



# Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 58

SPRING 2024

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# Noticeboard

19 Mar **Strathendrick Stitchers** Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Talk by Alison Templeton, ‘Stitching, Weaving and Printing’ at 11am. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome; first visit free. Contact [strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com).

20 Mar **Golden Years Club** Annual dinner (tbc). **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ([fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk](mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk)).

21 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling** Lecture by Karin Fernald, ‘The Blue Hour: Painting the North’. The Barracks, Stirling, FK8 1QZ, 11am. [www.theartsociety.org.uk](http://www.theartsociety.org.uk)

21 Mar–9 Apr **Strathendrick Stitchers** Annual Exhibition. Drymen Library during regular library hours.

24 Mar **Strathendrick Singers** Spring Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7.30pm. Gioachino Rossini’s *Petite Messe Solennelle*. Soloists accompanied by piano and accordion. Tickets from choir members, on the door and from [chair@strathendricksingers.org.uk](mailto:chair@strathendricksingers.org.uk).

28 Mar **Drymen & District Local History Society** Talk by Alastair Eckersall, NTS Property Manager/Ranger naturalist, ‘Ben Lomond: history of the mountain and the surrounding area’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. [www.drymen-history.org.uk](http://www.drymen-history.org.uk)

29 Mar **Killearn Health Centre** Closed.

1 Apr **Killearn Health Centre** Closed.

5 Apr **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Downton Abbey – a New Era*. Balfour High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.

13 Apr **West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers** Talk by Christine Borland: ‘Flax Turns, foundation cloth’. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am start. New members and visitors welcome. Visit [weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk](http://weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk) or contact the secretary ([weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com](mailto:weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com)).

**Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

16 Apr **Strathendrick Stitchers** Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. The AGM (10.30am) will be followed by a workshop at 11am: ‘Blue Squares’. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. First visit free. Contact [strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com](mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com).

17 Apr **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ([fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk](mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk)).

18 Apr **The Arts Society Stirling** Lecture by Steve King, ‘The Story Behind the Song’. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am.

17,19 & 20 Apr **FADs** *Mr Moonlight* by Kim Millar and *The Book Club of Little Witterington (After the Fete)* by Joan Greening. 7 for 7.30pm. Visit [www.fintrydrama.org.uk](http://www.fintrydrama.org.uk) for tickets and times.

28 Apr **Drymen & District Local History Society** Members Night and AGM. Short contributions by members of the Society, followed by a brief AGM. Meeting starts with cheese and wine at 7pm. Drymen Village Hall, [www.drymen-history.org.uk](http://www.drymen-history.org.uk)

3 May **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Sixth Sense*. Balfour High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.

6 May **Killearn Health Centre** Closed.

11 May **West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers** AGM (all previous minutes available upon request) 10.30am. ‘Rings and Things’ workshop for the 2025 exhibition. CE Centre, Milngavie G62 8PN, 10am start. New members and visitors welcome. See 13 April for contact details.

**Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

15 May **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ([fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk](mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk)).

16 May **The Arts Society Stirling** Lecture by Paul Roberts, ‘Ancient Faces: Petrie and Mummy Portraits’. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am. [www.theartsociety.org.uk](http://www.theartsociety.org.uk)

18 May **Killearn Horticultural Society** Plant sale and coffee morning. Village Hall, 10am–12noon. Schedule of classes for Annual Show on sale. For further info and updates, see [www.facebook.com/killearnhorti](http://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti) or [www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk](http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk).

21 May **Strathendrick Stitchers** Outing (tbc).

8 Jun **Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

19 Jun **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ([fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk](mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk)).

20 Jun **The Arts Society Stirling** lecture by Mark Cottle, ‘A Photographic Odyssey: Shackleton’s Endurance Expedition’. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am.

13 Jul **Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

10 Jul **Golden Years Club** Annual outing (tbc).

18 Aug **Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.

31 Aug **Killearn Horticultural Society** 158th Annual Show. Village Hall and Kirk Hall, 2pm–4.30pm. Scarecrow competition in car park. For further info, see [www.facebook.com/killearnhorti](http://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti) or [www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk](http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk).

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

## Killearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

### MONDAY

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

### TUESDAY

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

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

**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).

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

### 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).

**Lynda Turner School of Dance:** 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, 2.10pm–2.50pm. Contact Clare ([claremondaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:claremondaymusic@gmail.com)).

**Linda Turner School of Dancing:** Main Hall, 4pm–4.45pm. Dance classes for children of all ages. Contact Lynda (770390; [geolyn2000@hotmail.com](mailto:geolyn2000@hotmail.com)).

**Dance with Julie:** Garden Room, 5.30pm–7pm. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; [jjsymmonds36@gmail.com](mailto:jjsymmonds36@gmail.com)).

### FRIDAY

**Dancercise (adult 50+ fitness class):** 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)).

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

## Editorial

Hello and welcome to our first issue for 2024 – a New Year, with emphasis on ‘New’.

Cala have been working away at Ballagan Woods, and this will eventually see 89 houses of various designs – bungalows, semi-detached and detached houses – as well as space for a playpark and a common. There will be a safe pedestrian and cycle path from the Cala site to the village.

Permission has also been granted to build 11 dwellings on Lampson Road at its junction with Station Road, and this is scheduled to go ahead this spring.

In addition to these builds, there are also the occasional houses being built elsewhere on spare ground and back gardens.

Then there is the recent announcement that 23 acres including the Devil’s Pulpit is for sale along with planning permission for, among other structures, a visitor’s centre with a parking for 150 cars.

So there are lot of changes in the offing for 2024!

Killearn is a good place to live, but we always knew that. The village is blessed with a community spirit and will overcome any potential issues associated with the influx of some 200 plus adults, associated children, cars and, no doubt, the occasional dog!

We have one shop, one pub, a chemist, a health centre and a primary school all of which will be affected by the increase in population; car parking could also be a bit of a problem. We have, however, a wonderful Village Hall, and we have innumerable active organisations, services and clubs which will no doubt see an increase in members. Other businesses in the village will, hopefully, benefit, too.

We have travelled this road in the past. We no longer refer to Buchanan Views as ‘the new houses’ or the occupants as ‘the new people’. They are now very much part of our community, ready to get stuck in. The same will happen with the new ‘new people’. Killearn is like that. Who knows, perhaps there’s a budding journalist among them!

Meanwhile, never fear. the *Courier* team, our contributors, deliverers and advertisers are still in place, as you will see when you enjoy this issue.

Have a great New Year.

lan

### Cover Image

Our cover photo of the War Memorial was taken by David McKay and remains his copyright. Our thanks to David for permission to use his image.

### News in brief

Past editions of the *Courier* are now available as ‘flip books’ online. Revisit all your favourite times, review who won the 10k, check out the Horti entries. Revisit the wine shelf... Visit [kfcf.co.uk/courier.html](http://kfcf.co.uk/courier.html).

Join us in supporting Start Up Stirling Foodbank (SC035477) at art4you Scotland’s spring exhibition, showcasing local landscapes, landmarks and animals from Friday, 19 April to Sunday, 21 April. As we celebrate Start Up Stirling’s 30th anniversary, your attendance at this special event will contribute to our local community, making it a meaningful and impactful occasion. Immerse yourself in the beauty of our region while supporting a great cause.

The denizens of Silverton, Devon, lost their 700-year-old oak tree in January. Apparently, it simply keeled over, with a minimum of fuss and damage. It would be terrible to lose our Playpark Oak, the last remaining and largest of three. There are many venerable trees in Killearn, and if you have a favourite one, do let the Killearn Natural History Project know ([heritage@kfcf.co.uk](mailto:heritage@kfcf.co.uk)).

Two Killearn art teaching businesses have – quite independently – been selected as finalists for the prestigious ‘Business in the Community’ 2024 award, presented by *The Scotsman* newspaper.

Kari and Pete Morrison launched **innovate create** in February 2023, delivering art workshops for primary school-aged children on Mondays and Tuesdays in the Kirk Hall. Their programme has been hugely well received, so Kari (creative workshop developer) and Pete (professional artist), who live in the village, plan expand the business in coming months.

The other finalist is **art4you**, a well-established, award-winning art school based at Oakwood Garden Centre, Killearn.

The *Courier* wishes both these enterprises well and will report more fully in a future issue.



Charlotte Jones married Jared Ehret on 27 January in Duns. Charlotte lived in Killearn until going to Edinburgh University where the couple met. They now live in London.

### Letter to the Editor

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Dear Sir

No wonder the pavements of Killearn are in such a poor state of repair. When you get selfish, lazy and thoughtless acts, as detailed in the attached picture, it becomes all too clear. Not to mention the stream of invective issuing from this man’s mouth when I took the picture.

Continuing to walk past such incidents without comment will result in an increasing number of such events. I say name them and shame them. The only trouble is, I do not know his name!

FAIR SKUNNERED OF MAIN STREET

### Young–Davies

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Carenza Young and Rhys Davies were married on 17 February at the Coul House Hotel, Ross and Cromarty.

Carenza grew up in Killearn and attended the primary school and Balfour High School, and Rhys is from Inverness.

The couple met while studying at the University of the Highlands and Islands, and are making their home in Inverness.



# Well Done, Killearn



Killearn has once again shown its compassionate side.

The Advent Windows raised a stonking £1,612.39 for Shelter Scotland.

This includes all the generous contributions via Gift Aid and the QR code.

Furthermore, £781.11 was raised for CHAS – the Children’s Hospice Association Scotland. Thank you!



## turnip the beet



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# The Weather Channel

The year 2023 was memorable in the UK for a warm dry spring and early summer, very like 2022. This was followed by a poor summer, with rain and cloud predominant in the west of Scotland.

Killlearn residents will no doubt remember waking up on Saturday, 12 December, to an early snowfall of half an inch, but the year was most memorable for a succession of autumnal and early winter storms that caused a great deal of damage across the UK.

Storm Agnes arrived in September, with flooding and winds reaching 79mph in the south of England. Storm Babet followed in October, when Angus and Aberdeenshire felt the effects of 70–100mm (4ins) of rain falling on already wet ground. In early November, Storm Ciaran battered the south coast of England and the Channel Islands, destroying some sea defences. Then Storm Debi arrived on 4 November, with winds reaching 70mph on the east coast of Scotland. Finally, on 27 December Storm Gerrit brought snow, high winds and heavy rain to much of Scotland. Homes were flooded and travel disrupted.

At the time of writing, January 2024 alone has already seen Storms Henk, Isha and Joselyn.

Readers of this column and those who have observed coverage on TV or in newspapers of the increase in extreme weather events across the world (wildfires, floods and hurricanes), may not have seen much coverage of a less flamboyant feature of climate change: the rise in sea levels.

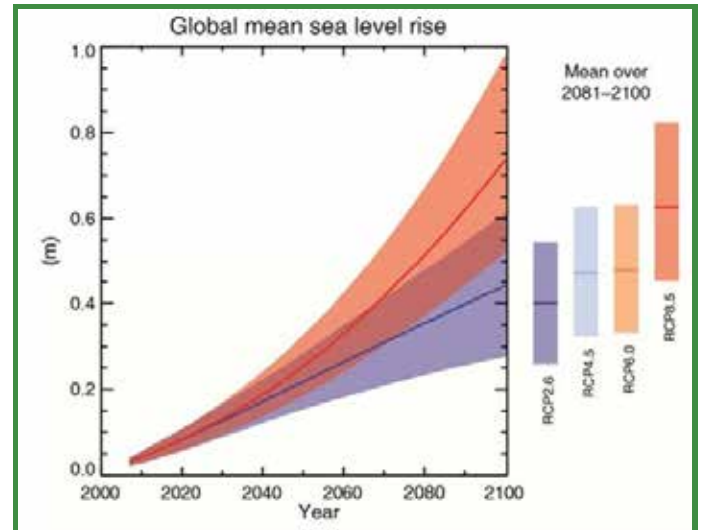
Scientists are becoming increasingly worried about this phenomenon. The three main causes of sea level rise are:

- thermal expansion of the oceans as they warm
- the addition of water from glacier and ice sheet melt
- changes in land water storage.

Local sea levels may increase differently from an overall global figure, but the Met Office reports that a global mean sea level rise of 20cms has occurred between 1901 and 2018. Although 20cms appears a small amount, many major cities around the globe are located on the

coast, and such a rise is already causing problems in some locations, as well as increasing the likelihood of coastal flooding events during periods of high tides.

Furthermore the rise in sea level is accelerating as the Earth continues to warm. Indeed, we are already committed to a continued rise in sea level from the thermal expansion mechanism.



Sea levels are predicted to rise as glaciers and ice sheets melt, and ocean water warms and expands. By the end of the century, sea levels are likely to rise by between 26 and 82cm. The mean sea level rise predicted under the IPCC's low emissions scenario is 40cm, while a high emissions scenario could result in an average of 63cm of sea level rise. RCP represents greenhouse gas concentrations.

Many of the processes that lead to sea level rise are well understood by scientists. However, the rise due to ice loss from the Greenland and the Antarctic ice sheets is less well understood, and the uncertainty increases if warming is greater than expected because of continued high emissions.

NASA has developed a tool that allows you to explore project sea level rises using the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scenarios ([sealevel.nasa.gov/data\\_tools/17](https://sealevel.nasa.gov/data_tools/17)).

So what can we expect if sea level rise continues,

Yearly Summary for Killlearn (2023)												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Highest Temp	10.3	10.6	15.8	17.3	24.2	28.9	24.2	22.4	26.6	15.8	12	11.3
Lowest Temp	-4.1	-3.5	-6.7	-2.4	4.2	5.3	6.6	7.3	6.6	-1	-4.3	-3.8
Mean Temp	4	6.1	4.8	7.8	11.8	15.7	14.1	14.5	13.4	8.9	5.1	4.9
Days Below Freezing	8	4	12	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	8
Highest Wind Gust	31	36	20	21	23	15	26	28	18	39	34	41
Monthly Rain	136.2	52.2	120.8	61	31.2	57.6	104.6	48.4	126.6	139.8	72.6	146.4
Most Rain in 24 hrs	19	9.8	26.6	24	16	12.8	16.4	6.2	23.2	51.6	18.4	40.6
Days without Rain	9	11	11	18	22	14	6	9	7	10	10	4
Cumulative Rainfall	136.2	188.4	309.2	430	461.2	518.8	623.4	671.8	798.4	850	922.6	1069

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



as is predicted by the IPCC? Probably the erosion of beaches, the loss of marshland, inundation of deltas and widespread flooding (Bangladesh is a critical case). Low-level islands in many parts of the world such as the Maldives may become uninhabitable, and South Pacific nations like Tuvalu will disappear altogether. Cities or even major rivers could experience increased occurrence of flooding and tidal surges.

In the UK, using the RCP2.6 projection in NASA's Sea Level Projection Tool, by 2050 when the UK hopes to be carbon neutral, we might already be seeing a total sea level rises of 17cm in Lerwick, 19cm in Aberdeen, 17cm at Rosyth, 14cm in Millport and 16cm in Stornoway. With a projected rise of 22cm (over 6.5in) at Tower Pier in London, another Thames Barrier may be needed to protect the capital. And this is the most optimistic IPCC projection.

Our hilly location in Killlearn looks safe. However, we will see a call in other parts of the UK for an increase in dykes, seawalls, storm surge barriers, breakwaters, beach-dune systems and costly changes to the built environment. Perhaps more homes built close to cliffs, as in Hemsby in Norfolk (<http://tinyurl.com/3s36atzw>), may be lost to the rising tides and the erosion of the cliff face.

Sea level rise is a serious hazard globally, and here in the UK, tackling the challenges it will pose is going to need long-term planning and investment.

TOM RENFREW

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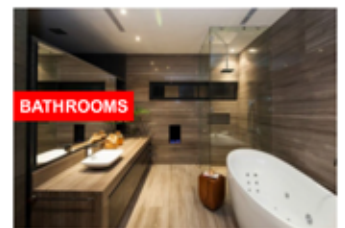
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### Three evenings of one-act plays in April

Every year, FADS enters a play into the British One-Act Play Festival for community drama and this year, it's *Mr Moonlight* by award-winning screenwriter Kim Millar.

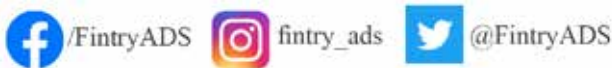
Set in the Barrowlands Ballroom, this is the story of how Frankie Vaughan's life-long affinity for Glasgow and its people might have come about. When heart-throb, hit-maker and Hollywood star Frankie Vaughan intervened in gang warfare on the streets of Easterhouse in the 1960s, some people dismissed it as a publicity stunt by a vain do-gooder intent on nothing more than selling records. In reality, having come from nothing himself, he understood the problems facing communities blighted by gangs and thought he could do something to help these young people. And he did.

While *Mr Moonlight* hopefully progresses through the competition, we're also putting on a second one-act play, *The Book Club of Little Witterington (After The Fete)* by Joan Greening.

The ladies of the village book club have gathered in Jenny's sitting room to discuss Nevil Shute's *On The Beach*. However, most of them seem far more interested in gossiping about events at the recent village fete – in particular, a certain book club member's liaison with the local vicar...

Both plays will be performed on three evenings: Wednesday, 17 April and Friday and Saturday, 19–20 April. Doors open at 7pm and curtain up at 7.30pm. The running time for each play is under an hour, so we should finish around 9.30pm.

Tickets are available online via our website at [www.fintrydrama.org.uk](http://www.fintrydrama.org.uk). Stay up to date with all our news by subscribing to our blog at [www.fintrydrama.org.uk/subscribe](http://www.fintrydrama.org.uk/subscribe).



## The Press Gang

Half way through the year here at Killearn Primary School, and here are just some of the amazing things we have been doing.

### Christmas Show

During the early weeks of December, the whole school put together an amazing Christmas Nativity for parents and citizens to watch. The P7s put together a band with many extraordinary instruments. Every class chose two songs and put actions and dance moves in. Killearn Primary put it all together in just under a month. They performed it three times in two days, with the audience of parents and citizens of Killearn. This took a lot of hard work from all the students, staff and some helpful parents.

### Robert Burns

So as we all know, 25 January is Burns Day which is a significant day here at Killearn Primary School. We learned about Robert Burns, his poems and Scotland's culture as a whole. Every class had learned a different poem, and each class picked three winners. It was judged by another member of staff who decided the winner for that class. All the winners competed against each other to decide on a whole school winner, who got their name on the Jean Pairman Award.

### General school stuff

The start of a new term for Killearn Primary has started well with the P2s and P3s learning how to use a Chromebook with the help of their P7 Buddies (The Hairy Monsters), and have just logged onto 'Hairy Reading' on the google site 'Nessy Learning'. P7s have also been learning coding with Scratch, an online, child-friendly coding website. Chromebooks are being used more frequently in our school.

### Sports

Many sports happen all round the school. For example, lacrosse club, football, cross-country, hockey and many more. Near Christmas, Mrs McLean and Miss McKie organised a lacrosse team. At the beginning of December, the team was eventually chosen, and the team are practising every week at Tuesday lunchtimes. There is a competition coming up for the lacrosse team and the cross-country.

CLAUDIA TOAL, ABBIE SIM,  
KELLAN MORRISON AND MATTHEW WALKINSHAW

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## More Mad Ferrets, Please



We were really pleased to host the Mad Ferret Band at the Village Hall at the end of January. What a resounding success that was!

And we're looking for ideas for other events, particularly fundraising events that we can bring to the hall. Times are hard for everyone just now, and we're feeling it at the hall too, so we are looking to raise income.

We've made a start by boosting our wedding advertising, providing more wedding information on the website – we are especially keen to continue encouraging our guests to use local suppliers. We're also opening up weddings to accommodate not only the Kitchen Window, but also to other caterers whom couples might like to involve.

We're keen to have more regular customers, including classes and groups, so do come and chat to us and we'll see if we can find you a regular slot in the main hall or garden room.

What about parties? You love a party. We totally love a party. So why not come and talk to us? We're on your doorstep and we're keen to help – come and chat or email us at [killearnvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:killearnvillagehall@gmail.com), and we can all have a party!

Let's work together to bring more events to the Village Hall!

FIONA RENNIE

## Malawi Group Goes to Market

On a dry February Saturday morning, the Killearn Malawi Group held another very successful jumble sale. A queue of hopeful bargain hunters stretched from the Kirk Hall almost to the Village Hall. Inside, a band of willing helpers managed a hall full of clothes, toys, games, books, DVDs, CDs and bric-a-brac, all about to find new homes. The group would like to thank the volunteers who helped sort the mountain of jumble and staffed the stalls, the people who so generously donated items and, finally, everyone who came and parted with their cash.

The sale raised over £2,000 towards its projects, which include the financing of the construction of a girls' hostel for Nkhande Community Day Secondary School. The group has also provided aid to alleviate the effects of severe weather events in Malawi.

Regular shipments of much needed items are sent to Muzuzu in northern Malawi via the Banana Box Trust.



Donations of good clothes, educational material and the like are always welcome.

Contact [info@killearnmalawigroup.org](mailto:info@killearnmalawigroup.org) for details of how to donate, and keep a look out for future fundraising events on [www.facebook.com/KillearnMalawiGroup](https://www.facebook.com/KillearnMalawiGroup) or the noticeboards.

## Killearn Active Travel Paths Project Update

We started 2024 on the Killearn Active Travel Path project by welcoming some new faces to the working group. They will be helping progress both this and the Killearn to Balfron Active Path.

We'd also like to thank Kenneth Alexander, who is retiring from the Killearn to Balfron path project, for all his hard work.

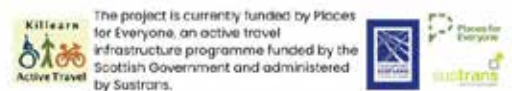
What is an active path? A path that provides the ability for people to walk, cycle or wheel (mobility scooters, prams, etc.) from A to B.

Both the Killearn Active Travel Path project and the Killearn to Balfron Active Path project are at Sustrans stages 0–2. We will continue to work with Sustrans on meeting their deliverables, and we hope to hold a further consultation with the village. Both projects will be coming to the end of stages 0–2 this year, and we would like to be able to take them to the next stage.

Last year, an advisory meeting of local businesses and groups was held and further meetings will take place this year. The Killearn Active Travel event was held in September. Find out more at [killearnactivetravel.blog](http://killearnactivetravel.blog).

Community feedback is always important. Let us know if you have any comments on the projects or would like to get involved.

CAROLINE CARRICK



## Bridge by Zorro



As the winter season at Killearn Bridge Club draws to a close, we celebrated with our annual dinner at the Old Mill after an afternoon of bridge. Our team in the

Western District League has had mixed results so far, with maximum points for us in one match and maximum points for our opponents in the other. Hopefully our remaining matches will deliver more consistent results! New players are always welcome at the club, and if you wish to join us for Tuesday club nights or to get involved in bridge classes, please email us through the contact page of our website.

The focus in this issue is upon defence against suit contracts. Defending against a 4-spade contract, West leads ♥Q in the deal that follows. As East, what is your best hope of defeating the contract, and how should you play?

Dealer: South Vulnerable: Neither

♠ A K 5  
♥ 9 8 7 6  
♦ 9 4 2  
♣ A Q 6

North

West **Z** East

♠ 4  
♥ A K 5  
♦ 8 7 6 5  
♣ J 10 9 8 2

South

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

\* With 13 points, North must respond, and a 'holding' bid of 2C is the best option, despite being associated with a 3-card suit. This allows South to provide more information about their hand. Answers on Page 45.

## Killearn Heritage Trail – Natural History Project



The Killearn Heritage Trail is developing a Natural History section of its website – describing what is special about our local environment, flora and fauna.



Do you know about fungi? Can you help?

These mushrooms were photographed in the village. Do you know what species they are – and what their features are?



If you can help us identify and prepare fact sheets on common fungi, please email us at [heritage@kfcf.co.uk](mailto:heritage@kfcf.co.uk).



## Health Centre News

Killearn Health Centre is delighted to have a new GP partner on board. Dr Aodhan Glynn qualified from Aberdeen University in 2011. He was a GP trainee at Killearn health centre from 2017 and has been a regular face at the practice since.

Alasdair MacDonald, our Practice Manager, has left to pursue a new business adventure, and we wish him the very best of luck.

Kelly McDonald has taken over as practice manager. She has been working at the health centre for seven years, starting on reception and progressing to Office Manager, a position she enjoyed for almost three years before taking over from Alasdair in January.



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## Affordable Housing Development in Killearn

Rural Stirling Housing Association (RSHA), a registered social landlord delivering affordable homes in rural Stirlingshire, is working with McTaggart Construction on a new housing development of 11 properties in Killearn. The development site is located to the west of Lampson Road, with construction scheduled to start in early spring following preliminary electrical diversion works by Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks.

The new, energy-efficient development is expected to be completed and ready for occupation in summer 2025.

The 11 properties will comprise four one-bedroom cottage flats, four two-bedroom cottage flats and one four-bedroom bungalow, all of which will be managed by RSHA for social rent. There will also be two three-bedroom, two-storey houses for sale under the Scottish Government's New Supply Shared Equity scheme (NSSE).

Tenancies for the affordable rent properties will be assigned in accordance with RSHA's allocations policy, details of which can be found at [rsha.org.uk](http://rsha.org.uk), where housing applications can also be made. Applicants can also request an application pack via post by calling RSHA (01786 841101).

Details of the NSSE scheme, including eligibility to purchase, can be found on the Scottish Government's website at [mygov.scot/new-supply-shared-equity-scheme](http://mygov.scot/new-supply-shared-equity-scheme).

## Village Local Place Plan is Your Plan

As many of you will know, KCC, Killearn Trust and KCFC have joined forces to complete a local place plan for Killearn. This is something requested by Stirling Council, and as such, will feed into their next Local Development Plan.

But over and above that, we are very much hoping that information gathered will enable us, as a village, to make changes ourselves in response to your views.

We are currently engaged in gathering responses to the survey, which has been available since November, but is still very much live.

It can be accessed via the QR code on leaflets available from us, but you will also be able to find copies in the Village Hall.

There is also a link to the survey on the KCC website, and KCC have paper copies which we are very happy to give anyone who would prefer not to fill one in online.

The next phase, started in January, is for us to approach as many groups and businesses as possible (we wish the views of those working as well as living in Killearn), so we will be out and about at as many clubs and social events as possible, to ensure the views we have are truly representative.

There has been a good uptake of the survey so far, and we are hoping to share some initial information in the coming months, but we still need you!

If you have not yet taken part, please do. While we are keen to give Stirling Council the information they need to plan ahead, we are even more excited about the ideas which may come, to make changes as a community.

With many thanks to the KCC committee, KCFC and Killearn Trust for all their help.

ELIZABETH JONES  
KCC CHAIR



**Rural Stirling**  
Housing Association

**Do you need an affordable home ?**

Rural Stirling Housing Association aims to support local communities by providing quality homes at affordable rents for families, couples and single people in housing need.

We currently have over 670 rented houses and flats. Around 40 of these become available for rent each year. At present we have properties in the following communities:

Aberfoyle	Doune	Killin	Strathyre
Balfron	Drymen	Kinlochard	Stronachlachar
Buchlyvie	Gargunnoch	Kippen	Tyndrum
Callander	Gartmore	Lochearnhead	
Deanston	Killearn	Strathblane	

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha, Croftamie, and Drymen. Please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us to plan. For a downloadable application pack please visit our website [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk).

Rural Stirling Housing Association  
Stirling Road, Doune FK16 6AA

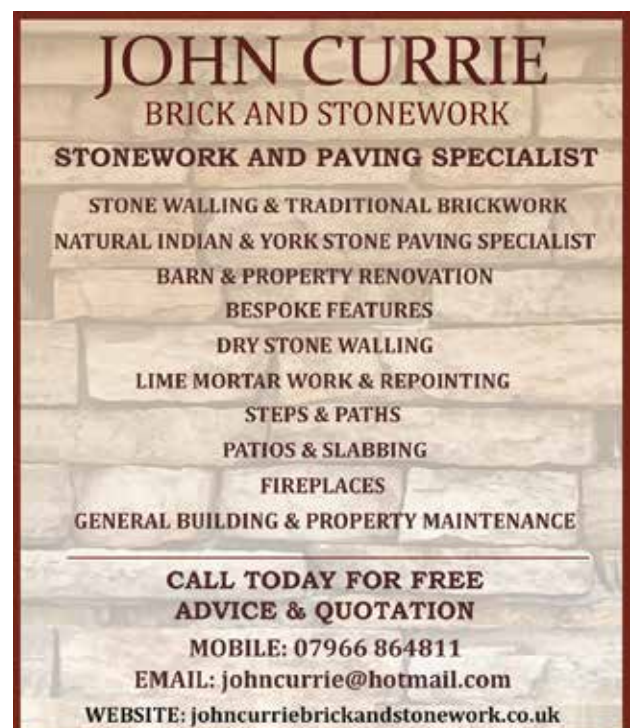
01786 841101  
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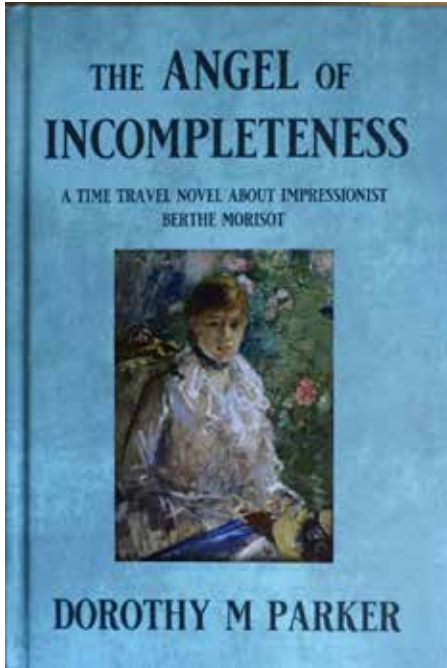
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## Local Author Praised for New Work

Aberfoyle author Dorothy Parker is highlighting an often overlooked female artist with her new book *The Angel of Incompleteness*, a time travel novel about Impressionist Berthe Morisot.

‘Berthe Morisot was one of the founder members of the Impressionists, but has been written



out of art history. I wrote this book to make more people aware of her fascinating life and beautiful paintings,’ she said.

It’s a time travel novel. A young modern woman copies one of Berthe Morisot’s paintings and finds herself on the other side of it, as its subject. She has time travelled through the painting into Berthe Morisot’s bedroom in Paris, 1871.

‘I thought it was fun to write a time travel story so that the reader could see what life was like at that time through modern eyes. It was a turbulent time in history, and I did a lot of research to get the details right. But really it’s a story of two women from two different centuries who help each other out,’ said Dorothy.

Reviews so far have called it a ‘fast paced page-turner’, ‘life



affirming and inspiring’ and ‘a thoroughly enjoyable plunge into the lives of the Impressionists’. After all, how often do novels combine self-discovery and quantum physics?

*The Angel of Incompleteness* is available on Amazon, or contact Dorothy at [dorothyparker2696@gmail.com](mailto:dorothyparker2696@gmail.com).

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## All Aboard!

Beatson Cancer Charity is bringing an information bus to Stirlingshire, as part of its regional awareness campaign.

The campaign – ‘Together Along the Way’ – has been devised to offer an information service to communities as the charity works towards ensuring no one goes through cancer alone. It will be the second location of the regional campaign tour, and the bus will be visible around Stirlingshire for a six-month period.

The charity has supported a number of patients within the Forth Valley health board through its specialist health and work service, bereavement support service, group programmes and befriending service.

The launch is in partnership with First Bus. The company gifted the charity a customised and bespoke double-decker bus, allowing the charity’s key messages to be seen and heard in communities. The bus has been transformed with the Beatson-branded yellow.

The pandemic highlighted a rise in isolation for cancer patients, the need for assistance with employment rights and advice on accessing benefits, access to bereavement support and support for patients facing the concerns associated with a cancer diagnosis or for those who experience fear regarding their cancer coming back. Charity staff and volunteers will be available on the bus to give information on the services offered and signpost people who require support.

For more information visit:  
[beatsoncancercharity.org/beatson-bus](https://beatsoncancercharity.org/beatson-bus).



# Beatson's BIG 10

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Beatson Cancer Charity. To celebrate this milestone, we'll be running events and raising awareness of the many ways we support people living with cancer. Thank you for being with us. Here's to the next 10!



Text **BIGTEN** to **70085**  
to donate £10\*

[beatsoncancercharity.org/big-10](https://beatsoncancercharity.org/big-10)

\* Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text BIGTENNOINFO instead.





## Adventures in the South Pacific, orangutans... and our impact on the environment

**We have been lucky enough to see some of the more remote and remarkable parts of our planet, but the impact of climate change, global warming and pollution is, sadly, to be seen everywhere.**

In 2020, my wife, Jackie, and I had booked to visit a friend who works for Birdlife International in Fiji, followed by an expedition around New Zealand. This was scuppered by the pandemic. Intrepid travellers that we are, we replanned the adventure for October 2023, replacing NZ with a trip to Vanuatu and Borneo.

We are widely travelled, but this was one of the more exotic and illuminating trips we have ever undertaken.

The forests, flora and fauna were magnificent, but the impact our species is having on our planet was only too plain to see. We are not naturalists, but we were happy to tag along with our professional ecologist friends.

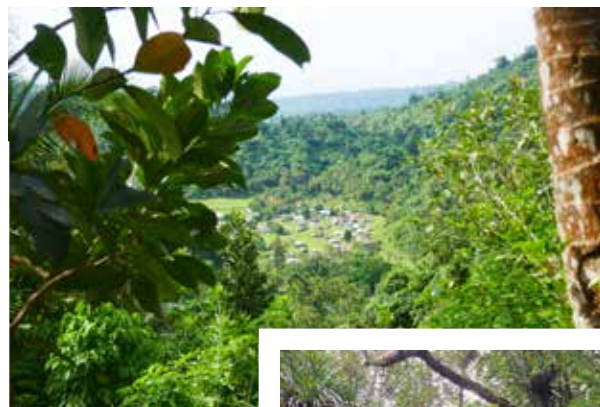
Fiji was magnificent: beautiful coasts, beaches and reefs; the friendliest people ever ‘Bula, bula’ (even when England beat them in the RWC quarter-final!); fascinating secondary forest and wildlife; and a curious cultural mix of ‘indigenous’ and Indo-Fijians.

A highlight of our

venture was to visit Espirito Santo – the second largest island of Vanuatu – to try and catch a glimpse of the rare Mountain Starling that only exists on a mountain range on this island.

We spent a few days in the capital, Luganville – a ribbon development on the coast, mostly consisting of breeze-block and corrugated iron buildings – preparing for our ‘expedition’.

On the back of two pickups, we left town and soon the tarmac road. Three hours later, bumping over forest tracks and across fords we arrived at Nayara, a native village on the Navaka River. Greeted by Chief Ronal, we met our local porters and guides and reorganised our packs. A four-hour trek up the valley followed, off road with umpteen crossings of the river until we reached Mataipevu – a remote traditional village of 800 people, with no vehicular access, but two schools and two churches: one Catholic, one Protestant. A legacy of Anglo-French colonialism means that one school teaches in English and the other in French!



We slept on floors in the French-speaking sector, hosted and fed by suitably wary villagers. The next morning our group set off up the mountain in search of the elusive Mountain Starling, which only exists above 1200m. The humidity was through the roof, the path had not been used since before the pandemic, but it had been cleared specially for us. The climb was steep, slippery and hugely challenging through jungle terrain.

After Day 1, Jackie and I decided to return to base where we spent a memorable two days making friends with our village hosts in pidgin French: diving into the river, singing songs and playing games. Three of our colleagues soldiered on with guides and porters, but well before reaching the summit they received an urgent radio message: ‘return to Base, without delay – a Category 5 Cyclone Lola is forecast’.



They had to retreat from their mission, and the next morning we all packed up and made our way back down to the road before rising rivers might cut us off.

We made it safely back to Laganville, where windows were taped and boarded, staff had been sent home and everyone hunkered down to see out the storm.

### OBSERVATION 1

**This was still October. The cyclone season does not usually begin until well into November. Such storms are becoming more frequent. Ocean surges threaten places like Laganville that lie only a metre or two above sea level.**



Fast-forward a couple of weeks and we are in Sabah, in the Malaysian part of Borneo – the world’s third largest island – famously rich with wildlife and natural history. After a few happy days in Kota Kinabalu, we set off overland to

Sepilok, the site of the Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre.

As we climbed out of the capital, the mountain road took us up towards the highlands, through mixed



woodlands, areas of small farms and hamlets. But then after two hours: wham! The natural vegetation stopped. As far as the eye could see in every direction the landscape was blanketed in groves of oil palm trees – complete monoculture for mile upon mile upon mile. Yes, these crops provide employment and earn foreign currency, but some of the world’s richest and most valuable primary equatorial rain forest has now been systematically cleared on an industrial scale. And a single ubiquitous crop is an ecological time bomb.

### OBSERVATION 2

**We all enjoy the benefits of palm-oil in hundreds of everyday products such as cakes, biscuits, margarine, cooking oil, soaps, shampoos, cosmetics and cleaning products, but the impact on some of our planet’s virgin ecosystems is devastating.**



The orangutans were, of course, absolutely fantastic. We could have watched their interactions, gymnastics and human-like behaviours for hours. Tender mother-baby care and teenage misdemeanours looked oh-so familiar.



We moved on to Sandakan for another treat: glamping on Libaran ‘Turtle Island’ off the east coast. A nature reserve, this is a haven for green turtles, nesting naturally and protected in hatcheries from predators and poachers by park rangers. We watched in awe as these tiny, iconic creatures emerged from the sand to struggle down the beach towards the surf and an exciting, if uncertain, future.



Having enjoyed a blissful evening in this idyllic place, the next morning we took a stroll along the sand, well away from the well-kept camp and local village. A few hundred metres away everything changed. The pristine beach was littered with plastic and detritus everywhere.

Plastic bottles, fishing line, packaging and polythene bags, presumably washed ashore from Indonesia and Malaysia, or possibly even further afield, was strewn everywhere. Our camp area was cleaned regularly by the villagers, but vast tracts of ocean and coastline have become rubbish dumps.

### OBSERVATION 3

**We all know about the damage single use plastics and other pollutants are doing to the natural world, but seeing it first hand is really startling, frightening and depressing.**

If you would like to read more about our travels, you can visit: [jacandnick2015.blogspot.com](http://jacandnick2015.blogspot.com).



## Killlearn Beer Festival 2024



Hi folks! Yes it's that time of year again when we start preparations for the Killlearn Beer Festival (number 11), which will take place as usual at the Old Mill, Killlearn, on Saturday, 1 June, opening at the slightly early time of 2pm to accommodate the increases in attendance.

As with previous occasions, the festival is targeted not just at beer aficionados, but is also one for the wider community, with all family members welcome. In addition to enjoying the occasion itself, it's also an opportunity to raise money for a variety of local causes. To date, over £5,000 has been distributed to local causes these past 10 years.

As always, there will be a wide range of styles to cater for all tastes, while serving favourites from past events and local breweries. This year specifically, there will be a selection from a number of Borders breweries (including Cumberland beer from Jennings Brewery).

For more details nearer the event, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

## Scam Warnings

While I don't have any new forms of scam to alert readers to, I am still getting reports of a few folk being taken in by the usual suspects.

Once again please be alert to cold-callers who purport to represent 'Microsoft', 'BT' or 'Apple', or someone claiming to be from these or similar high-profile companies. The real ones are far too busy to be phoning a single individual from their many millions of customers! Be doubly suspicious if they try to encourage you to start making changes to your computer, tablet or phone, or letting them do so on your behalf.

There has been a spate of emails and text messages that look very authentic purporting to be from HMRC about tax, saying that you are due a tax rebate or refund and asking for your bank account details. HMRC will never send notifications of tax rebates by email or text, so never give out any financial information to these fraudsters. If in doubt, phone or text HMRC separately.

If you have reason to phone any company or the HMRC for help yourself – a contact that you initiate – always try to get the company to give you a reference number. Then, if they have to call you back, you can use that reference number to check their credentials in the same way that they are always keen to check yours when you want to speak to them.

These days, I'm afraid, you have to be healthily sceptical about any cold call.

DOUG ASHWORTH

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

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# STRATHENDRICK Classic & Sports Car Club



As our winter programme draws to a close, we looked back on 20 years of the Car Club – from the inaugural run as part of the Balforn 700 celebrations through visits to all corners of Scotland for away trips, Rotary sponsored tours, sociable meet-ups for Car-BQs, and displays at Killearn Village Hall and Drymen Show. We have produced our own quality magazine *Overdrive* for over 10 years and the *Courier* has graciously accepted articles in every issue since the 10th in 2008. Over that time the membership has grown steadily to nearly 50, and around half our members attend each event.

As in previous years, we have a full summer programme, starting with a Drive-it-Day run in April when we all try to get our cars out and share our love for interesting motor vehicles with the public and (in our



Start of run for Balforn 700 (2003)



Drymen Show 2022


case) raise some money for Strathcarron Hospice. In addition, there is an Austin Enthusiasts meeting, also in April, in Aberfoyle. Other events we plan to support in May are the Gartmore Gala and Drymen Show, where we hope the great weather over the last couple of years will be repeated. We also hope the weather will be kind for our May Awaydays.

As summer progresses we have lunch and evening runs planned, as well as another run for pre-1940 cars in July, which we hope will attract an interesting

mix of older vehicles. We are also trying to arrange an evening or weekend visit to a car collection.

If you would like to join us, you don't even *have* to have a car, just an interest in motoring. Get in touch by email at [SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com](mailto:SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com).

DOUG ASHWORTH, SECRETARY



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# The RSPB on Loch Lomondside

It has been 12 years since RSPB Scotland acquired the 237 hectares of land in Gartocharn that we now know as RSPB Loch Lomond. Since then, the team has been managing the site to benefit wildlife, surveying habitats and species, and making the site more accessible for people to visit.

Each season brings with it something new to discover. Making nature accessible through projects, events and educational activities has been at the core of the work in recent years, including the creation of the boardwalk and trails which connect the car park and Nature Hub to the loch shore.

The variety of habitats at RSPB Loch Lomond is what make it such an important and special place for wildlife. Iconic Scottish species like ospreys (in summer) and red squirrels are seen regularly, the bluebells in spring are awe inspiring, and the winter spectacle of geese roosting is wonderful to witness. The diversity of wildflowers in summer and the beautiful landscape surrounding the site make it a favourite destination for many people.

Conservation efforts are focused around managing the grassland for the wintering Greenland white-fronted geese. These geese are in huge decline, so areas where they feed and roost are important for the population's future.

Wetlands have been created onsite and areas cleared to encourage botanic diversity. Tackling invasive non-native plants takes up a lot of warden (and hardy volunteer) time over the spring and summer, as does ongoing wildlife monitoring and essential reserve maintenance.

2023 was a huge year for the reserve and one that will be difficult to match after undertaking two beaver translocations (one in January; one in November). More details of these can be found on the [@RSPBLochLomond](#) Facebook page where progress updates, upcoming events, wildlife sightings and remote camera highlights can also be found.



The reserve car park is open seven days a week, 9am until 5pm in winter, and at all times from April to the end of September. The car park is free for RSPB members and for Blue Badge holders. For other visitors there is a charge of £2 for up to one hour, then £1 for each additional hour (payable onsite via PayByPhone website or app). The charge includes use of all visitor facilities including the car park, toilets, trails and picnic areas, and helps RSPB Loch Lomond continue their vital conservation work.

Follow on social media: [@RSPBLochLomond](#) or get in touch via email ([loch.lomond@rspb.org.uk](mailto:loch.lomond@rspb.org.uk)).



# Police Report



## Community Issues

A theft by shoplifting occurred in the Co-op, when a quantity of alcohol was stolen. Enquiries continue. A resident was contacted by email advising her that her road tax had not been paid and requesting her contact details, and she later received a telephone call from someone purporting to be from her bank. Fortunately, this was recognised as a scam. Please be aware of scams.

## Trailer and Horsebox Security Special

Thefts of lightweight livestock and flat-bed trailers and horseboxes have been growing. Two such trailers have been stolen from the Killearn area. The following simple precautions may help to deter thieves. The best approach is to make your property a less attractive target.

### Physical security

Consider fitting your trailer or horsebox with a combination of several products such as a hitch lock anti-theft device, wheel clamps and locking wheel nuts. If your trailer is stored in a barn or on a hard concrete surface, an SBD-approved ground anchor with a heavy-duty chain with a high attack rating is another option. Close access gates at night or consider a vehicle bollard to provide an extra, visible deterrent.

### Record details

Keep a record of serial numbers, chassis and model numbers, and take note of any custom marks on the horsebox or trailer. Take colour photographs and video from several angles which will help identify your trailer.

## Security marking and tracking systems

Security marking your trailer or horsebox is another highly effective, visible deterrent to thieves. Fit a tracking device to the trailer or horsebox so it can be traced if stolen.

### Insurance

Check that you have adequate cover under your insurance for theft for your tack, including overnight shows away from home. More information can be found at [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com).

### Contact Details

PC Matt McCammon is the Ward Officer for the Forth and Endrick area. He is based at Balfroon Police Office and can be contacted at the office, on 101, or at [ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk](mailto:ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk). It is recommended that this email address is used by the local community for email contact, however this should not be used to report crimes.

We regularly publish appeals for information, updates about road closures and crime prevention advice on our social media channels:

- [www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision](https://www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision)
- [www.facebook.com/policescotland](https://www.facebook.com/policescotland)
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# Singing for All

On 16 December, members of the community and beyond got wrapped up and made their way to Balfroon Church to enjoy the festive and energetic Balfroon Community Singers Christmas Concert, led by the marvellous Anne Lee of Balfroon. A music teacher of over 30 years, Anne has volunteered her time and energy for the last 18 years to developing her three choirs – the Tiddlers (primary), the Middlers (high school) and the Bigglers (I'm sure you can figure this one out!). This season, she put together yet another wonderfully festive programme for her choirs.



been growing year on year since the choirs were founded.

If you are interested in joining any of the Balfroon Community Singers choirs, they are always open to new members. They meet every Thursday evening during term time, and their next concert will be in the spring.



Full details can be found on their Facebook page, or you can contact them directly by email ([balfrooncommunitysingers@gmail.com](mailto:balfrooncommunitysingers@gmail.com)).

A bi-annual favourite in Balfroon, the evening opened with each choir showcasing their incredible array of talent with *The Greatest Showman*, and we continued to be entertained with a wonderful and varied programme from *Brave* to Mozart, and Kelly Clarkson to Pachelbel. Joined by a talented group of local musicians from Balfroon, Boquan and Killearn, there was something to bring the festive spirit out of even the scroogiest of grinch!

The huge and generous raffle (which, with the help of all three choirs has been managed to a fine art) raised more than £1,500 for charity – a generous total which has



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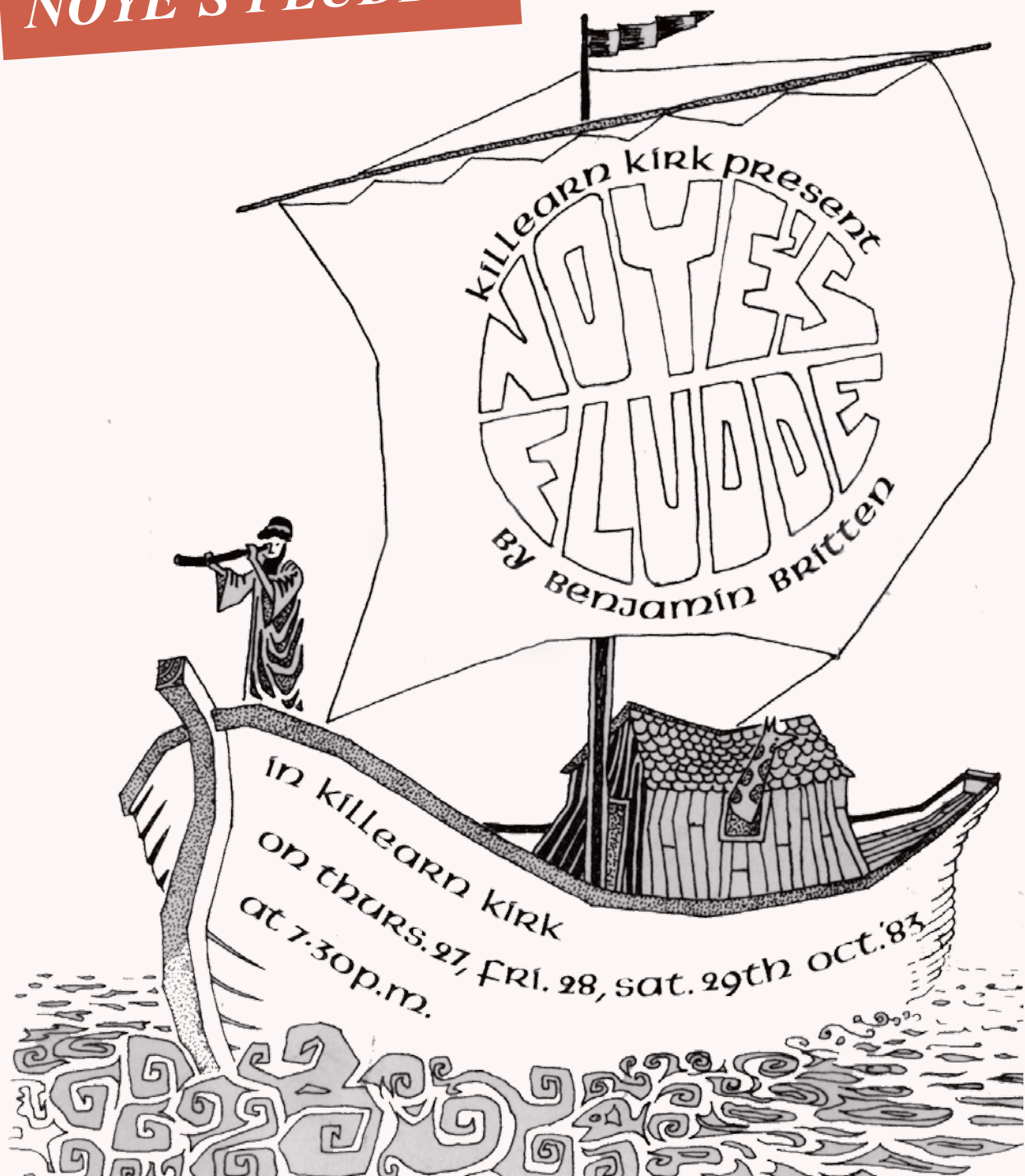
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Times Remembered

# NOYE'S FLUDDE



Just over 40 years ago, as part of Killearn Kirk's centenary celebrations, Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde* was performed on three consecutive nights in the church during October 1983.

On the following pages, we feature details from the programme, along with photos and memories of the event from two Killearn residents.



## THE CAST

THE VOICE OF GOD	Douglas Davies
NOYE	Andrew Weir
MRS. NOYE	Sheila Davidson
SEM	Peter Robinson
HAM	Roger Leaning
JAFFETT	Steven MacFarlane
MRS. SEM	Claire Smith
MRS. HAM	Diana Montgomery-Smith
MRS. JAFFETT	Alison Lilley
MRS. NOYE'S GOSSIPS	Stephanie Kennedy
	Gillian Leaning
	Lindsey Neville
	Kathryn Smith
	Susan Woodward

## PROPERTY MEN

Kate Barrett, Jackie Brown, Emma Hickman, Nicola Forrest.

## MUSICIANS

String Quartet		Piano Duet	
Iain White	violin	Helen Barclay	
Lindsey Pell	violin	Hilary Gray	
Jackie Mengler	violin	Organ	
Alison Brown	violin	Madge Niven	

## ORCHESTRA

Violins	Violincellos
Lorna Mulgrew	Carol Harley
Catriona Pollock	Judy Mason
Giles Kirby	
Victoria Burgess	Double Bass
Ruth Clements	Silas Bath
Harriet Livingstone	
Rory McEwen	Bass Guitars
Drew Lawrie	Michael Begg
Emma Samson	David Shannon
Andrew Walker	
Descant Recorders	Percussion
Jacqueline Anderson	Rebecca Oldham
Margaret Falconer	Carolyn Wyld
Margaret Main	Julian Smith
Chloe Misson	Kerr White
Kirsty McWilliam	Angela Denovan
Karen Norman	Claire Callan
Julie Kelso	Louise Pascall
Lisa Perkins	Bugles
Marie Perkins	David Brash
Kathy Harrison	Jim Pollock
Aileen Findlay	Russell Kirk
Linda Hannigan	Jonathan Honeyman
Yvette Ritchie	Grant Mearns
Lorna Hay	Miller Shaw
Jane Common	Gordon Davison
Lorna Shea	Stewart McFarlane

Treble Recorders	Hand Bells
Mark Cumine	Lindsey Mulgrew
Alan Campbell	Elsbeth Muir
James Fleming	Leslie Muir
Zoe Ross	Lindsey Kirk
	Helen Richardson
	Sarah McDougall

## THE ANIMALS

Ian Armstrong, Jennifer Banks, Emma Barnard, Gordon Barnard, Darren Barrie, Neil Bickerton, Stephanie Blyth, Alison Bogle, Julie Brownlie, Rhona Carmichael, Cecilia Clark, Julie Corbett, Laura Clarke, Hannah Clements, Hamish Corbett, Neil Corbett, Jennifer Dalziel, Zoe Dalziel, Linda Davis, Jennifer Dean, Catherine Douglas, Alison Douglas, Georgina Drew (Dove), Stuart Duffy, Christine Duke, Craig Finn, Grant Finn, Suzanne Frame, Alison Gibson, Tony Gibson, Nicola Gibson, Karen Gill, Pamela Greenshields, Kirsten Hale, Stuart Hall, Ann Hosford, Gavin Imrie, Gayle Imrie, Alistair Inglis, Karen Jamieson, Sheena Jamieson, Graham Jardine, Alistair Kirk, Gavin Lapraik, Susie Lapraik, Ross Leaning, Fiona Lilley, Hilary Livingstone, Andrew Lowe, Grant McDonald, Fiona Macdonald, John MacGowan (Raven), Kenneth McGregor, Jacqueline McKellar, Sarah McKellar, Suzanne Mackinlay, Fiona Mackintosh, Alexandra Mackintosh, Kirsty McNab, Elizabeth Mathieson, Elinor Meffen, Johanna Menzies, Victoria Menzies, Joanne Misson, Jonathan Murray, Daniel Neil, Paul Orphanoudakis, Daniel Owens, Catherine Owens, Karen Page, Diane Page, Sian Pattenden, Christopher Pirie, Elizabeth Platt, Iain Rankin, Jill Rankin, Heather Robbie, Henrika Simpson, Emma Smith, Rowena Smith, Sarah Smith, Philippa Smith, Fiona Snadden, David Southam, Lucy Wilks, Charlotte Wilson, Alistair Winkler, Nicola Young.

Cast  
of  
102

88  
children

Orchestra  
of  
63

55  
helpers



MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Rosalind MacGowan  
LIGHTING: Peter Wilks, Geoff Clements  
SOUND: Paul Owens, Leonard Southam  
COSTUME: Maureen Page  
PROPS: Marjory Woodward



## A COMMUNITY EVENT

*NOYE'S FLUDDE* was chosen as being particularly appropriate to celebrate Killearn Kirk's centenary because it was intended for amateur performers, especially children, and Britten specified that it should be staged in churches and not theatres. It is a short one-act opera based on the Chester Mystery Plays and tells the story of Noah's Ark. The original mystery plays had no music and Britten did not change one word of the original script, but added the intuitive music. The orchestra included many instruments associated with children's music-making: recorders, chime bells, guitars, bugles and percussion as well as violins. The music is complex and uplifting, involving people of all ages and including the orchestra and congregation, who join in for three hymns. It culminates in an unforgettable finale.

Brilliantly produced by the late Ken Barrett and under the musical direction of Ros McGowan, it was a resounding success.

Many of you will remember Ken Barrett. He moved to Killearn in 1972 so that he could take up his post lecturing in drama at Jordanhill College of Education. His gift, particularly with young people, was soon discovered and he was in great demand. He did many productions with Killearn Primary School, FADS, Young Farmers and the Strathendrick Singers.

Above all, it was to be a community event and this it certainly turned out to be. With a cast of 102, including 88 children, an orchestra of 63 and backstage helpers numbering 55, this was some undertaking.

The church was transformed, with Noah's Ark at the north end and planking laid down on top of



the pews for the full length of the church. The animals paraded two by two down this 'path' towards Noah in his ark. They all wore magnificent masks created by Ann Gordon and the Killearn Art Club.

Many of the cast will also be well remembered. Andrew Weir was Noye with Sheila Davidson as Mrs Noye. Douglas Davies (then head of Ballikinrain School) with his resonant Welsh tones was the Voice of God.

Of course, the value of such a production is not only the performance, but all the time spent together rehearsing beforehand, not only the actors and musicians, but all the people involved behind the scenes.

It was Ken's wish that the production would be remembered with pride and affection, so it is fitting that we should reflect again on this truly memorable event some 40 years later.

LAVINIA DREW

**The criteria for this church milestone were that it must be a celebration, a thanksgiving, a reconfirming of faith and an act of worship**

KEN BARRETT





# ONE MONKEY DOWN



For those of us who remember the many dramatic productions put on in the village by the late Ken Barrett, the most ambitious project was the 1983 *NOYE'S FLUDDE*.

The script came from one of the mediaeval mystery plays, and the music that accompanied it was written by Benjamin Britten. Involving as it did a great many children, the play took months to prepare, on both sides of the summer holidays, and everyone involved committed themselves to a great deal of hard work.

To make the most of the layout of the church, various platforms had to be built. The pews of one entire transept disappeared under wooden flooring to house an orchestra of 63 children and a few adults. Then there was the narrow catwalk on top of

the pews right down the centre of the nave, where the animals processed two by two from the back of the church all the way to the chancel, which was entirely filled with the Ark.

The building work was a labour of love which tended to be overlooked in the colour and sound of everything else, but it was amazing.

The main job of 'secretary' to the production was to keep the register, and coincidentally to help teach the children the music. As they walked down the catwalk, they sang the well known Tallis canon, a round which split itself into two parts and then four, so that the secretary found herself at rehearsal, running up and down the old church hall, directing the four different sections to come in at the right moment.

Another responsibility landed on the secretary was to decide which child should take on the role of which animal. This was an awesome task, and once fixed could not easily be altered. Once a flamingo, always a flamingo.



When the animals were all decided, the Art Club took on the job of creating a mask for each child, and they were stunning. The team in charge of the costumes made sure that every child wore a very plain top and trousers, so that all the focus was on the masks.

Various vignettes remain with lots of people. My son, who played bass guitar in the absence of a double bass, has an abiding memory of Mrs McGowan jumping up and down to make sure each member of the orchestra could see her. The teenage Gossips showed a surprising ability to appear drunk, and the slap Mrs Noye administered to her husband could be heard ringing round the building. Then there was the car passing outside whose occupants were a little taken aback by what sounded like the Voice of God emanating from the steeple and resounding round the village.

As the story continued, the noise and clamour of the storm filled the church, the Art Club waves threatened to overthrow the Ark, and the animals wailed in fear. The cacophony from the orchestra quietened at last, and when all was calm, the animals sat still and lowered their heads, and the masks were fully revealed in all their beauty.



None of the 88 children will have forgotten the experience of taking part in Mr. Barrett's production – well actually only 87. One of the monkeys went down with chickenpox and missed the performance. But she was at all the rehearsals and will still have her mask, as will the others.

It is sobering to reflect that they must now all be hovering round the 50 mark. And for those of us who are older, the privilege of taking part in *Noye's Fludde*, in any capacity, will stay with us for ever. **JOYCE BEGG**

**It was worth every moment. The end result was a thing of wonder and beauty.**

The piano in the old church hall was purchased with the proceeds from *Noye's Fludde*.  
Photos with kind permission of  
Jenifer Barrett and Joyce Begg.

# Community Council Report



The new year has ushered in a busy time for KCC. Fortunately we are up to full strength in numbers, which is excellent, with Susie Henderson and Calum McLean now having their feet well and truly under the table.

Calum has undertaken to lead on roads, for which he has all our thanks, as this is always a hot topic, and never more so than at the moment. And I am delighted that Heidi Bryce has agreed to lead on youth matters, which will help us to gather views from parts of the community we sometimes struggle to reach!

One of our main areas of activity this spring will be linking with CALA and Stirling Council. A safe pedestrian route from the CALA development to the village is stipulated in the planning agreement, and will see some degree of remodelling of the 'pavement' along Station Road. We are linking in as early as possible to ensure that whatever is proposed and agreed meets the needs of the village.

We have also been linking up with several other rural community councils to express our concerns about the impact that Stirling Council's proposed budget cuts will have in rural areas. With a saving of £13 million to be made, clearly spending will be cut, but we would like councillors to be aware which proposals will have a disproportionate effect in rural areas. Of particular concern to us would be reduction of the X10 bus service,

which would make travel to health care in Forth Valley (already a difficult journey) extremely problematic for many. It would also affect access to employment, especially for those working shifts, and reduce options for young people to travel independently. The overall effect would be a risk of isolation coupled with increasing dependence on car travel.

We have been in correspondence with Stirling councillors, and will have submitted an impact statement before they met to vote on the proposals in February.

The Local Place Plan survey is gaining momentum, but we still need more replies! Just in case anyone has missed this, there is a separate section in the *Courier* to update on this (see page 11).

As always, we remain keen to hear your views, both good and bad, on anything related to village life.

We would be delighted to see you on the third Wednesday of the month at 8pm, either in the Garden Room of the Village Hall or by Zoom. Our next meeting is 20 March.

Between meetings, you are welcome to email your questions or observations ([contactus@killearn.org.uk](mailto:contactus@killearn.org.uk)), and we will respond.

ELIZABETH JONES  
KCC CHAIR

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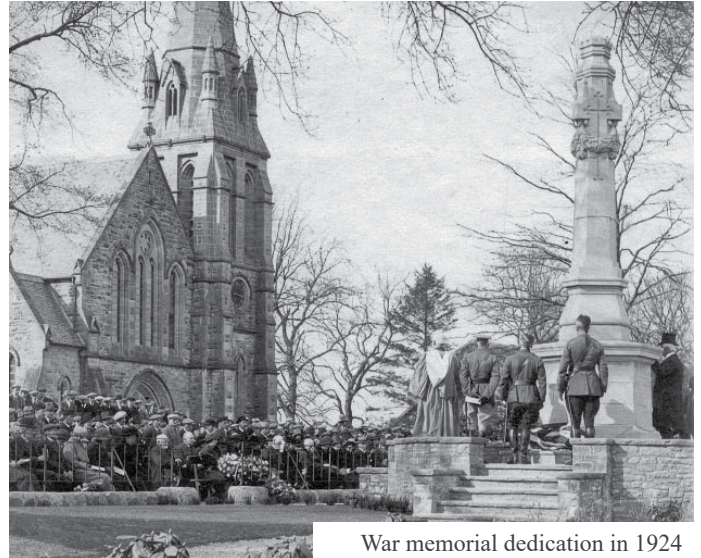
# War Memorial Rededication

The Killearn war memorial was erected in 1924 and dedicated in an outdoor service in April of that year. Originally its plaque listed the names, ranks and regiments of local men lost in World War I, the 'War to End All Wars'. As we know, those hopes were dashed. A mere 20 years later, another generation of men was called to defend their country, with the names of those killed inscribed on a new plaque and incorporated into the western side of the monument.

Prior to the centenary of the 'Great War' in 2014, the All Killearn Archive Group, and most notably Rab Hunter, set about finding out more about the men whose names were listed. This was a fruitful exercise, bringing to light many interesting stories and village connections, but there was also a mystery. It became clear that the names of another 10 men either from Killearn or with links to the village had been left off the official plaque. We may never know why this happened.

But an oversight at that time can be rectified now, with the aim of incorporating the names of these lost servicemen on a new plaque, appropriately on the centenary of its original dedication. With the help of AKA, Rev. Stuart Sharp and Killearn Kirk, the Killearn Heritage Trail, the Killearn Trust and Community Council, as well as Stirling Council and other partners, a plan for the rededication of the war memorial is taking shape.

It is hoped that the rededication will take place in the afternoon of 28 April. Groups will be invited to lay



War memorial dedication in 1924

flowers at the memorial for all of those villagers lost in wars, and, naturally, there will be refreshments following.

If the arrangements appear slightly hazy, it's because (at the time of writing) they are. While the decision to copy the original plaque in terms of size, font and design has been agreed with village stakeholders, this must be ratified, and various other permissions from the Council and Historic Environment Scotland have to be obtained in order to allow it to go forward.

The village will be kept informed on social media and appropriately old-fashioned posters. Make a note in your diary to attend this truly once in a lifetime event. NB

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# A KILLEARN HERITAGE TRAIL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Continuing our feature of recollections, four former Killearn Boys' Brigade members – Alasdair Campbell, Jim Simpson, Stewart Paterson and James 'Jimmuck' Macdonald – reminisce about the happy (and sometimes challenging) times they had with the group.



## The Boys' Brigade in Killearn – camaraderie, discipline, fun

From the late 1950s through to 2014, the Boys' Brigade was a hugely important social and cultural activity for teenage boys in Killearn and surrounding villages. In the days before mobile phones and computer screens, instructive and constructive group activities taught the boys skills, engagement, commitment and comradeship – resulting in life-long friendships (some of 60 years).



Inspection May 1968

The Boys' Brigade was founded in Glasgow in 1883 by Sir William Alexander Smith to develop 'Christian manliness by the use of a semi-military discipline and order, gymnastics, summer camps and religious services and classes'. The Killearn Brigade was started in 1955 and over the next 20 years it developed to become a primary interest and activity for many local lads.

Like many voluntary organisations and youth groups in particular, its success depended very much on its adult leadership. The Killearn Brigade's

first Captain was Alan Lamont, succeeded in turn by Peter McRobbie, Graham Pollock, Jim Fallas, Jonathan Honeyman, David Higgins, Alastair Smith and Neil Evans, all of whom devoted a huge amount of time and commitment to the group.

Most Killearn lads started with the Life Boys at the age of 7 or 8 and moved up to the Boy's Brigade aged 12. Alasdair Campbell joined up in 1955 and worked through the ranks to become an Officer; Jim was a member from 1958 for a decade – as was Stewart (now living overseas but still in touch with his comrades); Jimmuck enjoyed 10 happy and formative years from 1960–70. Joe McLaren joined the Life Boys at 7 and continued through to the age of 18, by which time he had been promoted to Staff Sergeant. All our interviewees achieved the prestigious Queen's Badge.



The Killearn BBs met on Friday evenings in the Church Hall (where the Pharmacy is now located); sessions included skills training such as orienteering, signalling, first aid, wayfaring, arts, crafts and regular drill practice.



Pictured above from top – l-r: Jim Simpson, Alasdair Campbell, James 'Jimmuck' Macdonald; Jim's Life Boy and BB badges and Signaller's Certificate; Alasdair's First Aid certificate 1960 (signed by Dr Campbell and Graham Pollock)



Football matches were played on Saturdays – home games on the Big Park, away games might be on the lethal ‘red blaze’ in Drumchapel or the ‘black ash’ at Dawsholm. Regular heavy defeats were mixed with heroic deeds by the likes of ‘Wilibur’, the Company’s orange-booted enforcer!



Football team May 1969

Bible classes were every Sunday: Christian faith was an important element in the organisation’s ethos. Indeed, in 1967 Jimmuck was commended for ‘six years perfect attendance at Bible Class and Company Parade nights.’

A highlight of the year was the camp in the summer holidays when the Killearn Company joined with the Drymen Brigade and went to a variety of sites such as Achnaclloch near Loch Etive, Dunbar, Nairn, Campbeltown and St. Andrews, where the boys enjoyed sports, outdoor activities and exercises, plus numerous adventures and various scrapes!



Camp July 1966

Our group recount how they were camped near the coastal dunes at Arbroath one year when the rain and wind was so strong, they had to hold on to their tent guy ropes for half the night to stop them blowing away! Character-forming stuff. In later years, skiing trips were added to the itinerary.

Another annual event was the district sports day, when Killearn competed against the Balfroon, Kippen, Aberfoyle and Drymen brigades. Alasdair (son of Killearn GP, Dr Hector Campbell) was known as a pretty useful runner, winning many points for his Company.

The Brigade played an important role in the annual Remembrance Day parade each November, turning out in their smart uniforms, marching well-practised drills past the War Memorial and paying tribute to those lost in the two World Wars.



March past at the Village Hall

The fourth key event in the Brigade’s calendar was its annual inspection and display in April/May. The boys presented smartly for visiting VIPs, parents and supporters, demonstrating their activities and achievements over the year, and receiving well-earned certificates and awards.



l-r: David Jardine, Gordon Lyon, Billy Hardie  
Walter McGowan and Lawrence Lawson

Over the years society changed, the leadership of youth groups became ever-more demanding, and more difficult to recruit. Competing interests led to the decline in the BB’s membership and ultimately the disbanding of the Company in 2014. However, Killearn BBs left behind many treasured memories, experiences and friendships across several generations of young men in our village.

How many faces to you recognise in the photos featured in this article?

NH

References and materials courtesy of: the late Jim Fallas, Kay Pollock, All Killearn Archive, Alasdair Campbell, Jim Simpson, contributors’ memories and Wikipedia.

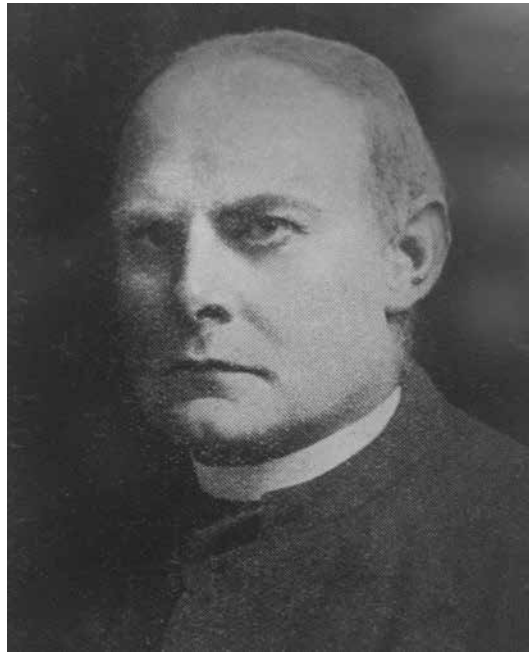
## From the Archives – Rev. Dr A. Gordon Mitchell

On 6 April 1924, Rev. Mitchell officiated at what must have been one of the most important and poignant services of his career, the dedication of the Killearn War Memorial. Words from one of his poems are inscribed on the back of the memorial. As the centenary of this event falls in April and it is intended to hold a service to mark this, it was felt appropriate to give a brief biography of one of Killearn's most prominent ministers.

He was born in 1864 in Kilmadock near Doune, where his father was the minister. His brother, James, also became a minister, serving at Norrieston (Thornhill).

In 1898, he was appointed the minister at Killearn Kirk and seems to have immediately immersed himself in village life. He served on the School Board and the Parish Council, sang at concerts, organised outings for various entities, curled with Strathendrick Curling Club and was involved in the Burns Club.

When he first came to Killearn, his older sister, Susan, was living with him as his housekeeper. In 1907, at the



age of 42, he married the 25-year-old Edith Gilkes from Brighton. She, too, became involved in village life and is often recorded as an accompanist at the many concerts in Killearn. Sadly, she died in 1925 aged only 43.

Prior to the 1906 quatercentenary of George Buchanan's death, Mitchell translated many of Buchanan's works from the original Latin, using books purchased by Sir Archibald Lawrie of the Moss, and was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Divinity by St. Andrews University for this work. In the photograph taken at the Moss to mark the anniversary,

he can be seen seated five from the right (see photograph in the Village Hall Committee Room or the Killearn book).

From 1914 onwards, he had to manage the tragedy of World War I, and the loss of many village soldiers, together with the trauma and ill health suffered by those who returned. The local newspapers record many tributes by him to the fallen. Although his own family were too young to be involved, his elder son died aged 8 in February 1918 after a short illness and an unsuccessful operation. His younger son was to die, aged only 21, in 1938.

He worked closely with the United Free Church minister, Rev Hugh Sanderson, who was appointed in 1901. They both retired as ministers in 1931, to allow for the re-unification of the churches.

He served as chaplain, secretary and treasurer of Strathendrick Curling Club for 40 years, chaplain and president of Forth & Endrick Province and chaplain of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club from 1920 to 1939. He was an enthusiastic poet, and published a book of war songs as well as writing over 60 curling poems for the RCCC Annual. His name is well known in Forth & Endrick Province, as an annual bonspiel is played for the Rose Bowl which he presented in 1938, to mark the centenary of the RCCC.

He died in 1943, aged 79, and is buried with his wife, two sons and the ashes of his daughter, at the rear entrance to the old graveyard.



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## The Wine Shelf – Picnic in the Spring

As the weather begins to warm up and the flowers start to bloom, the arrival of spring usually heralds a change in our wine-drinking habits, as heavier comforting winter wines give way to lighter ones. Sadly, for rosé it is not yet their season. I am sure all rosé winemakers must scratch their heads in despair at being so intrinsically locked in with summer drinking.

We have some of the most diverse ranges of wines in the world to choose from, and here are just a few of the more traditional and the very alternative styles that are worth (re)visiting.

### **Sauvignon Blanc**

A refreshing and crisp white wine that is perfect for spring. The wine is known for its light and zesty flavours, with hints of citrus and tropical fruit. Sauvignon Blanc pairs well with seafood, salads and light pasta dishes, and is perfect for a picnic in the park on a sunny spring day.

### **Pinot Noir**

A popular red wine that is perfect for spring. It is lighter than other red wines and has a delicate flavour with hints of cherry and raspberry. Pinot Noir pairs well with grilled



meats, roasted vegetables and soft cheeses. It is perfect for springtime.

### **Orange Wine**

A white wine made by leaving the grape skins in contact with the juice during fermentation. It has a unique flavour profile that is often described as earthy and tannic.

### **Cabernet Franc**

The lesser-known star in the red blends of Bordeaux, is a full-bodied red wine that is perfect for this time of year. It has a rich, complex flavour with hints of blackberry, plum and spice. Cabernet Franc pairs well

with grilled meats, roasted vegetables and hard cheeses. A great addition to Easter lunch.

### **Pétillant-naturel or Pet Nat for short**

A type of sparkling wine that is made by bottling the wine before fermentation is complete. It has a natural effervescence and is often cloudy in appearance.

### **Natural Wine**

This is wine made with minimal intervention, often using organic or biodynamic methods. Natural wines can have a range of flavours and textures, and are popular with those who prefer a more ‘hands-off’ approach to winemaking.

ELAINE TAYLOR

An advertisement for Joe Skinner Painter & Decorator. The top half shows a hand using a brush to apply white paint to a surface. Overlaid on this image is the text: "Paper Hanging", "Interior and Exterior Painting", and "Free Estimates". The bottom half is a dark blue box with white text: "JOE SKINNER PAINTER & DECORATOR", "55 Dunkeld Court Balforn, G63 0TL", "Phone: 01360 440327 Mobile: 07789 004787", and "joeskinner199@gmail.com".

**Paper Hanging**  
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Phone: 01360 440327 Mobile: 07789 004787  
joeskinner199@gmail.com

An advertisement for Steven Skinner Joinery, Glazing & Property Maintenance. The top half features the name "Steven Skinner" in a large, stylized font, with "Joinery, Glazing & Property Maintenance" below it. A dark blue banner across the middle contains the text "Glazing Repairs" and "Misted/cracked double glazed units replaced". Below this, it says "ALL TYPES OF JOINERY WORK UNDERTAKEN" and "Upvc & Hardwood windows & doors supplied & fitted Composite doors supplied & fitted". The bottom half lists "FREE ESTIMATES", the address "11 Strathview Terrace Balforn G63 0PS", contact information "Telephone: 01360 449 080 Mobile: 07713 805 086 Email: stevenskinnerjoinery@gmail.com Website: www.stevenskinnerjoinery.co.uk", and the "fsb MEMBER" logo.

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fsb  
MEMBER



## Local Traditional Music Group

Do you play an instrument or enjoy singing traditional or folk music? If you are over 18 and interested in making music locally with others, why not come along to the Killearn Traditional Music Group?

We meet on specific Thursday evenings in the Killearn Village Hall Garden Room from 7.30pm–9.30pm. Our next scheduled meetings will be on 21 March, 25 April and 16 May.

We have ukelele, guitar, accordion, fiddle, bodhran, mandolin and whistle players, and play in a relaxed group. We play a great variety of music recommended by group members. All instruments, all abilities and singers are welcome.

Please contact Jackie (550576) for further information.



## Do As I Say and Do As I Do



A new ceilidh band, Tàrnach, is hitting the local scene, with a vibrant blend of traditional and modern music. Balfron High School music teacher Ashley Edwards and friends have joined together to create their very own ceilidh band, fuelled by a shared passion for performing and years of playing for other groups. Ashley can now say ‘do as I do’ as well as ‘do as I say’ when he is in front of his class.

Their repertoire includes all the classic ceilidh favourites, but what makes them unique is their blending of pop tunes into their ceilidh sets. Imagine dancing the Virginia Reel to ‘Dancing Queen’, or getting your groove on with a ceilidh-fied version of Van Halen’s ‘Jump’. Tàrnach adds a modern twist to the traditional ceilidh experience, ensuring there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Follow them on social media @tarnachceilidhband.



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## No Rest in the Field of Dreams

It may be the close season for Killearn FC, but no 'winter breaks' for our boys. Wednesday night is 7-a-side down at the Drum, to keep everyone ticking over ahead of pre-season starting.

It's been great to see new players as well as the usual suspects at the club over the last year. If anyone fancies joining us for the season ahead, please feel free. You don't have to live in the area – if you work here or have links with the village and want to play, permits are available to make this happen. The club and



Anyone interested in playing or supporting the club, contact us through social platforms or call Colin Banks (07447 498341), or James Beaton (07733 405386).

league look to welcome and encourage as many players as possible.

The new season starts on 12 April and runs to mid-August. Young and older, all are welcome.

Remember, keep up to date on the Killearn FC social channels, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to the Field of Dreams in April!

## Opening a Busy 2024 at Killearn Tennis Club

Typically December and January are quieter times at the club, however, a committed group of members harnessed WhatsApp and consistently met and played socially through the winter. Liveball and kids coaching has also been ongoing, and our coaches are planning to release new sessions as we approach the spring. We are also grateful to the Cycling Killearn group for the bike racks now installed next to the clubhouse – cycling is a great way to travel to and from the club.

Off the court, the committee have been busy planning 2024, and would like to encourage everyone in the Killearn area to look out for some exciting events in the coming year. More details will follow on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/killearntennis](http://www.facebook.com/killearntennis). The key dates are:

- Juniors Day – 24 March
- Open Day – weekend of 18 May
- Wimbledon Strawberries & Cream, Pimms & Play – 30 June
- Championship Finals Day – 8 September

We are also supporting both the Balfroon and Killearn 10k races this year, so we look forward to seeing you there.

We are also looking to organise a fun evening in the autumn, and are planning to host several friendlies with local clubs through the season. We would also like to remind the community that guests are welcome to play at the club – just use the honesty box to pay for court time.

The committee are currently developing a longer term plan to upgrade aspects of the club to offer players the best tennis experience possible, benefit the community and continue to grow our membership. This includes switching to energy-efficient LED floodlights, improving court surfaces, facilities and access points. We look forward to sharing these plans with members in due course.

Finally, it was with great sadness that we learnt of the recent passing of Meg Hale. Meg was a brilliant member of KTC for many years and enjoyed playing, along with her husband, David, until just a few years ago. Meg played in KTC Ladies team and had many successful matches. We will very much miss Meg at the club, and offer our condolences to her family.

# Hire an EBIKE



Killearn has 4 ebikes that anyone who lives or works in the village can borrow. You must be over 18 yrs old.

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## Second Stones

The Mixed Club has completed the first two leagues. The Autumn League was won by Paul Mosley's team of Sally Macfarlane, Liz Paterson and Susan Ross by 2 points from John Macfarlane's team. The Winter League was won by John Macfarlane's team of Mary MacDonald, Susan Ross and Mario Cannavina by 1 end from teams lead by Rosemary Miller and Luisella Mosley.



Luisella Mosley, Fiona Glass, Jane and Kim McLaren with the Forth Valley Area Knockout trophy

The Ladies Peat league was won easily by Gillian Kingslake's team of Jinty Halley, Kay Bidwell and Annette Rogers. The Ladies Chris Gardner league was much closer going right to the last round. However, none of the second placed teams managed to overtake that week's non-playing team of Jane Weir, Gill Smith, Gail Pain and Patricia Brown, who won on a better shots up record than Alice Fraser's team.

The Ladies Christmas Bonspiel was contested by six teams and just won by Fiona Glass's team of Jean Leitch, Gail Pain and Helen McKinnell. The draws to the Christmas puddings were won by Penny Evans, Helen McKinnell and Liz Paterson. After being let down with a few days notice by the Torbrex Inn, the Lion and Unicorn were able to accommodate the Ladies Christmas lunch.

The Mixed Club Ladies v Gents Bonspiel was won by 8 ends to 6 by the Ladies, for the first time since 2017. This was followed by drinks at Springkerse View.

The Mixed Club Pairs competition was played in the form of a knockout with 4 pairs. The winning pair was Tony Flisch and Liz Paterson.

The Club has had mixed fortunes in external fixtures. We are struggling this year in the major Forth & Endrick Province League, but have a lead of 1 point in the B League with two games to play. We again won the Province Medal Bonspiel, this time in a two-way tie at 11 ends but 9 shots better up. In the Low Road of the Province Knockout, the club has reached the final.

In the Ballikinrain Cup against Balforn and Kippen, it needed a measure on the last stone of the match for Strathendrick to retain the trophy.

Strathendrick had a major success in October with a first-ever win in the Forth Valley Area Knockout. The team of Jane and Kim McLaren, Fiona Glass and Luisella Mosley scored a 2 in the last end against Linlithgow, to win by 8 shots to 7 (see photo left).

A team (pictured below) comprising Fiona Glass, Jean Leitch, Jane Weir and Di Christie came second in the Emily Tait competition run by Stirling Ladies Branch.

The various team members, scores and our programme of events are available at [www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk](http://www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk).

Both the Mixed Club and the Ladies Section play regularly during the season from end September to late March.



Jane Weir, Fiona Glass, Jean Leitch and Di Christie with the second place prizes in the Emily Tait

The Mixed Club plays at 3pm on Tuesdays and the Ladies at 10am on Thursdays.

The contacts for the Club are Tony Flisch (860580) or Gill Smith (550726). New members would be welcomed by both the Mixed Club and the Ladies Section.

GILL SMITH

## Another Record Sell-out for the Killearn 10k

This year's 10k race takes place on Saturday, 1 June 2024, and organisers are delighted to report a sell-out of places in a record breaking 13 hours!

This event is a firm favourite on the race calendar, attracting locals as well as club runners from all over Scotland. In particular, Garscube and Bellahouston club runners turn up in numbers to take part in this multi-terrain, chip-timed and, above all, friendly local race. It's a tough, undulating 10k route, out and back along the pipe track which finishes in the park. We hope to see many locals there to cheer on our runners as they race to the finish line.

Organisers would like to extend thanks to all of our sponsors who make the event the success that it is. This year, our new gold sponsors are TLA Subsea, who we are thrilled to have onboard. Grateful thanks also to returning silver sponsors West Homes and The Old Mill Killearn – both are long-standing and enthusiastic supporters of the event. Thanks also to Killearn Pharmacy and Home is Best, our committed returning bronze sponsors. We are also delighted to welcome Town and Country Designs as bronze sponsors, as well as Heron House, who were one of the original sponsors of the Killearn Mile. We are proud to be working with all of these brilliant businesses, and we invite other local businesses to get involved by donating prizes, as they do so generously year after year.



As always, we wouldn't be able to run this event without the fantastic support of our friendly, enthusiastic marshals who turn out in all weather conditions to make sure the runners stay on route, are safe and cheered on. If you'd like to help out with marshalling, please email [marshals@killearn10k.com](mailto:marshals@killearn10k.com).

While the runners are preparing for the race with their training plans, we'll be working behind the scenes to get everything ready, not only for the 10k, but also the Killearn Mile, which will be run again before the start of the 10k.

Many runners of the main event use this as a warm up, running alongside their little ones – it is fantastic to see so many families enjoy the Mile, and we try to capture everyone in the professional photos. Sign-ups for the Mile take place in the park on the day.

We are looking forward to seeing lots of smiling faces at the start of both the Killearn Mile and the Killearn 10k. Make sure 1 June is in the diary, and we will keep our fingers crossed for good running conditions. It's a great day out, followed by another popular local event – the Killearn Beer Festival. Thank you Killearn for all your brilliant support. See you on the start... and finish line!

JUDE HOLT



# Youth is the Way Forward for Strathendrick RFC

Strathendrick 1st XV are playing some attractive rugby this season and – at the time of going to press – are sitting in 4th place in West Region League Division 2, and are through to the next round of the National Shield. Although the squad has a backbone of older players, much of the attacking flair comes from younger players who have come up through the Strathendrick Balfroun HS strategic partnership. Likewise, the 2nd XV is made up of less experienced and ‘more mature’ players.

The growth and development of both boys’ and girls’ youth rugby has been phenomenal over recent years, reflecting the close cooperation between club and school as well as the tremendous commitment, not only by the players, but also a phalanx of 40+ volunteer parent-coaches.



U14 boys and girls Winning the SP Network Glasgow Warriors Schools Championship 2023

This season, Strathendrick/Balfroun are running eight full teams (five boys’ and three girls’ teams) playing weekly conference fixtures. This progress is also showing in the results achieved by several age group teams. Strathendrick/Balfroun won the Glasgow Warriors Schools Festival last summer, competing against 28 other state schools.

This year Strathendrick/Balfroun HS U18s came out on top in a fierce Scottish Schools Plate semi-finals game against St. Columbus School. They go onto play Queen Victoria School in the Scottish Schools Plate Finals, scheduled to be played at the Hive Stadium on 23 March.



Strathendrick Balfroun U18’s beating St Columbus School to reach the Scottish Schools Rugby Plate Finals 2023/24

Strathendrick RFC were recognised in 2023 by the SRU for the good work that they have been doing for their community by becoming the recipients of the Best Community Club Awards for both Caledonia and overall Scotland Club in 2023.

The real revelation over the past three years has been the transformation of girls’/women’s rugby at the club. From almost a standing start, Strathendrick now have four girls’ teams (one mini and three midi) and also a ladies’ touch rugby team.

In the first season of the Inspiring League, the U16s won the title for 2022/23. Three of the girls from this team have gone on to represent the Caledonia team. The SRU have developed an excellent competition structure that has enabled new teams or part teams to combine with other clubs to ensure that regular rugby fixtures can take place on a weekly basis for new girls’ teams.



Strathendrick U16 Girls Winning the first Glasgow North Inspiring League 2022/23

This year both girls’ U14–U18 and boys’ teams are going on tour to Sweden at the end of the season. Sponsorship has been secured from Cala Homes West Ltd., who are developing the Killearn Hospital site, to help fund new strips for the girls’ teams and to support the tour.

To complete the Talent pathway, Strathendrick also has a thriving Minis set up, with teams at all age groups (P1–P7) enjoying training sessions and games. Strathendrick hosts its Annual Charity Mini Rugby Festival again this spring. This typically involves invitations to 14 clubs, 900 players and 2,000 supporters, and is Scotland’s largest mini rugby festival.

This season’s tournament will be at Fintry Sports Club on Sunday, 28 April – put the date in your diary. For more information, see [pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc](http://pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc).



Strathendrick’s Annual Mini Rugby Festival



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# Robert Dunlop Begg 1933 – 2024

Robert Begg, or Bob as he was known in the village, was born in Glasgow to George and Peggy who were both school teachers. When he was six, the family, which now included his brother Alastair, was evacuated to Girvan and lived amid the fishing community, where, during the severe rationing of wartime, fish was always available. This resulted for Bob in a lifelong aversion to herring, which he would tell you about at the drop of a hat. From Girvan the family moved to Garelochhead, where George became headmaster of the primary school. Garelochhead became the basis of Bob's happy sunlit childhood, which he often thought of right to the end of his life. He also spoke of the German POWs whose camp was stationed near the village. He remembered their courtesy, and their skill in woodwork, as they made toys and sledges for the village children at Christmas.



After his secondary school education at Hermitage Academy in Helensburgh, Bob progressed to Glasgow University, where he gained a First Class Honours degree in engineering. After a few years working in England, he returned to do postgraduate work in Glasgow, and there, at the Saturday night dancing in the QM, he met Joyce. After that, there was no question of him returning to work in England. Instead, he joined the staff of Glasgow University. They married in 1963 and set up home in Kelvindale, where in time their sons Peter and Michael came along. Since both Bob and Joyce had enjoyed

village childhoods, they decided that was what they would like for their own boys, so the family moved to Killearn in 1973, and reckoned it was the best thing they ever did. Over the years, taking full advantage of the sabbatical system in universities, Bob taught engineering in Montreal, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, as well as two summer schools in Sydney.

Killearn in the 1970s was an extremely social place. It still is, of course, but back in the day, dinner parties and dances abounded. A network of friendships arose that lasted for years. Many of these friends are still in the village, although the dinners have tended to turn into afternoon teas. Apart from the social side of life in Killearn, Bob also took part briefly in the Community Council and on the Flower Show Committee. But his main enthusiasm his whole life was for tennis, which he played as often as he could. He served on the committee of the Killearn Tennis Club, taking his turn as President. When he was still playing into his 80s, the club made him an honorary member, which pleased him greatly.

In his retirement, Bob took up walking, and gathered a small group of friends to walk all round Scotland, and to visit the Lake District, Wales and Ireland. They even got to Italy and the Dolomites. None of the remaining members are still going on walking trips, but they all expressed their appreciation of Bob's organisational skills and his company.

In his final years, Alzheimer's disease robbed him of most of his energy and his mental capacity, but he still enjoyed life, sitting in the sun in his conservatory and seeing his family as often as possible. The carers from Home Is Best looked after him most kindly 'til he needed full-time attention. He died in his sleep, in the excellent care of Blanefield House.

His family is grateful for his long life, and for his kindness and affection.

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# Kenneth William McGowan Barclay 1943 – 2023

Kenneth Barclay, although he lived in Fintry, was very much a local boy. He was the son of Dr and Mrs Barclay, and had his early years education at Killearn Primary School before moving on to Kelvinside Academy.

He would have been the first to acknowledge that academia was not his first love, but farming definitely was. His early experience of employment served only to strengthen his interest in agriculture, and by his early 20s he had made the move into a farming partnership in Nethererton Farm, Fintry, and later went on to rent, and then to buy, the Garrel Farm at Balfron Station.

His cousin and great pal was Walter McGowan, and through this kinship he met Helen, the best friend of Walter's wife, Rosalind. Romance blossomed and Kenneth and Helen were married in 1970. The births of their sons, Graeme and Kenneth, made the family complete.

As the years passed and the challenges in farming increased,

a decision was made to change direction.

The Garrel was sold, the family moved to Fintry and Kenneth established a new business (KB Packaging) which, through his dedication and application, he developed successfully.

Kenneth shared with his family their interests in music and sporting activities, supporting them and participating in community events, where he was a gregarious and popular figure.

Health issues eventually led to his retirement, and his later years were spent in a challenging battle against pain and surgery.

It is a measure of the strength of Kenneth's positive personality and his fortitude that his endurance lasted so long, but ultimately he shared with his loving family his hope for a final peace, which came to pass just before Christmas.

A packed congregation attended the service in Killearn Kirk to commemorate Kenneth's life. BP



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# Margaret (Meg) Hale 1940 – 2023

Meg was born on 24 August 1940 in the family home in Dundee, spending most of her childhood in that city, before undertaking nursing training at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. She was inspired to become a nurse after being hospitalised with appendicitis as a child. Meg was an only child, but was close to Ronald, her cousin who was also an only child.

Meg was in the Girl Guides, and here she met her life-long friend, Ena. It was Ena who started calling her Meg, as she thought Margaret was too long a name.

Meg enjoyed childhood holidays with family on farms in Inverness and Selkirk, and never lost her Highland heritage through her soup-making and baking – Rice Krispie cake being a favourite.

After undertaking midwifery training at Dundee Royal Infirmary, Meg worked in Welwyn Garden City, Copenhagen and Aberdeen.

She moved to Glasgow in the late 1960s as a Ward Sister at the new Queen Mother's Maternity Hospital at Yorkhill, meeting with disapproval from her parents, due to Glasgow's 'No Mean City' reputation at that time.

She met David, who had also recently moved to Glasgow from Portsmouth to work on the Clydeside expressway, at Bellahouston Squash Club. They were married on

17 October 1970, at Park Church in Dundee, setting up home in Blanefield, where Meg worked in the Strathblane Children's Home Hospital and helped with Riding for the Disabled.

Kirsten was born in 1971 and Iain two years later. In 1980, the family moved to Killlearn, and Meg soon became involved in village life, initially with the Tennis and Curling clubs, the primary school PTA, and Cub and Scout committee, being involved in fundraising for a new Scout hall, which David was heavily involved in building.

Meg worked as a district nursing midwife, based at Balfron Health Centre, from 1983 until her retirement in 1997, subsequently becoming a full-time grandmother to Louisa and Matthew. She became even more involved in village life, delivering Meals on Wheels, helping with the Monday Club, enjoying Scottish Country Dancing and leading a walking group.

Meg and David were regular attendees at Drymen Church, and to raise funds for a new church hall, at the age of 66, Meg abseiled from the Titan Crane in Clydebank.

Meg and David had many holidays together, travelling to China, Australia, Europe and the USA. They also visited family in Newcastle, the south coast, and going to watch



the tennis at Wimbledon. Meg also enjoyed walking, often with Kirsten's dogs, around the village, as well regularly climbing Dumgoyne on New Year's and at midsummer.

Meg suffered from Alzhiemer's in later life and maintained her independence for as long as she could. She was admitted to Buchanan House Care Home in November 2021, where she died peacefully, surrounded by her family on 23 November 2023. Meg will be sorely missed by her husband, David, daughter Kirsten and husband David, son Iain and partner Leigh, and by her grandchildren, Louisa, Matthew and Jessica.

THE HALE FAMILY



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## John Smith 1932 – 2023

John Smith was born in Paisley to John and Margaret Smith, and lived with his parents, older sister, Cherrie, and his grandmother in the same small tenement flat until leaving home, aged 25. Many of his earlier childhood memories were of the war: bombing raids, air raid shelters, exploring bombed out spaces and listening to stories from his father, who was a volunteer wartime fireman.



Many positive childhood experiences included playing with friends in the back courts, attending the church where his father was an elder, singing as a boy treble in the Paisley Abbey Choir, enjoying his education at the John Neilson Institution, and spending the annual summer holiday in Millport. Leaving school at 15, he joined the Commercial Bank of Scotland, completing his training at branches in Paisley and Glasgow.

John never wavered in his commitment to the Church of Scotland or his love of singing. He became an elder in his 20s, always becoming fully involved in the life of the churches he attended.

Graduating from treble to a fine bass voice, he sang in many concerts with the Paisley Abbey Choir, often singing solo bass parts. He also met his future wife, Margaret, in the choir and they married in 1957.

They had two sons, David and Stewart, of whom John was a very proud father.

His banking career progressed, and he was appointed a bank inspector for the National Commercial Bank in 1967. This required the family to move to Edinburgh, then to Galashiels, where he developed a love of country life, and then back to Edinburgh as a senior manager at the bank's head office.

After his marriage came to an end, he returned to the west of Scotland in 1983, where he married his second wife, Avril, and worked in Glasgow until in 1991. He retired as Assistant General Manager for Scotland. Initially living in Strathblane, he moved to Killearn, staying here for the rest of his life. Retirement meant he could indulge his wish to travel. It also gave him time to spend with his two sons and their families, to see his six grandsons grow up and to welcome the arrival of two great-grandsons.

John loved Killearn, quickly becoming a part of the local community. He continued his singing, first with the Bearsden Choir and then with the Strathendrick Singers, and maintained his commitment to the church as a worshipper, elder and a member of the choir at Killearn Kirk, being a good neighbour and friend to many.

Declining health ultimately led to both John and his wife moving to Antonine House Care Home in Bearsden, where he benefited considerably from the skill and care of the staff in the final months of his life, and received many visits from friends and neighbours. He died peacefully, with his two sons at his side.

THE SMITH FAMILY

An advertisement for Fraser C. Robb, a company specializing in garden and ground care equipment. The ad features a woman in a dark blue jacket holding a chainsaw. The background is a workshop filled with various tools and equipment. The text is in white and blue on a dark blue background.

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# John Wilson 1950 – 2023

John was born in Blairhall, Fife, as an only child to parents Ella and John.

Growing up, he was a hard-working, ambitious student.

When he wasn't studying, he was driving his scooter, playing football or listening to The Who and the Small Faces!



John met Maureen at school when he was 16, and they were married at 21. He worked in the pit all summer to save up for her engagement ring, and from then on, they did everything together. He was a devoted and proud husband.

It was when John and Maureen moved to Killearn 40 years ago, that John became a loving and committed father to Kieran, Jonathan and Siobhan. Unassuming and reliable, he never missed a football game or swimming competition. He even coached the young Killearn Colts football team. He made them feel like they were preparing for an Old Firm match when they were up against the neighbouring village of Strathblane! He was passionate about football and followed Celtic closely over the years.

When he wasn't watching football, John enjoyed spending time with extended family and friends, hosting dinner parties. He would cook while Maureen chatted! He was famous for his chicken and chorizo casserole. He also enjoyed gardening, and spent many evenings sitting enjoying the garden with a glass of red wine.

As his children grew up and met their partners, Louise, Suzanne and Stuart, John's family continued to grow as they welcomed three grandsons into the family: Dylan, Michael and Rory. They became his pride and joy in life and he played an integral role in their lives. Not a week went by he didn't see each of them. All three boys look like him, have the same sparkle in their eyes and the same sense of fun. He was a compassionate, gentle and kind grandad.

John had a long, successful career working in a variety of posts in education for over 40 years, retiring as a Director of Education in 2013, a post he held for 10 years. Throughout that time, he was committed to improving outcomes for the most vulnerable learners. His significant contribution was recently recognised by the provost of East Renfrewshire Council, who shared that John's legacy continues today. During his career, his outstanding leadership was recognised in two sector-leading HM inspections and he was proud to be appointed an OBE by the Queen for his commitment to education. He was also awarded the Paisley Diocesan Medal.

This account from a former colleague seems to encapsulate perfectly who he was: 'Very few people get to the top of an organisation and still put in practice the values which they hold dear. Usually, they've had to do deals or conform to the status quo. I had great respect for your dad, because he stayed true to his own beliefs. He always gave extra support to those who were vulnerable and in need. Way before the government came up with PEF, he made the bold decision that those on free school meals should have funding for them to get food over the holidays and that these pupils should be a priority for the summer activities.'

Sadly, John passed on the 14 October 2023 at the age of 73. He is sorely missed everyday by his family.

THE WILSON FAMILY



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# John Howie Taylor 1927 – 2024

John Taylor was born and brought up in Kelvindale, Glasgow, later moving to Anniesland with his parents Robert and Minnie, and his older sister, Margaret. Living at Anniesland Cross, he enjoyed looking from the balcony at the variety of traffic that passed through the busy junction. He had a love for the city of Glasgow and often spoke of the trams, horses and carts carrying goods. He would help out on his dad's allotment, and in later years he enjoyed gardening and growing his own vegetables, particularly broad beans!



The war and subsequent National Service were unhappy times for John. During the Clydebank Blitz, he was evacuated to Dumfriesshire while his sister stayed in Anniesland. He saw three years of National Service in Egypt, where he had a few swims in the Suez Canal. After completing National Service, he returned to Glasgow, driving reporters by night and doing clerical work by day.

In his late 20s, he decided to go to Canada. He explored the country, travelling on long bus journeys and on the Trans Canadian Railway into North America. After about 18 months, he returned to Glasgow, then moved to

work in Slough. Soon after this he met Rosemary. They were married in 1961, and in the next few years Jean and Moira were born.

John retained a great love for Scotland and always wanted to return. In January 1969, the family came north to Dunblane and three years later moved to Killearn.

He worked very hard setting up his own business as a designer and maker of pewter jewellery, selling to Scottish craft shops until his retirement. He loved to tour with his family, visiting many parts of Scotland.

After retirement, he continued his love of art through his paintings, showing and selling many works at local exhibitions and at the annual MacMillan Cancer Research exhibitions. His pewter jewellery designs, like his paintings, reflected his profound love of Scotland and the country's heritage. He was part of the Green Gallery art group classes at Aberfoyle for many years and then of the Byre group in Killearn. He and Rosemary enjoyed holidays in Europe, his photos from these visits often giving him inspiration for his paintings.

He read a lot and enjoyed TV documentaries about many aspects of our world: art, nature, geography, history. He was a long-standing member of the SNP, the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the RSPB. His wide interests and his deep passion for Scotland has left a positive impression on his family: his daughters, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren.

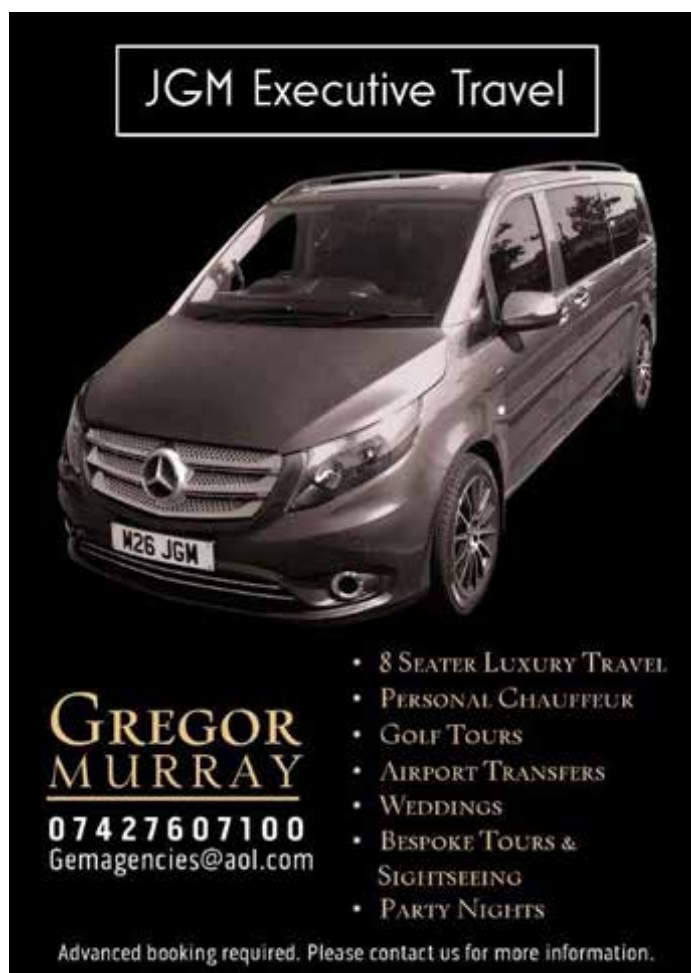
THE TAYLOR FAMILY/BP



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# Norman Reginald Lilley 1936 – 2023

Norman was born in West Bromwich, the elder son of Reginald and Irene Lilley, and had a brother Gordon. The family moved around in the West Midlands before settling in Wolverhampton, this accounting for his lifelong following of Wolves.



Norman did well at school and after leaving went on to study accountancy at Wolverhampton Technical High School. He started work at a large engineering firm, John Thompson Ltd., where he developed his skills, qualifying as both a Certified Corporate Accountant and a Certified Company Secretary. Norman met Elizabeth Dargie at the local Presbyterian church and they were married there in May 1962. They lived in several areas of the Midlands as suited the demands of Norman's work until the opportunity arose to work in Scotland, and this brought them to Killearn. Over the years he worked in Glasgow and Edinburgh for a number of companies and also in the college sector. He also ran his own small accountancy business, working for a number of local firms until he was 80.

The arrival of daughters, Alison and Fiona, completed the family, but when in the 1970s, Norman and Elizabeth parted and went their separate ways, the girls stayed with Norman. As the girls were growing up, Norman encouraged them to become involved in a wide range of local groups and activities, whilst he developed his own interests, taking part in car rallies and motocross events as part of the Lanarkshire Car Club, and becoming involved with the Burmah Rally.

His driving passions started when he passed his driving test at 17. He was a founder member of the John Thompson's Motoring Club and was soon taking part in club rallies. He was good enough to compete in national events where, as a private entrant, he once finished in seventh place, beaten only by six works-sponsored competitors.

He was a member of the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club and various steam railway societies, and was active in the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, organising some of their tours, even doing the onboard narration. He was also involved with the Clyde River Steamer Club, the local Horti, the Strathendrick Car Club and Strathendrick Singers.

Norman was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in the 2010s, and faced the inevitable gradual decline in health. With the support of Home is Best, he was able to fulfil his wish to spend as much of his final time at home until at the end he passed away peacefully in hospital.

His family greatly appreciated the help and support by all who cared for Norman at the end of his life.

THE LILLEY FAMILY/BP

## Bridge by Zorro

### Solution to the problem on page 10

As Defenders, you should always spend a (little) time thinking about the cards you see in front of you and what you can infer from these and the preceding bidding. Here, the bidding should indicate to East that South holds five spades and four diamonds: they opened with spades, not diamonds, and they didn't rebid spades as they probably would with six or more. With nine cards accounted for, South must also be short in hearts, and in any event, West would not have led ♥Q without a decent holding in that suit. Once they see dummy, East should draw a further inference: as South can be assumed to hold five spades, given their own singleton, West must be taken as holding four. That should give East the key to excellent defence – aim to promote one of West's trumps.

East must hope that West has a winning diamond, probable when South's bidding did not indicate an especially strong hand. With that in mind, East should overtake the lead with ♥A, follow with ♥K, and then play a third heart that South must ruff. South will think all is well until trumps start to be drawn, and they discover the 4–1 break with ♦A still to be played. If all trumps are drawn before South switches to diamonds, West will be left with a winning ♥J once they win the ♦A. If South concedes the diamond trick before drawing all the trumps, West should play ♥J forcing South to ruff, which will leave West with the master spade. Either way, the contract is one down!

The full hands can be seen below, but note that the Defenders' success doesn't only depend on East's skill at imagining the two hands they can't see. They must also force South to ruff. Novice Defenders can be reluctant to 'gift' Declarers a ruff, and they should certainly never do this when Declarer can ruff in either dummy or their own hand. However, in this deal North has four hearts, so the option of ruffing heart returns in dummy simply does not apply. Forcing the ruff is, in fact, the winning strategy.

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

With acknowledgement to the seminar covered in *Better Bridge with Bernard – Thinking Defence*. One DVD from Bernard Magee's series of lectures to improve your success at the game of bridge.

Z

# PRIZE COURIER CROSSWORD

Set by PeeWit

Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is £10 to spend or even save. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. 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. The *Courier* would like to thank the Ambassador Theatre Group for its generosity in providing this prize for the competition. Details of how to enter below.

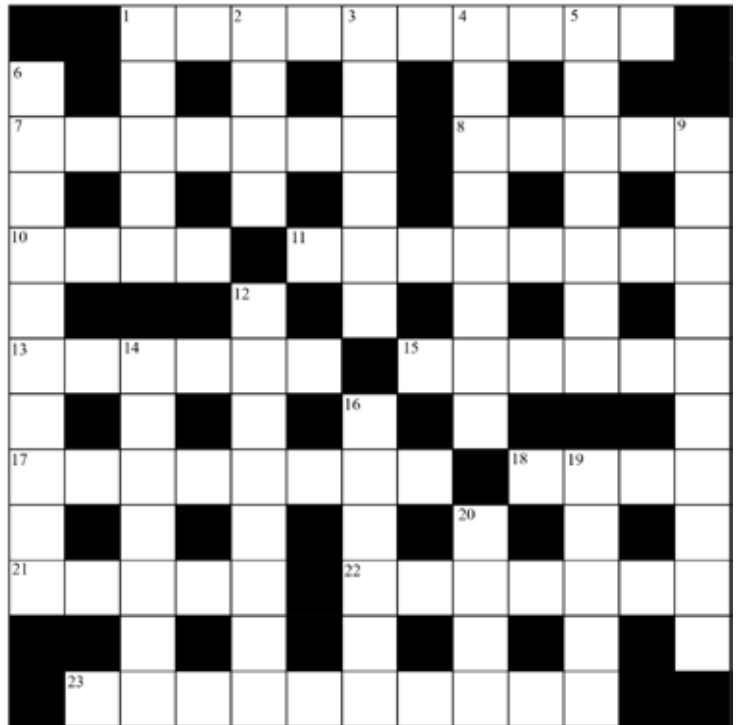
## ACROSS

- 1 Damn! Come up to right troublemaker (10)
- 7 Finish haystack in 17, 21 (7)
- 8 17, 21 not in the first three by the sound of it (5)
- 10 Her hairdo only got wet in a 17, 21 (4)
- 11 Discover brass instrument in 17, 21 (8)
- 13 Get back old US President with one inside (6)
- 15 Kirk trees? (6)
- 17 Countryman this cost something to be around (8)
- 18 Old politician was hot in his headpiece (4)
- 21 I've put myself in coat of rambler to find the burn (5)
- 22 A slap up organised in Sweden (7)
- 23 Shy peg got around in pool to study elections (10)

## DOWN

- 1 Power inside bolshy dromedary (5)
- 2 Beheaded ex PM laid to rest here (4)
- 3 Get lots of money with garden tool in use (4,2)
- 4 Heretics find lies everywhere (8)
- 5 Body part receives before time short honour (7)
- 6 So I ordered this mixed to remove a nasty smell (10)
- 9 Gesture to attract worker with a sign (4,6)
- 12 Grip and waft around paper on present (4,4)
- 14 Nothing in the small wood but furrows (7)
- 16 It's not genuine to pay your dues back in the post office (6)
- 19 A weighty villain (5)
- 20 Close by when you say please turn over (2,2)

Winner of the last crossword: Priscilla Douglas, Killearn



Solution to the last crossword: *Across*: 3 fairy; 7 deliverer; 8 sober up; 10 ous; 11 unexcited; 14 pylon; 15 eyrie; 16 Pepys; 18 state; 25 learned; 26 Vega; 27 carol; 28 holly hysterical. *Down*: 1 Ghandi; 2 groyne; 5 seasonal; 6 leap year; 9 Boxing Day; 10 raised; 12 appears; 13 festive; 17,19 Yuletide; 20,24 New Year; 21 parasol; 22 ungodly; 23 Aga.

Solve the crossword and then count how many times the letter 'D' appears in the crossword. Then either email or write the number of letters on a piece of paper and send it to the *Courier* for a chance to win our prize.

Instructions how to enter are given in the box below.

## Children's Prize Wordsearch

Find 10 words in the wordsearch grid that are the surnames of children's writers.

Eight of the words are: Blyton, Carroll, Grahame, Greenaway, Milne, Potter, Ransom, Walliams.

Can you find the other two? One writes about chocolate and the other a boy wizard. Write them down and post or email your answer to the *Courier* for a chance to win £10.

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

Instructions for sending it are given in the box below.

Good luck to all the contestants. PEEWIT

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 an envelope in the postbox outside the Village Hall, addressed to Peewit, before **7 April 2024**. Remember to give your name, address and a contact phone number. Children, please give your age.

Good luck, we love hearing from you.

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

Well done to the winner of the 'Spot the Difference' puzzle – Laura Gingles (Age 11).



## Starling-shire

Each spring, the day arrives when excited shrieking and frantic scrabbling from above the bedroom ceiling tells me that the starlings have returned. Supremely skilled at locating the tiniest of gaps between slates, gutters and drainpipes, they proudly announce their success at breaking into the roof space yet again. One can then hear them inspecting the area, clearing out any debris from the previous year and generally setting up camp. This is where they will nest.

Over the next few weeks, there is a fair amount of avian noise pollution to contend with. This is especially the case when newly-hatched chicks grow more and more impatient for food delivered by flustered parents darting in and out the nest repeatedly.

Such intermittent commotion is naturally not to everybody's taste, and many people will seek to have a starling-free zone by ensuring that all nooks and crannies are completely sealed up. But this is a species whose range is limited by the availability of suitable nest holes (in trees, cliffs and buildings) and whose British population suffered a serious decline by over 70 per cent between 1970 and 1999. Much of this drop has been ascribed to modern housing being harder for starlings (and other birds such as house sparrows) to infiltrate. There has since been some recovery, more so in Scotland than the rest of the UK, and it does still feel like a common enough bird, but the



data tells us that its UK Conservation Status has justifiably remained red-listed for over 20 years now.

Starlings are wonderfully boisterous at the bird table, collectively bullying smaller birds out the way until they've had their fill of all that's on offer. They are also known for their rich repertoire of calls and songs, the latter frequently interspersed with imitations of several other species such as curlew. Furthermore, they are famed for their spectacular pre-roost aerial gatherings (or 'murmurations') that twist and turn and spiral up and across the sky just before dark.

Over the winter, I have been studying them closely on the ground, too, mesmerised by their stunning plumage – a characterful medley of greasy spottiness and purple-green iridescence.

So I am more than happy to accommodate these beautiful birds as free tenants each year – though I really should charge them for the earplugs.

MARTIN CULSHAW

**Killearn Courier**  
is published by Killearn  
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Anyone wishing to contribute to the summer edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed on 16 August 2024.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 21 June 2024.

Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 21 June 2024.

Please send them to:

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