of injury in rugby. Occasional, high-profile incidents do occur, but many physically demanding activities involve some element of risk: soccer, hockey, horse riding, mountain biking and climbing to name but a few. Elite rugby players at professional level are subject to frequent high-impact collisions, but this is hardly the case with young people enjoying a run around with their team-mates – some of whom might become friends for life. So the benefits of playing rugby far outweigh the risks.

For more information, visit [strathendrickrfc.com](http://strathendrickrfc.com) or contact [nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com](mailto:nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com).



# ALEXANDER STEWART MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for  
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## Curling – Lead Stones

At the start of the 2022/23 season, we are now back to normal with no masks, no disinfecting the handles of stones and no restricting the sweepers to one at a time. More sessions have been added during the day, which has enabled the main club to return to their 3pm session on Tuesdays.

We have been lucky to gain a number of new members for this season. This is partly from contacts within the Gateway Club, which is for new curlers, others from the sad demise of some Ladies clubs, and some from the Bearsden area due to the closure of the curling rink at Braehead.

The club has inherited three trophies from West Stirlingshire Ladies which has enabled the expansion of the league programmes for both the main club and the Ladies section.

The main club has planned three single round leagues with six teams in each. The Ladies section have four single round leagues with five teams in the first three and four teams in the final league.

The Ladies started with a well-supported practice session, including trying out various shots and playing



Luisella Mosley, Helen McKinnell and Katherine Kelsey with their prizes for winning the Ladies Opening Bonspiel

positions. This was followed by an opening bonspiel which was narrowly won by Luisella Mosley's team of Katherine Kelsey and Helen McKinnell from Fiona Glass's team of Penny Evans, Sue Scordia and Sandra Goldie.

The main club started with the President v Vice President competition which forms their opening bonspiel. Unfortunately, the numbers were low due to holidays. The result was a win for President Bob Glass by 8 ends to 4.

The club has had some successes in their initial external matches. They won their first match in the Forth Valley Area Knockout, but narrowly lost in the quarter final.

The Ladies section were very pleased to win their first match in a Stirling Ladies Branch competition, as they have not competed in these competitions for many years.

The club was 175 years old in 2021, but have yet to hold a celebration. However, we are arranging to play the Balyarrow Trophy Bonspiel in December against three other clubs which are the same age.

New members would be welcomed by both the Main (mixed) Club and the Ladies Section. Club contacts are Tony Flisch (860580) and Gill Smith (550726), or visit [strathendrickcurling.org.uk](http://strathendrickcurling.org.uk).

### Bridge by Zorro Solution to the problem on page 10

South	West	North	East
			1C
1S	2D	4S	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The bidding went as shown above. South has an excellent suit with a SQOT score of eight (five cards and three honours), and being Spades against the opponents' Clubs, has the maximum disruptive effect. North, with wonderful support in partner's suit and distributional strength, can, and does, support strongly. Reluctantly therefore East is forced to give in, even though as we can see from the full hands, they clearly have the majority of points.

West leads the ♣7 (only a Spade lead can defeat the contract) to East's ♣K. Declarer then ruffs the

♣A returned. Guessing that East holds ♥A rather than ♥Q from their opening bid, Declarer leads ♥3 from dummy to their ♥J, and that is indeed taken by East's ♥A. East now switches suit leading ♠6 (the best choice as it cuts down Declarer's ruffing ability). Winning with ♠K, Declarer crossed to ♥K, ruffed ♥2, then ruffed ♦2 followed by ♣8. The crossruffing continued with ♦4, ♣10 (ruffed with ♠Q), and ruffed ♦7. The ♠A was then cashed and the ♥5 conceded to East's ♥9. The game contract was made! A steal when East-West could make 5♦.

For a full description of the *Suit Quality Overall Test*, and more on overcalling, see Chapter 6 of *The Next Level* by Andrew Robson.

Z

# 2023 Killearn 10k

Entries for the 2023 Killearn 10k will open on Thursday, 1 December.

This year's 10k and Mile will be hard to beat, but preparations for next June are already well under way, and the committee will be pulling out all the stops to make sure the 2023 event is the best ever.

We'll announce details of the entry process online nearer the time. Places always sell out quickly, so keep your eyes peeled if you'd like to take part.

The 10k wouldn't happen without our wonderful marshals and volunteers. They were out in force this year to make sure the race went without a hitch, and we were delighted to say thank you to them all at a special event at the Old Mill on 14 August.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Alice and the team at the Mill – yet again – for their fantastic support of the race. They provided amazing pizza for everyone at the party. We're also most grateful to Glengoyne for the miniatures presented to the marshals.



If you're interested in joining our happy band for the next 10k and Mile, message us on our Facebook page.

And if you're a runner with an itch to tackle one of Scotland's most beautiful trail race courses, remember December 1st!



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# Killlearn Football Club – End of Season Review

This season was definitely ‘one of two halves’ as the saying goes! First half, the team got off to a flyer and we played some great football and achieved a few memorable victories, seeing us once again secure our place in the top half ahead of the split. Second half saw a combination of other teams getting stronger and our inability at times to see games out, leading to a disappointing run of results that saw us ultimately finish mid table.

In the cup tournaments, we again proved we can give the top teams in the league a challenge and reached the semi-final in one, and quarter finals in the other, but alas no finals this year.

As a club we were awarded the Garvie Trophy for our on-field behaviour, being the team with the lowest number of bookings and red cards. This is an area we have encouraged the guys to work on and is a positive recognition of the players’ attitudes.

On a team front we continue to have a healthy squad of local lads that fits with the ethos of the club as a community-focused organisation.

Off the field, we continue to do well and remain financially stable. We invested in new goals, contributed to players’ tracksuits and subsidised our annual golf outing. All this is possible thanks to contributions from players, supporters and our sponsors.

We finished the season with our annual golf outing at Aberfoyle Golf Club and a players night at the Old Mill.

Allan Denton (pictured right with the cup ) was the winner of the Hughie Russell Trophy. It was presented

to him by Zander Russell, son of Hughie Russell. Hughie passed away a few years ago after over 50 years service to the club as a player, manager and chairman.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the club. It really was fantastic to see so many attend this year’s games and it is appreciated by all at the club.

COLIN BANKS



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# Killlearn Tennis Club News

We have had a very busy summer, with coaching for kids and adults proving to be well attended.

The club championships were fiercely contested, and trophies were presented to winners and runners up in each section on Saturday, 17 September.

Men's Singles Winner	Jamie Kingsley
Ladies' Singles Winner	Caroline Carrick
Women's Doubles Winners	Jan Biggart, Karen Crocket
Men's Doubles Winners	John Forshaw, Ross Aitken
Mixed Doubles Winners	Laura Hart, Stephen Hart

We are delighted to announce that the club has received a donation from Equine Medical Solutions Ltd. Derek and Morna Knottenbelt are Killlearn residents and are directors of the company. We will be using the money to purchase a ball machine with 20 functions and a remote control, a ball hopper which picks up the balls without the need to lift them manually, and 32 new tennis racquets for juniors to use when attending coaching. We intend to use the remaining funds to subsidise the cost of using floodlights for coaching during the winter. This will be a great help because Killlearn Tennis Club is treated as a business by electricity companies and we would have had to consider increasing charges for using floodlights if we had not received this donation.

On behalf of our members we would like to say a big thank you to Morna and Derek for being so generous and enabling us to make these purchases.

We are keen to welcome new members and visitors to Killlearn Tennis Club. If you would like to try tennis, please go to [www.killlearntennisclub.org.uk](http://www.killlearntennisclub.org.uk) where you will find more information.

Best wishes from the committee – Roni, Gill, George, Laura, Phillip and Jamie.



Above left: Jamie Kingsley (Men's Singles Champion) awarding Men's Doubles trophy to Ross Aitken; above right: Jamie Kingsley awarding Mixed Doubles trophy to Stephen and Laura Hart

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## Carlo Dinardo 1939 – 2022

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Carlo belonged to two countries and cultures: he was born in the Molise region near Rome, by the ancient abbey of Monte Cassino, at the start of WWII. In his early years family life was dominated by the nearby famous battle and, during his school days, since he was the eldest of a family of seven surviving children, his help was needed assisting on the family 'croft' and in looking after his younger siblings. He learned early to work hard and this was the basis of his success in life.

His uncle, who had become a shop floor manager with Askeys, the ice-cream wafer manufacturer in Airdrie, suggested Carlo's father join him and in 1950, the family moved to start a new life Scotland.

Aged 18, Carlo glimpsed Irene through an office window and from that first sight developed a love match which lasted a lifetime. The couple wed in August 1962 and set up home in Bearsden, where Karen and Mark were born. Later they moved to Strathblane, before settling in Killearn in 1971, where the birth of Lorraine completed their family. He was so proud of how his family developed their careers, and was a loving grandfather to Keir and Zoe.

Carlo, who early decided he wanted to be an engineer, attended Coatbridge Technical College and set out on his career, first in London then in Glasgow at 'Square Grip'. He was skilled at art and drawing, and proved also to have team leadership qualities. He became a chartered civil/structural engineer in 1965, then a Fellow of both those institutions and a chartered highways engineer in 1976. He set up his own consulting engineering business with colleagues in 1969, relocating to Paisley in 1973 and opened an Aberdeen office in time for the oil boom. His work included development of the M74 Hamilton/Motherwell bypass and the construction of many notable

public buildings in Scottish cities and overseas. His business continues today. He served on an Institution Education Committee and was President of the IES (Scottish Engineering Institution) from 1999–2001, and was a great encourager of young people in their careers.



While his work was a prime focus in life, Carlo loved golf and was an active member of the committee of Buchanan Castle; he belonged also to Glasgow and Royal Aberdeen golf clubs, and played in Florida, which he and Irene regularly visited.

Carlo loved nature, philosophy, all things historical and visiting places of interest throughout the world. He had a love of his British-made Jaguar cars and enjoyed driving them for over 50 years. He often became involved in local affairs, especially development within the village, notably the old church and the old school. He attended local classes in painting and astronomy, and enjoyed researching his family history.

Carlo will be sadly missed, his sudden short illness and passing coming as a great shock to all who knew and worked with him, all over the world.

THE DINARDO FAMILY

## Robbie Coltrane 1950 – 2022

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It was with great sadness that the village learned of the death of Robbie Coltrane, who had lived near the village for several decades. Easily recognised, whether on foot or driving one of his large, often American, classic cars, he would chat to anyone in the queue in the Spar when it existed, or in the Co-op. Although his fame and his working life precluded close involvement in village life, he would sometimes appear at traditional village events and was a generous supporter of Killearn Primary School where his children were pupils. A highlight of one year was when he came to read from *Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone* to the pupils.

Working on and restoring classic cars was one of his favourite activities, and he was happy to share his knowledge and experiences with other enthusiasts.

He was delighted when he returned from London to Scotland to make his home here, and he developed a great affection for our village and the local area. Although Robbie preserved his privacy, when he came down to the village he was always genial to all he encountered; as a village celebrity and as a private resident he felt a real affinity with Killearn, where he will be much missed by the community. BP



## May Moreland 1932 – 2022

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May first met Iain (also known as John) at Dalziel High School. They married in 1952, signalling a loving partnership which lasted almost 70 years. Three children – Jimmy, Meg and Johnny – were born to make their family complete. May was essentially a loving mother and homemaker; she was a naturally warm and outgoing person who gathered a large circle of friends wherever they lived. Iain's work necessitated several moves around England and frequent absences from home, and May would often step in for his fatherly duties until he returned home.

When the family returned to Scotland and settled in Glasgow, May had more opportunity to further her love of the arts, in particular the theatre, opera and ballet, and served on support groups of Scottish Ballet and Scottish Opera, where she was chairperson of the Friends of Scottish Opera and also served on the Scottish Opera board for several years. She was able to convince Iain to share her love of Wagner and together they would travel to see the Ring Cycle wherever it was performed – even overseas.

She had a strong social conscience, abhorring injustice, and was an active supporter of Hillhead Labour Party until the Iraq war ended her association.

On Iain's retirement, the decision was made to move to the country, but to remain within easy reach of Glasgow. They came to Killearn in 1995 and settled in Drumbeg Loan, quickly making friends and entering into the life of the village. May became a member of the Monday

Club and joined bridge groups and a book club. She was a great reader and lover of books. She also became a regular member of Killearn Kirk and greatly valued the fellowship that the church provided.



As the years passed May's health took a downward turn and it became impossible for her to remain at home. She moved to Mugdock Care Home where she lived for several years thanks to the care and compassion of the staff. As well as her family, her circle of friends visited faithfully, and it is a tribute to her own warm and caring personality that she had so many regular visitors.

May was loved by all who knew her. Her family was paramount in her affection, but her large circle of friends, gathered and retained over her lifetime, was a testament to her warm and caring personality; her ready smile and ease of conversation and her caring nature will live on in their memories. To Iain and her family, her passing brings great sadness, but also the remembrance of the qualities of her personality that she brought to all around her.

BP

## Moira Brownlee 1950 – 2022

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Moira was born in Killearn to Peggy and Jimmy Young, and was the youngest of their five daughters. Her parents lived then at Croy Cunningham and worked for the Campbells at Croy Cunningham farm. She married David Brownlee with whom she had two daughters, Lorraine and Donna. Sadly David died young and she later teamed up with Peter Gibb, a happy partnership which lasted over 42 years.

Moira has been described as a stalwart of the village. If you didn't know her name, you knew her face. She was regularly behind the counter of the Spar, when it replaced Murray's store, starting early in the mornings to take

in and sort the newspapers and working until the store closed in the evening. She was, at one time, a lollypop lady in the Main Street, behind the bar at the Old Mill and, what many people may not have known, for many years she did the laundering of the Killearn football team's strips. She was a hard and reliable worker.



Moira was also very much the centre of her family, and hers the home where everyone collected for traditional Christmas and New Year meals. She was, as her family has said, always there for them and her loss to them is immense.

BP

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## Sheila McNab 1942 – 2022

Sheila was born in Comliebank, the first child of Mollie and Lachlan MacKinnon. The family moved some four years later to Broomhill, Glasgow, and Sheila was educated at Hillhead School. In Broomhill she was much involved in the church, where she was a Sunday School teacher and also Tawny Owl in the local Brownies. Her fondness for children and her natural aptitude led her to Jordanhill College to train as a teacher. Her first post was a challenging one in Townhead School, and later she taught at Milngavie Primary and at Craighead Primary in Milton of Campsie.

She met Norman through mutual friends in her home church and they married in 1969. It was a most devoted and supportive partnership for over 50 years, blessed by the birth of a daughter, Kirsty, and a son, Kenneth, completing their family. Their first home was in Milngavie and from there they moved in 1975 to Killearn, and quickly settled into the life of the village.

Sheila was diagnosed with a serious neurological muscular condition in 1991. As this progressed she took early retirement from teaching but, for a number of years, was able to pursue a wide range of interests and activities with enthusiasm, giving pleasure to all around her. She had a natural talent in both art and music which brought her great joy. She was a founder member of the Strathendrick Singers, performing in their concerts for many years, and also had fun with her friends the 'Couthy Twangers', singing and playing folk music. She took classes in art at Strathclyde University and joined Drymen Art Club and, although characteristically modest, she revealed significant accomplishment and sensitivity in her paintings. She maintained a close connection with Killearn Kirk, at one time singing in the church choir and attending services regularly. She was an active member of the Guild, always greeting folk on the door at any Guild event.

As well as her trundles around Killearn, when a meeting with her was always such a pleasure, she and Norman enjoyed many travels abroad and in Scotland, particularly on the Kyle of Tongue and latterly in Skye, sharing their love of the mountain and coastal scenery.



Their often ambitious travels continued even when she was wheelchair-bound and led to some challenging and at times alarming adventures – being hoisted by a forklift truck onto a train in Lucerne and a bus in Alaska, dodging geysers in Yellowstone and trundling around the lip of the Grand Canyon. Once, on a train approaching Brussels, they were told to get off and continue their journey by bus, but were faced with the problem of being, at that point, over 100 feet below street level!

As well as being an intrepid traveller, Sheila was a woman of great kindness and with a deep love for humanity. Her long battle with decreasing mobility never showed in her ready smile and her delight in meeting people. Her upbeat spirit astounded all who knew her, and it was due to her own boundless positivity and determination, and with the unfailing support of her husband and family, that she was able to be active in the life of the village for so many years even as her health declined. Her legacy has been inspirational.

BP



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# Prize Christmas Crossword

Set by PeeWit

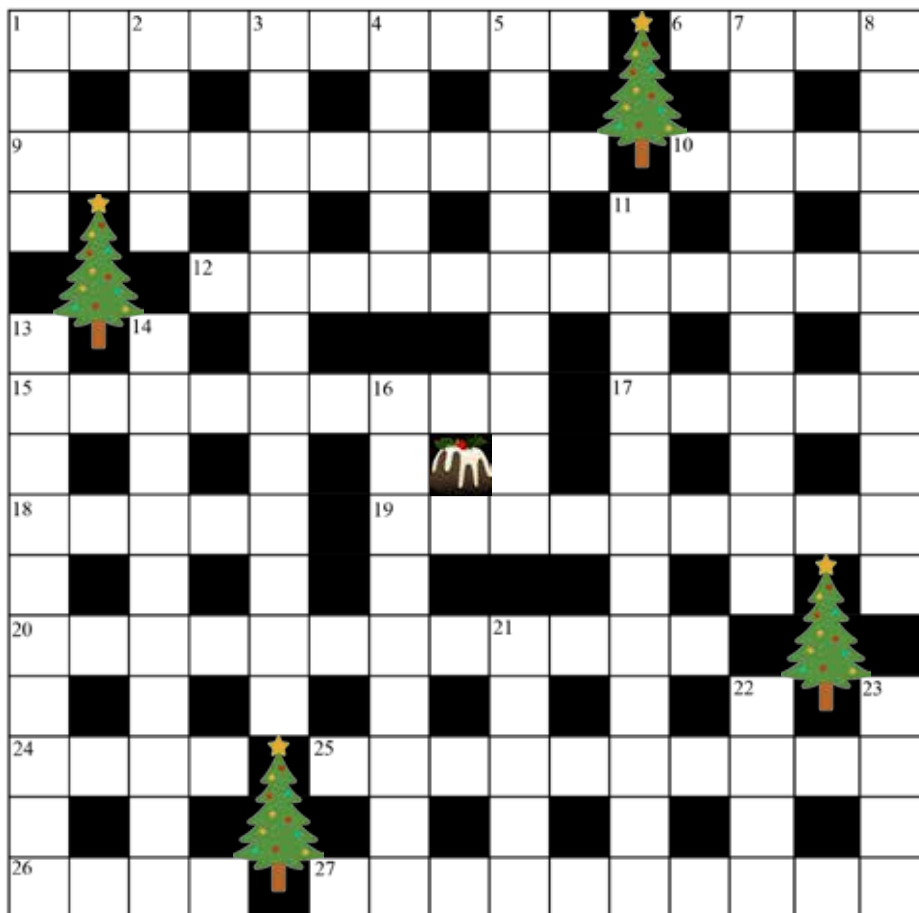
Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher to spend at the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank the Ambassador Theatre Group for its generosity in providing the prize for one of our competitions.

## ACROSS

- 1 Distorted when no form left (3, 2, 5)
- 6 Musical sign inside oracle font (4)
- 9 Met diarist about a nasty disease (10)
- 10 Sport to hit back (4)
- 12 Season to perform shy dramatics (9, 3)
- 15 Another love starts to visit country to find another (9)
- 17 Find answer to problem when five cut into fish (5)
- 18 He makes an effort to get right into a row (5)
- 19 Heard at Woodstock? (4, 5)
- 20 Against French wine said singly and decisively (12)
- 24 Final word when one man is back inside (4)
- 25 Freeze the beans for this drink (4, 6)
- 26 Place that sounds like a mess (4)
- 27 About gifts at 12, that's what it means! (10)

## DOWN

- 1 Chances not even (4)
- 2 Small lake northern rodent swims up (4)
- 3 Scatty person light on the grey matter (7, 5)
- 4 Girl I hide maybe (5)
- 5 Team sport to colour a globe (8)
- 7 Shipping journal about silly dolts (6, 4)
- 8 Coin is half a nicker (5, 5)
- 11 Sweet bog plants (5, 7)
- 13 Can assault break this visitor on 12 (5, 5)
- 14 Allocation of sets naming another way (10)
- 16 From beginning to end a living bike ride (4, 5)
- 21 Lowest point new drain (5)
- 22 A cooler supporter (1, 3)
- 23 Tread back with furry friends (4)



Lucky winner of our last crossword was Catherine Frew, Killearn.

Solution to the last crossword: Across: 1 less, 4 end, 6 fare, 8 relative, 9 evil, 10 mass-produce, 12 echo sounder, 15 oil painting, 19 fête, 20 closeted, 21 tons, 22 son, 23 east. Down: 2 elevated, 3 snaps, 4 emigres, 5 dread, 6 fleeced, 7 rail, 11 princess, 13 heiress, 14 unicorn, 16 Picts, 17 theme, 18 zero.

**A pangram crossword is one that contains every letter of the alphabet in the solution. Is this a pangram, and if not, what letters are missing? Send us your answer using the instructions in the box below.**

## Children's Prize Wordsearch

Find 10 words in the word search grid that are related to the Christmas season.

Eight of the words are: *Bethlehem, decorations, mincemeat, nativity, presents, pudding, reindeer, tree.*

Find the other two words, write them down and post them or email them to the *Courier* for a chance to win a £10 voucher.

Please give your name, your age and a contact address or telephone number. Entrants must be 12 or under.

Instructions for sending it are given in the box below.

We urge everyone who tries our competitions to send in an entry – it's easy! Winners are selected at random from those received, so everyone has a chance to win. Email your solution(s) to [peewit@kfc.co.uk](mailto:peewit@kfc.co.uk), or drop it in the postbox outside the Village Hall. Remember to give your name, address and a contact phone number before **4 December 2022**.

C L J W B E U S M A A I  
 D S H F S E C I J M D N  
 B L W Y I R S N C E M M  
 I O Y L G T A T C H I S  
 X R B P L T L O F E N K  
 J A Y E I F R R L L C B  
 G C T V W A Z A N H E M  
 J O I D T A I D R T M Y  
 E T R I B D M S J E E Q  
 Y H O R P L R Z F B A S  
 O N M P U D D I N G T V  
 S L N Z R E E D N I E R

Winner of our last wordsearch was Arthur Maxwell, age 9

## Choose Tobacco

This year I gave myself the goal of attracting a very special creature to the garden. I knew from the outset it was a long shot but, if nothing else, it could enhance my horticultural skills...

What on earth am I talking about? Well, there is a moth called *Convolvulus Hawkmoth*. It's a huge thing with an 11cm wingspan and a chunky, striped body to boot. In flight it appears bat-sized, even small bird-sized. All in all it's a monster of a migrant from the continent that occurs each year in Britain in varying numbers, mainly on the south and east coasts of England. Annual numbers in Scotland are much smaller, mostly on the east coast and northern isles. Thus an inland location such as Killearn offered little promise of a sighting. In fact Stirlingshire had just a scattering of historical records up to 1964, then one in 2011– and nothing since. The odds were clearly not in my favour.

But there was one thing I could try: the tobacco plant (*Nicotiana*). The scent from the pink and maroon flowers of these tall plants attracts hawkmoths. The tubular flowers might have been designed for them, with their nectar buried deep inside so that only a long proboscis – something this hawkmoth most certainly has – can reach it.



Starting in February, I grew them from seed and at each stage the casualty rate was significant so that by early June, from hundreds of seeds, I was left with just five surviving plants to harden off and move outside

permanently. It was a time-consuming process (none of this comes naturally to me!) and initially looked as if it may all have been in vain, with no hawkmoth activity witnessed during the summer evenings.

Then, after dark on 8 September, I was in the garden checking buddleia for signs of insect activity. Conditions were far from promising and heavy rain quickly had me soaked. Heading back indoors, a cursory glance at the *Nicotiana* saw

raindrops bouncing off my prized flowers. But wait. What was that? Something massive whirred around them, wheeling up in the air one moment, diving back down the next. The pilot then switched to a controlled hover and moved methodically between plants. At each one it fired a ridiculously disproportionate proboscis (several times longer than its body) deep into the flower for a few seconds, before rewinding it, slightly less elegantly, into its head.



*Convolvulus Hawkmoth*! I couldn't believe it. It was huge, it was on show and it was there for ages. I watched and marvelled at it, following it around the plants and filming it with my phone. The resultant video stills don't do it justice. The fast, humming wingbeats are invisible without an equally fast shutter speed. But hopefully you get some idea of what I was watching.

Amazingly, the moth came back three more nights to plunder the plants. Like it, I may now be addicted to *Nicotiana*...

MARTIN CULSHAW

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the spring edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed on 18 March 2023.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 27 January 2023.

Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 27 January 2023.

Please send them to:

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email: [courier@kfc.co.uk](mailto:courier@kfc.co.uk)

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