



# Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 55

SPRING 2023

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# Noticeboard

14 Mar	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> meeting. Ann Roy, 'Travellers' Tales'. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.	19 Apr	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ( <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk">fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk</a> ).
15 Mar	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ( <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk">fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk</a> ).	23 Apr	<b>The Willow Trio</b> concert. Village Hall, 3pm–4.30pm. Tickets £8; U18s, concessions £5. Listen to tracks on <a href="https://on.soundcloud.com/AQvYh">https://on.soundcloud.com/AQvYh</a> .
16 Mar	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> lecture by David Wright, 'The History of Wine'. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am. <a href="http://theartsocietystirling.org.uk">theartsocietystirling.org.uk</a> <b>Traditional Music Group</b> Garden Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm. For more information, contact Jackie (07999 776128). Also on 20 April, 18 May and 15 June.	27 Apr	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> 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.
21 Mar	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Talk by Heather Wright, 'Capturing Memories' (10.30am–12noon); workshop by Alexis Patrick, 'English Patchwork coasters' (12.30pm–2pm). New members welcome. Visitors £4 per session; first visit free. Contact Susan Rhind ( <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com">strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com</a> ).	1 May	<b>Killearn Health Centre</b> closed. <b>HubG63</b> community meals. Evening potluck in Killearn, time and venues tbc. Contact <a href="mailto:info@thehubg63.org.uk">info@thehubg63.org.uk</a> or 07745 744895 for more information.
22 Mar	<b>Killearn Community Garden</b> garden sessions with Emily McLennan. By Heron's Court off the A875, 10am–12noon. All welcome. Also on 20 April, 19 May, 17 June, 18 July and 20 August.	16 May	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> outing tbc. Contact Susan Rhind ( <a href="mailto:strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com">strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com</a> ).
22, 24 & 25 Mar	<b>FADs</b> plays: <i>Losers</i> by Brian Friel and Act 3 of <i>Plaza Suite</i> by Neil Simon. Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7pm for 7.30pm. For tickets, visit <a href="http://www.fintrydrama.org.uk">www.fintrydrama.org.uk</a> .	17 May	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ( <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk">fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk</a> ).
23 Mar	<b>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</b> talk by Dr Irene O'Brien, Glasgow City Archives, 'Scottish Poor Law'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm.	18 May	<b>The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley</b> lecture by Bernard Lockett, 'The Heritage of Gilbert and Sullivan'. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am.
26 Mar	<b>Women in Chamber Music</b> concert, 'Folklore and Fairy Tales', Village Hall, 3pm. Tickets online at <a href="http://womeninchambermusic.co.uk/concerts">womeninchambermusic.co.uk/concerts</a> or on the door, adults, £10; children under 12, £5; seniors, £8.	20 May	<b>Killearn Horticultural Society</b> plant sale and coffee morning. Village Hall, 10am–12noon. Schedule of classes for annual show on sale. For further info and updates, see <a href="http://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti">www.facebook.com/killearnhorti</a> or <a href="http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk">www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk</a> .
28 Mar	<b>Killearn Kirk Guild</b> AGM followed by musical entertainment. Kirk Hall, 1.15pm–3.15pm.	4 Jun	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Sacrament of Holy Communion. Who I am in Christ. 10.30am.
31 Mar	<b>Strathendrick Film Society</b> showing <i>1917</i> . Balfron High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20; £15 concessions.	15 Jun	<b>The Arts Society Stirling</b> lecture by Matthew Williams, 'Ghastly Good Taste'. Albert Halls Stirling, 11am.
5 Apr	<b>Drymen Church</b> Easter Service, 7.30pm.	21 Jun	<b>Killearn Community Council</b> meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom. 8pm. For the link to join the live stream, email Fiona ( <a href="mailto:fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk">fiona.rennie@killearncc.org.uk</a> ).
6 Apr	<b>Strathblane Church</b> Maundy Thursday Service, 7.30pm.	30 Jul	<b>Killearn Horticultural Society</b> Killearn Open Gardens village-wide event. Tickets and maps £6 (free for children) at the Village Hall. Teas and plant sale.
7 Apr	<b>Killearn Health Centre</b> closed. <b>Killearn Kirk</b> Good Friday Service, 7.30pm.	26 Aug	<b>Killearn Horticultural Society Annual Show</b> . Village Hall and Kirk Hall, 2pm–4.30pm. Scarecrow competition. Village Hall car park. For further info and updates, see <a href="http://www.facebook.com/killearnhorti">www.facebook.com/killearnhorti</a> or <a href="http://www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk">www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk</a>
9 Apr	<b>Killearn Kirk</b> Easter Service, 10.30am.		
10 Apr	<b>Killearn Health Centre</b> closed.		
18 Apr	<b>Strathendrick Stitchers</b> AGM followed by Heather Wright, 'Capturing Memories' workshop. Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. See 21 Mar for contact details.		

If you have dates of events 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.

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

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

### TUESDAY

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

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

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

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

### WEDNESDAY

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

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

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

### THURSDAY

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

**Children's Music Class:** Main Hall, 2.10pm–2.50pm.  
Contact Clare ([claremondaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:claremondaymusic@gmail.com)).

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

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

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

### FRIDAY

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

**Dancercise (adult 50+ fitness 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)).

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

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

## Editorial

Welcome to our first issue of this year. It seems a while ago now, but I hope you enjoyed the festive season, and are now looking forward to a happy and healthy 2023. Roll on spring!

Christmas for us was celebrated with our son and family in Demark which was accomplished in typical Danish style – so much so that I found the marzipan ‘pig’ in the almond rice (with hot cherry sauce) and won a set of face masks (don’t ask!). We had a lovely time, but this was dampened somewhat by our plane back being delayed which resulted in us getting home at 2 o’clock in the morning!

Our Group was saddened to learn of the death of one of our founder members, Christine Bowie, who passed away on 27 December. She was very much involved in setting up the *Courier*, and contributed consistently to the running of the magazine, as well as submitting humorous stories of personal experiences. Her husband John has composed a tribute to her which we are honoured to publish (see p34).

On a happier note, we were delighted to congratulate Fiona Rennie on being awarded a well-deserved British Empire Medal.

Inside this issue you will find some familiar articles and contributions as well as some new ones. The centre pages feature successful local groups with a focus on sustainability. Thinking globally and acting locally has never been so important.

In other pages, there are updates about the Killearn Heritage Trail, and a very interesting item on a small but perfectly formed George Buchanan book.

Killearnites are an open-handed bunch. Village organisations have given their time to raise money for various charities. The Christmas Post, Advent Windows and the Malawi Group raised £5,087.76 between them, all thanks to volunteers organising and to people donating. And while donating to worthy causes is a grand thing to do, I wonder if any of these kind benefactors have considered taking the next step and volunteering to help out? All you have to do is contact the organisers.

The weather during our November deliveries was pretty grim, so thank you to our deliverers. Thanks also to our advertisers staying with us through these difficult times. Please support them.

So, now, sit back, relax and enjoy this issue.

Ian

### Cover Image

The cover photo of a chaffinch at the feeder was captured by Chris Bell on one of his regular visits to the RSPB Nature Reserve, Lochwinnoch. It remains his copyright. Chris is a keen wildlife and bird photographer; you can see more of his photos at [www.chrisbellphotography.net](http://www.chrisbellphotography.net). Our thanks to Chris for permission to use his image.

### News in brief

Congratulations to Coffee Politik CIC which won a £10,000 Good Food for All award from Stirling Council. They also received £5,000 from the National Lottery's Let's Get Together fund and another £500 from Inspiring Communities – Ideas into Action, a Scottish Government initiative for rural communities. To find out where this is being put to good use, see our centre page feature.

Christmas Post in Killearn raised a grand total of £745.62 for CHAS. Rachel, their fundraiser, said '£700 is enough to cover the cost of a two-day home visit..., giving a family respite help caring for their child.' You helped make this happen, so well done!

Glasgow LEZ (Low Emission Zone) expands on 1 June, and looks to include the off-ramp of the M8 to Craighall Street, the entire city centre, Port Dundas Road and possibly Garscube Road, both of which many in Killearn use for commuting. You will not incur a penalty if you hold a Blue Badge and there are certain other exemptions. For all the details, check at: [Glasgow.gov.uk/LEZ](https://glasgow.gov.uk/LEZ).

Proposals to construct an algae manufacturing facility at Claylands Farm have been given conditional approval by Stirling Council's Planning and Regulation Panel. The process involves fermenting co-products from the whisky industry with micro algae to create a source of Omega-3, eliminating the reliance on wild-caught fish. The resulting Omega-3 paste will be used for pet food. The site will be accessed via the existing access into the farm from the B818. Read the report at: [minutes.stirling.gov.uk/PDFs/Planning&Regulation/Agendas/PlanRegAgenda.pdf](https://stirling.gov.uk/PDFs/Planning&Regulation/Agendas/PlanRegAgenda.pdf).

Stirling Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has published a detailed guide in response to the current cost of living pressures, including information, advice and guidance for anyone in the situation of being unable to feed themselves and their immediate family. Visit the Citizens Advice Scotland website ([www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/)) or the Scotland-wide user friendly money map [moneymap.scot/](https://moneymap.scot/) for a full index of the help and guidance available.

Electric vehicle owners will have noticed that on 1 Feb, a tariff on the Council's charging points came into force, bringing it into line with most other local authorities. With a minimum fee of £1.50, the new tariff is set at 25p/kWh at slow and fast charge points, and 35p/kWh at rapid charge points. The maximum stay at rapid charging points has been set at 40 minutes, with an overstay penalty of £1/minute up to £60. Obviously, that still gives you time to pop across the road and have a cuppa while the car charges up!



The grand total of £1,102.90 for the work of Shelter was raised through the Advent Windows Trail during December. Half of this was from the Gift Star online giving page, and half through the collection buckets, those that were carried around the village each night, along with those left in the Co-op, Old Mill and collection taken by the Church.

Once again, huge thanks to everyone who took part – whether creating and hosting a window, coming along to one of the events, giving us money when you saw us in the village, donating online or taking time to follow the trail around the village and see all the windows.

We hope you've enjoyed it as much as we have, and the good news is, we're going to do it all again this Christmas! Watch out for advance notice in a future *Courier*. In the meantime, if you want to offer to help either in hosting a window, being a local bucket rattler, or another job to share some of the load, do contact Glenda at [killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com](mailto:killearn.advent.windows@gmail.com) and we'll get in touch later in the year when we know how things are looking.

LINDSAY KIRK

## The Abbeyfield – Gone But Not Forgotten

From pioneering beginnings, Abbeyfield built a legacy of care in the Killearn community, supporting independent living for older people in a homely setting.

Moving with the times and to ensure financial resilience, Abbeyfield transferred its undertakings to Blackwood Homes and Care on 1 September 2022. The company is a well-established housing association with similar values.

The Friends of Abbeyfield wish you well.

MAUREEN BLACKMORE

The 2023 Burns Poetry Competition and winner of the Jean Pairman Shield was Wallace from P4 who read the poem 'Fed Up'.

The scenes at P7 Burns Supper on 25 January 2023 will be remembered for all time. It started with Scots word-games and 'Address to a Haggis' was recited by our very own Jamie Gordon, P6. Our main course consisted of haggis, neeps and tatties, with veggie haggis for the vegetarians and, as a special treat, Irn Bru and custard creams. The P7s were delighted and grateful for this kind gesture. Laughter and chat was carried throughout the afternoon.

P5 has been doing experiments on floating and sinking. They used tinfoil to make identical boats. They were all given a handful of coins to place in the boats and wrote a hypothesis on the number of coins it would take for the boats to sink. There were different variations of the answer.

P4 are currently working on a gymnastics show. The shows consisted of different stands and poses. They



were divided into four groups and competed against each other to see which group had the best routine.

P3 have been celebrating the Scottish festival and Saint Andrew's Day. They learnt different Scottish songs including 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'Donald Where's Your Troosers'.

P2 is learning about the artist and author Steven Brown. He painted the famous artwork named the McCooos. The P2 class enjoyed making their own artwork inspired by the McCooos. They are also currently reading some of his literature.

P1/2 made a hedgehog hideout using outside materials. They put cat food in it for the hedgehogs, and brushed the 'floors' with ink, to find hedgehog footprints. They were successful – hedgehog footprints were found!

And, finally, P1 went on a virtual trip to Edinburgh Castle! They enjoyed eating their snacks while pretending to be on a bus. They sang songs like 'Ye cannae push yer granny aff the bus' and 'Auld Lang Syne'. Once they 'arrived' at Edinburgh castle, they put an image of the landmark on the screen to make it seem more life-like.

THE PRESS GANG

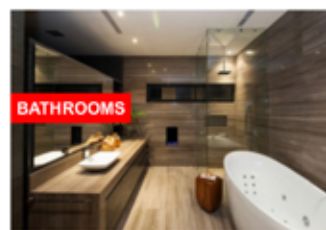
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# The Weather Channel

The year 2022 was memorable in the UK and for most of Europe for a long, very dry and hot summer. Lincolnshire recorded a new UK record 40.3° temperature on 19 July, and new national records were set in Scotland (34.8° in the Borders) and Wales (37.1° in Flint). The June to August period was the hottest on record in England. The Killearn weather year did not see the temperature extremes of the south, but had a mean temperature of 5.3° in January – 1.5° higher than normal.

We had very dry months in January, March, April, June and July, but October recorded rain every day, and we had only two dry days in November.

Freja Vamborg, senior scientist for the Copernicus Climate Change Service, stated ‘an intense series of heatwaves across Europe paired with unusually dry conditions have led to a summer of extremes with records in terms of temperature, drought and fire activity in many parts of Europe.’

A number of my Weather Channel reports of late have referred to records being broken in temperatures, rainfall and occasionally winds. Headlines use the phrase ‘the hottest year on record’. The phrase ‘on record’ relates back to 1880, and the reason for this reference point is that climate data doesn’t cover enough of the planet prior to 1880 to obtain accurate readings. Whilst the recording

of land surface temperatures pre-dates 1880, the level of uncertainty goes up considerably.

Humans have been measuring temperature since the early 1700s when the thermometer was invented. Formal weather stations before 1800 were mostly in Europe and the United States, but by 1880 were rapidly spreading to other parts of the world.

There is, however, a great deal of older data that has not been digitised and sits in old weather offices and ships logs. The British East India Company, for example, travelled extensively between 1789 and 1834 and collected a great deal of weather data.

Researchers have also been crowd sourcing to digitise weather data from as early as 1867 in Uzbekistan, El Salvador, Malawi and Tanzania. Philip Brohan, a climate scientist at the Met Office, is working with a team to collate hundreds of thousands of these records and digitising them so they can be added to the pre-1880 global climate records.

Nearer to home, weather observations taken every hour during the years 1883 to 1904 on the summit of Ben Nevis have now been transcribed from the original publication into digital form by over 3,500 ‘citizen scientist’ volunteers who completed the task in three months.

TOM RENFREW

Yearly Summary for Killearn (2022)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Highest Temp	12.6	10.1	17.9	20.3	19.6	22.7	28.7	26.6	21	15.1	15.6	11.7
Lowest Temp	-2	-3.1	-3.1	-2.4	3.9	5.2	6.3	6.9	4.2	3.4	-0.4	-7.7
Mean Temp	5.3	4.8	6.1	8.2	11.2	13.3	15.3	14.8	12.6	10.3	7.6	2
Days Below Freezing	5	4	8	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14
Highest Wind Gust	43	48	22	23	35	18	29	19	26	17	17	21
Monthly Rain	61.2	189.4	47.3	29.8	70.2	58.8	39.2	75.6	83.5	241.9	157.1	183.2
Most Rain in 24 hrs	10.6	22.2	14.8	7.8	17.2	13.8	7.2	18.4	23	23.9	23.2	32
Days without Rain	13	1	16	19	8	11	16	10	9	0	2	12
Cumulative Rainfall	61.2	250.6	297.9	327.7	397.9	438.7	477.9	553.5	637	879.8	1036.9	1220.1

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

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# The Horti in 2023 — Not Just an Annual Show!

The Horticultural Society committee has been potting up its ideas, and with annuals, perennials and some new blooms, it looks like the Horti has a flourishing year ahead with an open gardens day, plant sale, coach trip and annual show – and a new idea – we are looking for Friends.

First things first. Last year our plant sale raised our second highest ever takings total, helping fund the Annual Show and supporting local voluntary and charitable organisations.

This year our Plant Sale & Coffee Morning is on Saturday, 20 May, in the Village Hall car park. We welcome any spare plants and garden bric-a-brac, and our Annual Show's Schedule of Classes will also be on sale.



Our most exciting news is that as part of the Scottish Garden Scheme a number of gardens in Killearn will be open to the public on Sunday, 30 July, raising money for Colourful Killearn, Strathcarron Hospice and Killearn Community Futures Company. Tickets will be on sale at the Village Hall, along with refreshments and a plant sale. It's not too late if you want to take part, but you will need to let us know soon.

Less than a month later, it's the 157th Annual Show on Saturday, 26 August. Based around the Village and Church halls, the Show is a family-friendly event for the young and not so young which everyone is welcome to enter.

It's not just about flowers. There are baking, craftwork, art and photography sections, as well as vegetables, fruit and pot plants – and a scarecrow competition. The wines and cordials class was very popular last year, possibly due to people learning new skills during lockdown! After each Show, most of the flowers are available for sale – last year we raised £91 for Strathcarron Hospice.

We are keen to ensure that there are lots of entrants in the Youth section, which includes best picture, a miniature garden, any craftwork, or most amusing misshapen vegetable.

But however old you are, you need a 'Schedule of Classes' to enter, available first at our Plant Sale. The Schedule is an excellent opportunity for local businesses to promote themselves, so if you are interested in placing an advert, please get in touch.

It's easy to think that all this takes place without effort or planning.



But although we have more than a dozen people on the committee, we are always looking for new faces to help as we want to continue to meet the Horti's aim to 'promote interest, knowledge and skills in the practice of horticulture and crafts'. Therefore, we are looking for people to be a 'Friend of the Horti' which could involve volunteering to assist at events, being a steward, selling schedules, serving teas, all without being on the committee. If this sounds of interest, please get in touch or talk to a committee member – full details are on our website.

Thank you for your support. You can read about all our events at [killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk](http://killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk) or email us at [kchs@killearn.org.uk](mailto:kchs@killearn.org.uk).

Local hero Fiona Rennie has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours List for services to rowing.

A keen tennis and badminton player in her university days, Fiona later got drawn into volunteering in student sports administration, first for tennis and then rowing. Since 2008, Fiona has been Chair of the British Universities and College Sports (BUCS) Event Management Group for Rowing, supporting the planning and delivery of university rowing events. For the past five years she has served as Secretary to the British Rowing Sport Committee and she volunteers at three national British Rowing Championships each year. As if that was not enough – on top of her paid work as a Project Manager for NHS Scotland – Fiona is Chair of the Scottish Rowing Competition Strategy Group. Fiona finds volunteering with these organisations, and particularly working with the students and the highly committed coaches, hugely rewarding. Her award is clearly well merited.

A 'serial volunteer', Fiona is a well-known figure around Killearn serving on the Village Hall Committee, Killearn Community Futures Company, Killearn Community Council, the Killearn Heritage Trail project and running the DIY Circuits group. Oh yes, and she is a dedicated daughter to Mum, Ebeth, too!

Well done, Fiona, you're a star!

NH



The Killearn Beer Festival is happy to announce that we are open for business once again for our 10th (yes, 10th!) annual event, taking place at the Old Mill, Balfron Road, Killearn, on Saturday, 3 June at 2pm.



This is a community and family-focused event, with a relaxed atmosphere where you can enjoy great beers, ciders, food and music.

As usual, we will feature local breweries such as Loch Lomond, and we are also looking forward to revisiting favourite ales from the last decade, sourced from a host of independent breweries across Scotland.

An entry fee of £6 will get you a KBF glass and tasting notes, but entry is free for non-beer drinkers and a range of wines will be available.

A full list of the beers and tasting notes will be posted on the Killearn BeerFest website and Facebook pages.

As with all our events, the bulk of any surplus earned will be distributed to local clubs, schools and charities, with over £6,000 of such donations delivered so far.

We are very much looking forward to seeing you on 3 June for another great village event – put it in your diary now!

MARK WHITE



## The Wine Shelf: Thinking of Investing?

This has already been a very interesting year in the UK, and it is only just getting started. So given some of the most unique circumstances, with so many market forces coming to a head at once, it seemed an ideal time to consider again where we might find value in wine, and for some, where we might find a return on investment.

Every element of a bottle of wine is increasing, and soon there will be the additional cost of the Deposit Return Scheme in Scotland and revised Duty rate structure on alcohol. Due to political influences around the world, there are glass, cork, packaging and oak shortages, and when they are all resolved there are then container shortages and port delays. All of these lead to price increases.

As is often the case, the 'value' and return on investment of wine sits very firmly at one end of



the spectrum. Over the last 30 years the fine wine market has proven to be a very stable investment opportunity, with LivEx, the global investment platform, reporting a compound annual growth rate of 10 per cent. Even when all other elements of the market are in flux, such as during the 2008 crash, wine continued to perform well, making it a more secure investment than less tangible products.

As we see the value of our money shrinking, even with the smallest of investments, this may be a safer place than a lot of the more traditional alternatives. Plus, due to a growth in wine investment companies, all the heavy lifting can be taken out of your hands. And if it all does go wrong? At least it is one area of investment where you get something really lovely to drink at the end of it all.

ELAINE TAYLOR

## Killearn Village Hall

The Killearn Village Hall 'Warm Space' opened at the beginning of January and we're hoping our 'Warm Space' embodies values that we practice across all our activities: a warm and friendly approach, welcoming, hard-working, open and colourful. We are hugely thankful to all our volunteers and recognise their contributions.

The warm, friendly space in the Garden Room is open for folk – especially those on their own, those looking for company – to drop in on Saturdays and Sundays between 2pm and 5pm for a cuppa and a chat, to bring a board game, or maybe a cake or a packet of biscuits to share! But if you just want to sit and read a newspaper or a book, that's fine, too. Volunteers are on hand to make tea or coffee and offer to be a partner in a card game or dominoes match.

As I write we're only three weeks in, but already it's lovely to see lots of happy faces, people playing table tennis, dominoes, Scrabble. People sitting chatting, enjoying cake and biscuits. We hope it can continue through the winter months to help brighten up weekends.

In the run up to Christmas, we were delighted to partner again with Killearn Primary School to host the first Advent Window. A huge thanks to all of those involved, including the KPS Fundraising Group and our volunteer carol singers for making the opening night such a busy, welcoming vibe for all of the community.

We're on your doorstep – we're keen to help – come and chat! or email us ([killearnvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:killearnvillagehall@gmail.com)).



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## Thursday Club News

The Thursday Club runs weekly from January to the end of May (excluding 6 April for the Easter weekend). It is a social club for seniors run by a group of volunteer hostesses and drivers. We meet in the Church Hall where members have a game of cards, dominoes, scrabble or just a chat, followed by afternoon tea.

This year our Christmas treat was the Fintry pantomime *Babes in the Wood*, which was attended by 20 club members. One of the members, who doesn't normally care for pantomimes, enjoyed the evening. A further three, never having been to a FADS production, were pleasantly surprised by the performance quality, professionalism and community participation.

It was disappointing for all when earlier this year our club was closed for one week, due to bad weather/icy conditions and for a further week due to a faulty heating system. On 9 February when the Church Hall was used by the Blood Transfusion Service, we relocated to the Kitchen Window for tea with a lovely view.

If you wish to join us, please contact Maureen (550743), Alison (07776 250226) or Pat (550074).



Birthday celebration for a club member



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## Bridge by Zorro



The Killearn Club held its annual dinner recently, for the first time since 2019. A very enjoyable 'individual' competition held in the afternoon was followed by an excellent meal at the Old Mill for 22 members.

For now, we continue with a mix of online and face-to-face club nights, the first Tuesday of each month being face-to-face. Over the summer, we will probably continue to make online bridge available.

To join us for Tuesday club nights, please register on our website ([www.bridgewebs.com/killearn/](http://www.bridgewebs.com/killearn/)); for the classes or any other query, please email us via the website.

Most players will recognise the need to preserve communication between partnering hands, and this applies to both Declarer and the defence. Furthermore, with No Trump contracts in particular, there is often a need to set up a long suit by Declarer, and the defence wish to prevent that.

The golden rule, applicable to both sides is: 'Try to lose tricks (that are unavoidable) as early as possible to maintain communications'. As a defender there may also be an opportunity to mislead Declarer.

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

Dealer: South Vulnerable: Neither

<b>South</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>
2NT*	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

\*Promising 20–21 points.

West leads ♠Q taken by South's ♠K. This is followed by the lead of ♦Q to West's ♦4 and Dummy's ♦5. With the hand above, consider how, as East, you might best defend against this 3NT contract. See page 30 for the answer.

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## Ladies' Night in Killearn

It sounds very demure, a Ladies' Night in Killearn. It was anything but!

The ladies of Killearn were out to party on Friday, 18 November 2022, and party they did. The village hall rocked with the music provided by talented singer Alan Parker, who kept the sell-out hall dancing the night away. Apparently some ladies were still partying well into the morning!

It was wonderful to see the full age range in the village represented and up on their feet dancing. There were a few lucky guys privileged to be at the party, but they were there to work, dressed in amusing aprons, to serve drinks and pakora to the dancers. They were kept very busy, but – almost a disaster – they ran out of Prosecco!

As well as the entertainment, there were raffles with many prizes donated by individuals and businesses in and around Killearn and further afield. We are very grateful to the many generous donors. The raffles raised an amazing £1,313.

The night was organised by the Killearn Malawi Group to publicise and help finance their latest project: the building of a girls' hostel at Nkhande secondary school in the far south of Malawi. It is actually the local community itself which is asking us to help it to build this facility. Many girls who win places at the school live so far away that they have to find accommodation for themselves nearby. But there's nobody to look after these young girls and they are very vulnerable, with the result that most of them drop out and don't complete their secondary education. We know from elsewhere in Malawi that a girls' hostel is a gamechanger for their secondary education, and can enable more girls to go on to access further education as well.

The event raised the final sum of £3,221.24, which is just phenomenal. Thanks are due to many people who worked hard to make it work: principally to Shona Kelday and others on the Killearn Malawi Group, and also to Alan Parker, to the Village Hall committee, to the waiters and to many friends, particularly Lesley and Craig Moir.

It is now 30 years since the Killearn Malawi Group started, firstly in the Kirk by supporting a missionary partner in the north of Malawi, then as a registered charity (SC043555) with partners and other groups working in the north. Now it is working with communities in a very poor area in the far south of the country. We are very lucky with our Malawian partners who help to facilitate our work in both areas, and who have visited and stayed in Killearn. Some of our group have also visited Malawi, and experienced the friendliness of people in the 'Warm Heart of Africa'.



The Killearn Malawi Group is a small charity, but it makes a big impact in the communities with which it works. We welcome your interest, and it costs nothing to become a Friend and receive occasional news about our activities. Just contact Ken Allen ([chair@killearnmalawigroup.org](mailto:chair@killearnmalawigroup.org)) or Sue Beck ([treasurer@killearnmalawigroup.org](mailto:treasurer@killearnmalawigroup.org)).

Donations are always very gratefully received, by contacting Sue Beck as above.

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Following a hybrid meeting on 18 January, the community was unanimous in confirming that this was the preferred format for future meetings.

From March, all meetings will be in person in the Garden Room of the Village Hall and also online. We have relocated from the Primary School in order to have adequate broadband coverage.

Regarding business, the main issues of concern at present would appear to be the poor bus service, flooding, potholes and broadband.

We continue to forward complaints and irregularities relating to buses through Valerie Brand in Buchlyvie, who is leading the contact with Stirling Council.

We have contacted the Roads Department in respect of flooding, particularly for Dumgoyne where we understand the dam higher on the hillside was breached by the sheer volume of water, but also for Graham Road within the village which is affected whenever rainfall is heavier than normal. We are anxious to have remedial measures put in place. This may include some form of planting at Dumgoyne to stem the flow and to have a more regular maintenance check on drainage within the village.

With the recent spell of weather many more potholes have emerged. The Stockiemuir Road is particularly affected, and we would urge anyone noticing these to

report them to the Roads Department immediately.

Despite the continued efforts of the Broadband Group, it would appear that adequate provision cannot be provided in Killearn Primary School until summertime. There are also around 600 houses waiting to have a fast broadband provision. There does not appear to be any way in which Openreach can be persuaded to improve programmes.

All of these issues are also being taken up on our behalf by our three local Councillors.

In terms of major developments, at the former hospital site, fencing has been erected and additional survey work is being undertaken. Cala has indicated a willingness to meet with the Community Council in respect of roads and pathways. We understand Stirling Rural Housing Association awaits final financial consent before commencing work at Lampson Road. At the time of writing, landscaping work was being carried out at the former hotel to finalise the project.

Lastly, we would remind everyone that elections for a new Community Council will take place in June. It is worthwhile having this body to maintain liaison with all statutory services, and we would ask anyone interested to contact any member of the present Community Council.

JIM PTOLOMEY, KILLEARN CC

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## Childrenswear Shop Comes to Killearn

Killearn's Jo McHugh has opened a childrenswear boutique, Huckleberry Tree Lane, in the iconic bothy, The Lodge, down at Killearn Mill.

Jo will already be familiar to *Courier* readers as one of the faces behind McFarlane Ironmongers in Balforn. Leaving the nuts and bolts to husband Richie, Jo is following her passion for children's clothes and in particular the more unusual brands that are not available on the high street.

Huckleberry Tree Lane carries sustainable and organic brands such as Little Green Radicals, Liewood, Organic Zoo and Claude & Co's 'Milking It' range.


Jo caters for clothing, shoes and accessories from babies to 13 years with prices to suit everyone.

Mums aren't left out, with wellbeing and pamper products to help them cope with their little ones.



The boutique is open Wednesday to Saturday from 10am to 5pm, and there are plans for a future online shop. Pop in or contact Jo ([hello@huckleberrytreelane.com](mailto:hello@huckleberrytreelane.com)).



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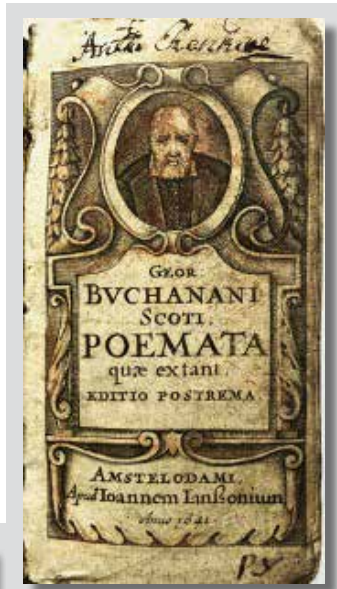
# George Buchanan Returns Home

We all know Killearn's monument to George Buchanan, but he is not an easy person to relate to, particularly given the severe demeanour shown in his portraits.

There are few other tangible artefacts in the village that can be linked back to the man. Yes, he was born at The Moss in 1506, but that house was replaced in 1812. The monument, imposing as it is, was built over 200 years after his death.

I was really pleased when I was given a book of Buchanan's Latin poems, published in Amsterdam in 1641, 59 years after his death. It is now 382 years since it was printed. What a survivor, and now it was back in the village!

The first thing to notice about the book is its size. While it has 562 pages, the page size is only 56mm by 106mm – not much larger than a credit card.



It is in its original plain leather binding and shows signs of much use.



The book was published in Amsterdam by Johannes Janssonius, who was born in 1588 (six years after the death of Buchanan). Whilst surprising that a map publisher should produce such a small-format book, he must have seen a commercial publishing opportunity – a similarly sized edition had been published in 1628 by Elzevir, the most famous 17th-century Dutch publisher.



The biography of George Buchanan, at the start of the book, notes that he was born in the province of Leven, by the river Blane, in a rustic villa.



Photo courtesy of David McKay

The challenge of fitting all of Buchanan's poetry into such a small format would certainly tax the eyesight of today's typesetters and readers. Some pages contain over 400 words, whereas if the typesize were the same as that used by the *Courier*, squeezing in 90 words would have been difficult.

Buchanan was one of the last significant writers of poetry in Latin. This book contains works that shaped his life. His satires on Franciscan monks led to his exile from Scotland in 1539. He went to Bordeaux, where he translated two of Euripedes' plays, *Medea* and *Alcestis*, from Greek into Latin.

By 1547 he was in Coimbra, Portugal, but soon his satirical and love poetry offended the Inquisition and he was imprisoned. During this time, he wrote his Latin versions of the Psalms (still used 300 years later to teach Latin in Scottish schools).

Buchanan returned to Scotland in 1561, initially tutoring Mary, Queen of Scots. He soon stopped writing poetry, fell from royal favour and wrote diatribes against the role of monarchy.

I'll see what opportunities there might be to share this book with the village.

CHRISTOPHER RICHES



The Introduction to his play *Jephthes*, showing the normal size of type used in the book.

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## Killlearn Health Centre News

### Appointment Update

We continue to offer our patients a choice of either face-to-face or telephone consultations. Telephone contact became important during Covid and indeed has remained a popular choice for patients with conditions which do not necessarily require examination. We have consistently adapted our appointment system to ensure we offer good access to all our patients. We remained open throughout the pandemic and have come out with an adaptable appointment system.

### Respect

It saddens us to have to write this, but we are aware of an increase in abusive and disrespectful behaviour towards both our reception and clinical teams from a very small minority of patients. We cannot – and will not – tolerate such behaviour towards any member of staff. We ask all patients to follow the example of the majority and show respect to all our staff.

### Vaccinations

We are sorry to advise all patients that, from 1 April 2023, in line with Scottish Government strategy, responsibility for the administration of all vaccines will transfer from the practice to Forth Valley Health Board. This includes flu, Covid, shingles, pneumococcal and all childhood immunisations. The Forth Valley Immunisation team will schedule, appoint and contact all patients as required.

Please be aware this is not a practice decision, but is a decision which has been made at Scottish Government level and facilitated by Forth Valley Health Board.

### Staff Update

Dr Maria J. Barroso Relinque joined us in February 2023 as our ST1 trainee. We continue to offer Foundation Year training to medical student Dr Zak Slevin, who will finish his rotation on 4 April. Dr Jessica Polkey will start her Foundation Year rotation on 5 April.



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## Rural Paradise

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Am I right in thinking that jigsaw puzzles are making a comeback? Many years ago there was a shop in Glasgow that sold nothing else, but it eventually closed. We would all have had to buy a puzzle every 10 days to make it viable. One friend used to buy a jigsaw at his local charity shop at the weekend, take it back the next Saturday and buy another. No regular shop could compete with that. But various stores do have them, especially around Christmas time. And catalogues abound. The jigsaw is back.

We have several of them jamming up a cupboard. Lots of them feature subjects like dinosaurs, Spiderman or Star Trek, but there are much classier adult ones. We have a couple of Christmas scenes that are just a delight, like the one featuring all the characters in the Twelve Days. Each set appears together, milking cows or playing drums, except for one of their number who has got separated from the rest and the puzzler has to find them in another part of the picture. At 1,000 pieces, it is now too much for us oldies, but it is a charming picture. As is the circular puzzle of a skating scene by Avercamp (1585–1634), a painter from the Dutch Golden Age. I looked him up on Google. It's just beautiful, and you do feel smart when you finish it. I noticed this year that Oakwood sported several really pretty Christmas puzzles, but I didn't see any at less than 1,000 pieces. If they'd been 250 or 300, I'd have bought one. Maybe next year, when I'm in for my tree.

Our cupboard also houses one or two nostalgia pieces, a '50s tearoom in a seaside resort, or a village shop offering broken biscuits. We have several city scenes, like the street in Lincoln with wall-to-wall half timbering. That one is a serious challenge. We do not have any plates of baked beans or unrelieved North Sea. They are a challenge too far. We prefer something that's going to give pleasure to the eye when it's finished.

Some of the visitors we have had recently from the city have commented on what a pretty area we live in, and even expressed a desire to live here some day. And have you noticed, when you start up Google, how often Killearn figures on these lists of 'Scotland's poshest village', or 'Prettiest village in the UK'? That set me thinking. We do live in a chocolate box/jigsaw village, and so do lots of others. Someone could clean up designing jigsaws of all the villages. From the bustle of Buchanan Street in Balfron, with its shops, gateways,

side roads, cars and buses, moving and static, to the placidity of Killearn's Glebe, where all you see is the church, some grass and a bunch of sheep – they would both make good subjects. The handsome proportions of Buchlyvie's main thoroughfare would make a fine traditional picture and the Square in Drymen would sell all over the place.



But Killearn outranks them all. Could that be why it was chosen as the place to film the new children's TV programme, *Olga da Polga*, filmed in Lampson Road last summer? It is set mainly in a pretty garden, but there are intermittent shots of the Glebe, the Main Street, the Balfron Road. So come on, some budding entrepreneur. Put the villages on the map. The jigsaw world awaits you, in a

variety of sizes. Oh, and while you're at it, print some postcards.

JOYCE BEGG

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## P6 Girls Bake to Help Earthquake Children

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Laura, Emmylou, Florence and Lena, P6 girls from Killearn Primary School, wanted to help the children in Turkey and Syria after seeing the heart-breaking images and devastation of the earthquake. So they organised a bake sale fundraiser for UNICEF on 11 February, and raised an astonishing £645 to help support the organisation's work with children caught up in the disaster.

It was all their own idea, and they organised everything themselves – from making and putting up posters to the baking, which took days to accomplish.

They were delighted that many kind people from the village donated baking, too, making a wonderful array of home-made goodies. There was a bit of baking left, so the girls' two friends, Nina and Rose, sold that at a rugby event in Fintry.



# A KILLEARN HERITAGE TRAIL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Continuing our feature of recollections with Jim Simpson who is part of the oldest resident family in the village – ‘the last of the Mohicans’.

**Not many of us still sleep in the same bedroom in the same house as we were born in decades earlier, but Jim Simpson does.**

Leading a busy and productive life, Jim is part of one of the oldest families in Killearn (along with the McGowans and the Gilfillans) who own the block of sandstone houses on Main Street and the Panik Gallery.

Jim’s ancestors first moved to Killearn in the early 1700s and worked as cartwrights and wheelwrights, making barrows and wheels for local farmers, and spinning wheels for the wool and cotton industry in the area. The original family home was at No. 21, currently owned by Jim’s cousin, Moyra Simpson, and the ground now occupied by Nos 15–19 was the site of the saw draught pit and original workshop. No. 19 was built by Jim’s great-grandfather, Robert Simpson, in 1865. Nos 15–19 were sublet to various local inhabitants, and No. 15, where Jim now lives, was once a general store selling groceries, cakes and sweets.

The family business developed their joinery trade and from time to time had upwards of 10 joiners working on a wide range of specialist carpentry products including water wheels for Glengoyne Distillery and bespoke timber-work such doors and staircases. They built many of the older houses in Killearn such as Blairessen, The Bungalow, King’s Mile and Auchenibert –



Robert Simpson Sr in the snow



James Simpson (Jim's grandfather) with a water wheel made for Glengoyne Distillery

indeed Charles Rennie Mackintosh held planning meetings for that project with Jim’s grandfather in No. 19!

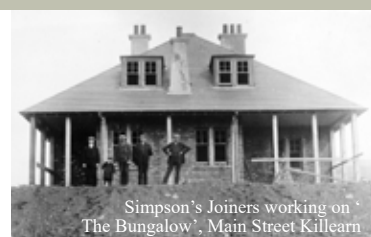
The joinery workshop on Main Street was built in 1933 and is now the Panik Gallery. The buildings behind were originally the stables and byre for the business horse and milking cow, which grazed the garden to the rear. And if you ever wondered why the pavements outside the ‘Simpson block’ are chipped rather than paved, it is because they never gave up their rights to the pavement to the local authority.

Jim’s father (also Jim) and uncles Robert and Rennie all worked in the joinery business which diversified into coffin making and funeral undertaking. Born in 1949, Jim attended (the old) Killearn Primary School and (the old) Balforn High. His Saturday jobs as a youth included sweeping out the sawdust from the workshops and splitting sticks for the old folk. His upbringing included many happy times and adventures with the Life Boys and the Boys’ Brigade – which played an important role in the life of the village for many years. Gifted at art, Jim’s Mum encouraged him to pursue this talent, and so he left for Dundee to study architecture.

After almost 250 years distinguished service, Jim’s Uncle Rennie finally closed the Simpson’s joinery business in 1981. In 1977 Jim and his wife, Henrietta, an interior designer, had opened Town and Country Designs. Jim and Henrietta were in the same class at Balforn High and both studied at the Dundee College of Art. They have two daughters, Annika and Henrika, who also work in the family design business, Designworks, based in Glasgow, but Jim is the last male in the long line of Simpson’s in Killearn: ‘the last of the Mohicans’.



KILLEARN HERITAGE TRAIL



Simpson's Joiners working on 'The Bungalow', Main Street Killearn

These photos and more are available on the KHT website [www.killearnheritage.org.uk](http://www.killearnheritage.org.uk)

NH

## FADS Presents: Two One-Act Comedy Dramas

Every year, FADS enters a play into the British One-Act Play Festival for community drama and this year, it's



*Losers* by acclaimed Irish playwright, Brian Friel. Set in rural Ireland in the 1960s, this touching and humorous play features middle-aged couple, Andy and Hanna, along with Mrs Wilson, Hanna's 'invalid' mother, who lives with them, and Cissy, Mrs Wilson's friend and neighbour. And then there's St. Philomena...

While *Losers* hopefully progresses through the competition, we're also putting on a second one-act play, Act 3 of *Plaza Suite* by four-time Toni winner, Neil Simon. It's the day of Mimsey's wedding and the bride has locked herself in the bathroom of Suite 719 of the Plaza Hotel in a fit of nerves. Penny-pinching father Roy and hysterical mother Norma are forced to consider where they might have gone wrong in Mimsey's upbringing, and focus on their own relationship for answers. Will Mimsey come out of the bathroom, and will the wedding go ahead?

These two plays will be performed on three evenings: Wednesday, 22 March and Friday-Saturday, 24-25 March, with doors opening at 7pm and curtain up at 7.30pm. Tickets are available online via our website at [www.finitydrama.org.uk](http://www.finitydrama.org.uk).

## Are You Interested in Wildlife and Natural History?

The Killearn Heritage Trail is developing a new section for its website highlighting our fascinating local habitats and our rich plant and animal life.

What creatures might we see where, and when?  
Why do they live where they do?  
What species are at risk, and what can we do to encourage or protect them?

Guided by experts who live in the area, community volunteers are being recruited to research and prepare content for the site.

If you would like to be involved, please email [heritage@kcfcc.co.uk](mailto:heritage@kcfcc.co.uk) for further information. No great expertise or specialist knowledge is required.



Images courtesy of Kay Roxby



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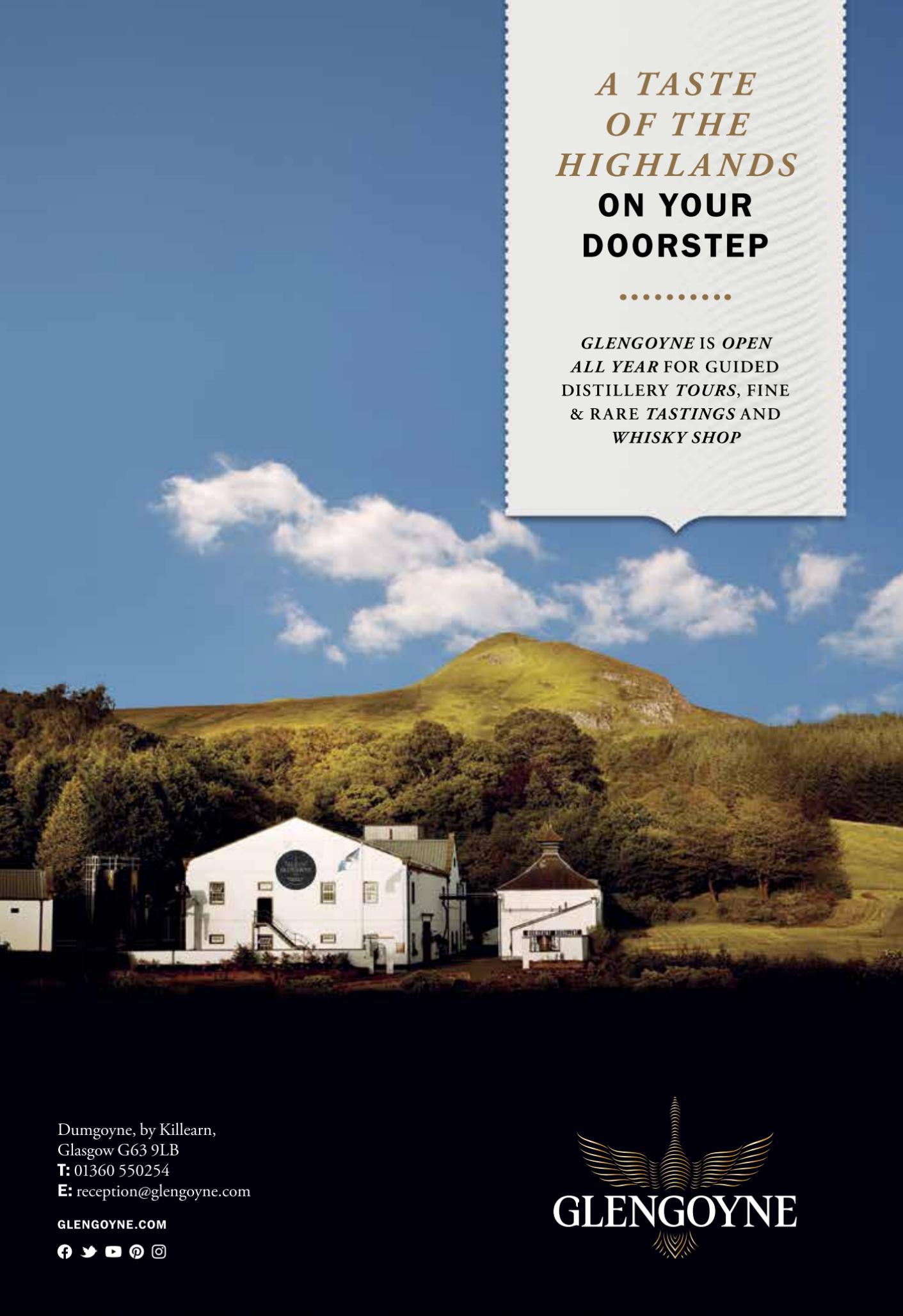
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## STRATHENDRICK Classic & Sports Car Club



Our winter programme of talks concluded with the final topics being 'The Fall and Rise of the Electric Car', 'A History of Aston Martin' and 'Ford Rally cars prepared by M-Sport'.

With lighter nights and sunnier days (we hope) our summer programme of events will get underway. These start with our AGM in April together with Drive-it-Day, when all of us with older cars and bikes are encouraged to dust them off from their hiding places over the winter and bring them out to let others admire them, too. This will again be run as a charity event in aid of Strathcarron Hospice. Last year we raised over £700 for them, and this support was recognised by the Hospice being chosen in the top 10 charities selected by *Practical Classics* magazine, the only Scottish organisation to be named. May will see us going to Banchory Lodge Hotel on Deeside for an overnight trip as well as informal runs before another



Above top: La Jamais Contente, electric powered  
1899 Land Speed Record holder  
Below: typical electric car of the modern era

visit to Drymen Show. If we have good weather again, it should be another excellent day!

In June we plan to have a trip to Loch Leven and the Japanese Garden and then another static show at the Village Hall. July will be the Car-BQ, and once more we hope for the fine weather and marvellous day we had last year. Taking advantage of the longer days in August, a trip up to Glen Coe has been proposed, and also a more local run in the evening.

In September we will head to Loch Fyne and another trip to the Scottish Torque Show – an interesting mix of cars and aeroplanes in aid of the RAF Foundation.

We have another 'mystery' event in October before we return to our winter programme of talks. So if you would like to join us – you don't even have to have a car, just an interest in motoring – then get in touch at [SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com](mailto:SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com).

DOUG ASHWORTH, SECRETARY

## Scam Alert

A re-occurrence of a scam was reported at a recent Community Council meeting. This revolved around being asked, allegedly by a family member or friend, to pay some bills due to their having to get a new phone. You can find this explained in detail in Issue 52 of the *Courier*.

A further instance is a communication – email, text or phone call – typically at this time of year when folk have been doing their tax returns. It is allegedly from HMRC, either about a rebate or (in my case) saying that 'an arrest warrant has been issued in your name due to tax fraud'. Initially I thought the phone call was from an 0191 number, which indeed is Newcastle, but using 1471 to check, it came up as 0019048-541356. But 0019 is an American dialling code, so I knew it was a scam. As usual, they are trying to get you to disclose your banking details.

Finally, I had another of the frequent phone calls: 'Amazon prime services have been renewed for £79. If you want to speak to our service manager, press 1 now.' Don't! Another scam.

As always, be healthily sceptical of any contact that comes out of the blue. If you think it might be genuine, verify it by independent means, rather than by some phone number or website link that they give you.

Take care!

DOUG ASHWORTH

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## SUSTAINABLE KILLEARN MEET UP

The relaunched Sustainable Killearn group had its first Meet Up in the Village Hall in January. A good turn-out included those with extensive knowledge and experience in this area and others who were beginning their sustainability journey and keen to find out more. The meeting considered the outline plans for each of the five themes (see diagram right). A wide-ranging discussion endorsed the overall plans as well as providing opportunities to improve ideas or linkages. Foraging is a key activity in both food and ecological sustainability and there was some swapping of ideas – though attendees were quite coy about the exact location of their favourite sites. Food sustainability was a popular topic with consideration around seasonal menu planning (and preserving to extend seasons) as well as the need to support and encourage core cooking skills. Speakers Emma Calvert, Lawrence Martin and Sarah Deas gave an overview of their sustainability work – covering respectively, G63 Growers and the Seed Library, sustainable farming at Carbeth Home Farm and Cycling Killearn.

We need to build on the enthusiasm of the Meet Up and find volunteers to take on individual themes and projects. There is so much that we could and should be doing to improve our sustainability.

Let's get together and make that happen. To find out more visit [www.kcfc.co.uk/sustainable.html](http://www.kcfc.co.uk/sustainable.html) or email [sustainable@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:sustainable@kcfc.co.uk) with any questions or to get involved in making a difference.

## FORTH VALLEY HUB INITIATIVE

The Scottish Government is supporting the development of a network of regional community climate action hubs. This network will help groups develop local plans, take up community funding opportunities and facilitate collaboration. A key aim is to ensure a joined up approach in significant aspects such as climate change, resilience and sustainability at a regional level. The Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (SCCAN) is employing regional network coordinators to help communities in identifying what they might need from a Hub and what shape it should take. It is planned that there will be a Forth Valley Hub which covers all of Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk. In January, Killearn hosted an inter-village discussion facilitated by Aisling Brady, the regional coordinator for our area. Colleagues from Drymen, Aberfoyle, Gartmore, Strathblane, Croftamie, Balfron and Kippen met to discuss our mutual challenges and how a Hub might help us tackle them.

There will be future meetings and more opportunities for everyone to get involved, but already these initial links are proving beneficial for ideas sharing, collaboration and providing a unified voice to speak up for our area.



## THE HUB G63 – A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PASSIONATE ABOUT FOOD, COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

We run the online farmers' market NeighbourFood providing an outlet for a selection of local food produce and sustainable shopping, including our new SustainaBox – ResilienceBox veg box scheme as well as eco household items.

Sustainabox is your local veg box, available to purchase on our online market at The Hub G63 page of NeighbourFood ([www.neighbourfood.co.uk/balfron](http://www.neighbourfood.co.uk/balfron)). We are also collaborating with two other groups – Upper Ballaird growers co-op (between Buchlyvie and Balfron) to supply ultra-local veg to the community and Seed Library G63 for seeds.

We grow food with and for the community, focusing this year on our Killearn site (just outside Killearn by Heron's Court). We aim to distribute as much as we can free or subsidised to those in need, via the ResilienceBox. It is paid for through: profit from SustainaBox veg sales; pay it forward – purchase an entire ResilienceBox for someone in need; from donations on our 'Buy me a coffee' page ([www.buymeacoffee.com/InfoJG](http://www.buymeacoffee.com/InfoJG)).

This is a community-based approach to tackling food poverty and insecurity. Please get in touch if you – or anyone you know – would benefit from support in this way. ResilienceBoxes will always be distributed in a dignified manner.



### The Killearn Garden

At the Killearn Garden we are 'growing for social purpose'. We are passionate about building community through food. By getting involved, you will find benefits for yourself as well as the community. Spending time in nature and being active in a way that suits you is known to be good for your own health. Then there's connecting with new people, learning new skills and polishing up your knowledge around food growing and climate issues.

Facilitated garden sessions are held every month at the Killearn Garden, from 10am–12noon from March until October with experienced gardener, Emily McLennan. The March session is on Wednesday, 22 March and the April one on Thursday, 20 April. See the Noticeboard (p2) for further dates. Giving a bit of your time and/or garden glut to support a community project and help tackle food poverty does everyone good.

### Community meals pull it all together

Share food and good craic with your friends and neighbours at the HubG63 free community lunches or suppers. These are spread out throughout the district, from Buchlyvie to Aberfoyle. The Killearn Potluck Evening is Monday, 1 May. Email [info@thehubg63.org](mailto:info@thehubg63.org) or phone 07745 744895 for more information and to book.



## PLANT A TREE IN '23

Stirling Council has committed to planting 80,000 trees in this year's planting season, though it has not yet clarified eligibility criteria or types of trees covered by the scheme. Some local land owners are already taking forward plans for increased planting and for extensive natural hedging, which will enhance our wider countryside setting. There is a real opportunity for us to identify areas in and around the village that could have the potential for community tree planting. This may even be the extra impetus required to finally succeed in getting a Killearn community orchard up and running. Meanwhile the Treelink Stirling 'free trees for babies' initiative was taken up by many village families looking to add a tree to their garden. The scheme has proven so popular that it is now closed for 2023 applications. You can still register for 2024 plantings at [www.treelinkstirling.org/copy-of-free-trees-for-babies](http://www.treelinkstirling.org/copy-of-free-trees-for-babies).



## POLLINATOR STRATEGY

In February, Stirling Council finally approved its long awaited Pollinator Strategy. This enables a review of how it manages parks and open spaces with an increased emphasis on habitat creation, sympathetic management and engagement with local communities. The overall aim being to not only benefit pollinators, but also provide higher

quality green spaces, bringing people closer to nature with the health and wellbeing benefits this provides. For Killearn, it is important we engage with this process. What spaces would lend themselves to pollinator habitat creation? One that is often talked about is the Blane Smiddy Roundabout. What do you think? Email [sustainable@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:sustainable@kcfc.co.uk) and let us know.



Photo courtesy of On the Verge

## KILLEARN ACTIVE TRAVEL PATH

We are delighted to report that the Killearn Active Travel Path project has been awarded Sustrans funding for the Concept Stage 0–2. This means that work should have begun in February, including the help of a consultant, looking at how we can link the village to the growing community south of Killearn and the new Cala development, with an off-road Active Travel Path for biking, walking and wheeling.

In the months ahead we will be reaching out to stakeholders and the community. We look forward to receiving your feedback and finding out your views on this project, and biking, walking and wheeling in the village.

Keep an eye on the Killearn Community Council Facebook and website, and the Cycling Killearn group for more information coming soon. If you have any questions in the meantime, want to get involved or have other ideas for Active Travel in the village, do get in touch at [ContactUs@KillearnCC.org.uk](mailto:ContactUs@KillearnCC.org.uk).



## G63 SEED LIBRARY

The G63 Seed Library initiative continues to be a success, with over 1,200 seed packets having been distributed across the area since the project began in February 2022.

The six 'libraries' in Strathblane, Drymen, Balforn, Killearn, Fintry and Aberfoyle have recently been restocked with a variety of vegetable and flower seeds for keen gardeners and growers to make use of this year.

The libraries, run by local Balforn Station resident Emma Calvert, have an accompanying Facebook group for local growers to connect with others for support and community. The group has met a few times in Killearn Village hall to sort through seeds and to socialise.

It's hoped that the free seeds will encourage more residents to try their hand at growing their own food and to save seeds to return to the library at the end of the harvest. There's a box at the seed libraries to donate collected seeds to the project.

## CYCLING KILLEARN

Did you know that Killearn has four electric bikes that are available for use by residents and those that work in the village? For more information, please email [cycling@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:cycling@kcfc.co.uk). We wish to create a cycling community that encourages healthy living and active travel. So please share your ideas with us. Our initial thoughts include organising events, promoting bike maintenance workshops, signposting cycling groups and offering local route maps.

We're currently planning some guided rides for the Spring. How would you like to see cycling develop in the village? Do share your thoughts – we'd love to hear from you. You can get updates and be part of our local cycling community by joining the Facebook group 'Cycling Killearn'.

Beth Carruthers, Sarah Deas and Carol Murray (Cycling Killearn leads)



# Environmental ‘Footprints’ in our DNA

Environmental pollution is a problem on a par with climate change, but with a subtle difference. Much pollution is intimately entwined with our genes and the way they work, and the last 200 years have seen dramatic environmental changes, many of which can damage our DNA.

Even 20 years ago around 80 per cent of cancers were associated with environmental factors that could easily be addressed. Today a staggering number of synthetic chemicals are being used in, or produced by, industrial and agricultural processes, and pollute our water and the air we breathe. Many of these can affect our DNA directly or indirectly and can even end up on our dinner plates.

The radiation from global warming can also harm our genes. The sun’s ultraviolet radiation, whilst less energetic than nuclear radiation, can still damage our DNA. Fortunately, the much-used, longer-wave radiation of today’s mobile telephones, radios and TV transmitters, has insufficient energy to cause DNA damage.

Another type of threat derives from lifestyle issues, for example, tobacco smoking or severe nutritional deprivation. These can obstruct the mechanisms that regulate how DNA is normally used. One vulnerable mechanism is the ‘epigenetic tagging’ involved in the switching on (or off) of genes during normal development from embryo to adulthood. This all-important process involves the attachment (or detachment) of small ‘chemical tags’ to certain parts of our DNA. Several human disorders can be caused by the obstruction of this vital process, such as intellectual disabilities and atypical physical characteristics.

You might ask how on earth have we survived this long? The good news

is that alongside the Earth’s ozone layer which protects us from much of the sun’s damaging radiation, the processes of evolution have provided our cells with an impressive array of



## For our future, clean water and air are a must

protective enzymes. Some of these can eliminate the toxic effects of hazardous chemicals, and others can act as ‘antioxidants’ to neutralise damaging ‘free radicals’ arising from radiation and atmospheric pollutants.

Even better, we have evolved systems that facilitate the repair of

DNA damage. On top of these, diets filled with fresh fruits and vegetables have the potential to supply further ‘antioxidants’.

What then is the problem? Basically, this war with our environment will never be completely won. The enemy just occasionally scrapes through and any DNA damage that escapes repair can be inherited as variants, or mutations (the notional footprints!), which among other things can be a prelude to some types of cancer. Thus overall, many of our life experiences, and those of our forebears, can have a real and lasting effect on our lives by virtue of becoming embedded in our DNA and its workings.

In recent days, there have been worrying hints of possible deregulation of key environmental legislation.

It was back in the 1960s that Rachel Carson declared ‘I do not like what I see’ before writing her book of apocalyptic foreboding, *Silent Spring*, where she highlighted the biological devastation caused

by indiscriminate use of pesticides. At the time, the book received a hostile reception, but ultimately it led to the creation of numerous environmental protection agencies. Despite these, we still have problems. For our future, clean water and air are a must.

ROY BURDON

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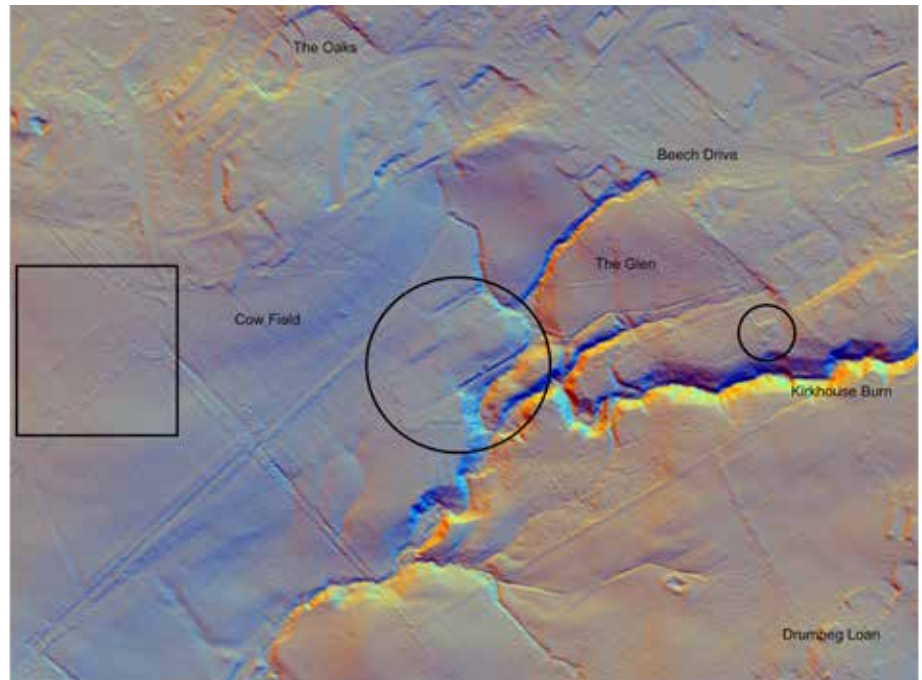
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# LiDAR and the Lost Landscape of The Place of Killearn

When Murray Cook, the Stirling Council Archaeologist, first visited Killearn he recognised there was a lost planned landscape relating to the laird of Killearn's former residence, the 'Place of Killearn', covering Killearn Glen, the 'Cow Field' and Crow Hill. Old maps of the area indicate a formal garden around the house with wider estate landscaping including a wooded area on Crow Hill. The area is now covered part by housing and part by vegetation, including extensive tree cover in the Glen. As a result little can be seen of the former landscape or the house with the exception of the old route to Killearn Mill running through the Cow Field.

LiDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) provides a method of looking through vegetation and revealing the ground beneath. LiDAR works by sending pulses of laser light towards an object and measuring the time taken for the light to bounce back. This enables the distance to the object to be determined with great accuracy. To study landscape, the equipment is housed in an aircraft and flown over the target area. The LiDAR equipment fires the laser many times per second towards the ground. The position of the aircraft is accurately determined using GPS so the position of each reflected light ray is known. The distance and position measurements can be combined to produce a 'Point Cloud'. Using a computer running a Geographical Information System (GIS) and a Relief Visualisation (RVT) programme, this raw data can be converted into aerial visualisations.

The most useful for archaeology or local history is the 'Digital Terrain Model' (DTM). This strips away most items on the ground, such as vegetation, and shows just the bare ground levels. This is possible because some of the many light beams fired from the aircraft will pass through gaps in the vegetation and be reflected from the ground.



The RVT programme allows the data to be shown in various ways, allowing some features to be rendered more visible.

The All Killearn Archive have long wanted to carry out a LiDAR survey of the area, but were told this would be very expensive. However, Murray Cook arranged a Zoom talk with an expert attended by members of AKA and the Heritage Group. This revealed that LiDAR surveys, at a 1m resolution, had been conducted for the Scottish Government over parts of Scotland, including Killearn, and the raw data was available free on a government website. Additionally free GIS and RVT programmes were available. We have now obtained these programmes, downloaded the local data and processed it to give usable aerial views of the area.

The illustration above is a colourised DTM image of the area of the policies of the Place of Killearn. Beech Drive, The Oaks and Chestnut Avenue form the top of the picture, with part of Drumbeg Loan visible to the bottom right.

Though the resolution of the data available is low, we can see interesting features not easily detectable on the ground showing the value of this technique.

The large circle encloses the site of the Place and its formal gardens. Level rectilinear features cutting across the natural slope of the land are visible and probably indicate the extent of the formal gardens.

The small circle shows a distinct raised square feature, buried within the Glen woodland. This may be a previously unknown building and forms a target for further investigation.

The square shows the top of Long Avenue, a wooded feature shown on the 1861 Ordnance Survey map and forming part of the designed landscape on Crow Hill.

Other visible features including field boundaries, paths and drainage in the Glen, burns and the line of the track to Killearn Mill.

Some archaeological sites have been surveyed at 25cm resolution, giving much more detail of the ground features. Such a survey would be costly, though the use of drones should make savings. If finance can be found, such a survey would greatly add to our knowledge of this important area of the village history.

PETER SMITH

# Killlearn Football Club News

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Killlearn Football Club has always been about encouraging people of all ages to participate in and enjoy football in our village, and this year's end-of-season awards dinner summed this up.

Hosted by our brilliant sponsor the Old Mill, players, supporters and committee members from across the decades attended to enjoy a night out and reminisce about the past season and the many before.

Unfortunately, we didn't win any major silverware this year. However, the players' commitment and effort were rewarded as we handed out our own club awards.

The winners for the 2022 season were as follows:

- Players' player of the year: Fraser Cameron
- Club player of the year: Ali Greenhill
- Young player of the year: Mikey Heron
- Top goal scorer (shared): Matt Anderson and Alan More

A good night was had by all, and the speeches will be remembered for many years to come – for various reasons!

We look forward to the coming season, which starts in April, and to seeing many of our supporters and friends back at the field of dreams.

Do follow us on social media ([www.facebook.com/killlearnfootballclub/](https://www.facebook.com/killlearnfootballclub/)) to keep up to date with what's going on and how you can get involved. Or if that's not your thing, feel free to have a chat with any team member around the village or in our wonderful sponsor's establishment!

COLIN BANKS



Fraser Cameron (right),  
Players' player of the  
year with Colin Banks



Ali Greenhill (right),  
Club player of the  
year with John Irvine



Top goal scorers Matt  
Anderson and Alan More  
with Ian Cameron (left)



Mikey Heron, Young  
player of the year (right)  
with Iain McKeich

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## Broadband Report

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By the time you read this, I hope that Openreach will have completed their initial work to bring fibre broadband to the primary school. The IT (Education) Department placed an order with BT to supply a gigabit service to the school back in January. The provisional completion date for this work, to lay and connect fibre cabling, was 2 March. Following that work, the Education Department can install the additional (network termination) equipment within the school and do the final router configuration. Stirling Council admitted that there is nothing they can do to expedite this process as Openreach devise their schedules independently. However, there is a degree of confidence that the school will have much improved broadband by the summer. Thanks to Cllr McGarvey for his help with extracting this information.

The same update, from Shaun Marley, the broadband liaison officer at Stirling Council, informed us about the R100 upgrade to bring fibre-based connections to the remaining parts of the village. Not surprisingly, as no

relevant Openreach work has been seen in the village for the last couple of years, the R100 upgrade that was scheduled for the second half of 2022, has been put back to Q2/2023. This affects about 660 premises, located I believe in the Branziert, Drumbeg Loan (top end), Glasgow Road, Kirkhouse Road, the Trees (some), Main Street (some), the Square (some), and Balfron Road (some). This upgrade is relevant to those premises still on direct analogue connections. As I write this update in January, both the Digital Scotland and Openreach websites are still showing 'connect during 2nd half of 2022'. Better news is that Shaun believes that these will be full-fibre connections.

Finally, it seems that Openreach also plan a commercial roll-out of fibre (i.e., independent of R100) to the 'remaining premises' in the village in 2024. I'm not sure where these might be though; perhaps, individual premises located outside the village itself.

DOUG ASHWORTH  
CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP

## A Successful First Half of the Curling Season

Both the mixed club and the Ladies Section have completed the first two leagues, although the mixed club struggled with numbers in the Winter League. The mixed Autumn League was narrowly won by Sally Macfarlane's team of Archie Banks, Richard Barker and Deborah Macken by 7 points from a three-way tie on 6 points. The mixed Winter League was even closer, with 3 teams tying on 8 points. Paul Mosley's team of Sally Macfarlane, Moray Weir and others was 3 ends better than John Macfarlane's and Fiona Glass's teams. The Ladies Peat League was won by 3 points by Gill Smith's team of Anne Lochhead, Gail Pain and Helen McKinnell. The Ladies Chris Gardner League was closer, being won in the last round by Sally Macfarlane's team of Alice Fraser, Anne Lochhead and Jinty Halley. They scored 1 point more than Gillian Kingslake's team.

The Ladies Christmas Bonspiel was contested by 6 teams and won by Viv Taylor's team of Muriel Holroyd, Gill Smith and Liz Paterson with 4 ends. The draws to the Christmas puddings were won by Viv Taylor, Gail Pain and Jinty Halley, and the best festive wear competition was won by Gillian Kingslake. Lunch at the Torbrex Inn completed the event.

The mixed club Ladies v Gents Bonspiel was won by the Gents by 11 ends to 9. This was followed by nibbles and drinks hosted by Fiona and Bob Glass.

Both Pairs competitions have been held. The Ladies Section had 11 players, so one of the pairings had to be made up of 3 players. This pairing of Liz Paterson with Heather Burns/Gill Smith won the competition with 6 ends from Gill's full pairing with Penny Evans which won 5 ends. The mixed Pairs with 6 players was won by Tony Flisch and Jim Meikle with 4 ends. Gill and Penny were second again with 3 ends.

The club has been very successful in external fixtures. They finished second in the major Forth & Endrick Province League, and have a lead of 2 points in the B League with 2 games to play. They won the Province Medal Bonspiel after a four-way tie at 9 ends by being 7 shots better up. In the Ballikinrain Cup against Balforn and Kippen, Strathendrick came through in the last two ends to steal victory with 9 ends to Kippen's 7.

Strathendrick was one of six Forth & Endrick Province clubs who won the Forth Valley Area Bonspiel for the first time that anyone can remember. In total, the Province won 9 ends and Balforn just pipped Strathendrick to the trophy by being 1 shot better up.

Strathendrick's Jane McLaren and three Province players were beaten finalists in the Scottish Senior Mixed championship.

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

Contacts for the club are Tony Flisch (860580) or Gill Smith (550726). New members would be welcomed by both the main club and the Ladies Section.

Photos: Ladies Christmas Bonspiel group; Ballikinrain Cup players



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# A Life on the Ocean Waves

During the lockdown of winter 2020–21, I passed the time following the Vendée Globe solo round the world race. Realistic or not at age 64, I began to fancy a bit of that. With time on my hands, I started working up a project, on paper at first, to give it a go in Classe Mini, the bottom rung of the offshore and ocean racing ladder. By the end of 2021, I had found a boat and was preparing for the forthcoming Mini season in Atlantic France.

Classe Mini is designed to build seamanship. You start from smaller events and accumulate race miles which qualify you for higher grade regattas. There is also a 1,000-mile solo sail to be completed to gain entry to the two ocean races – the Les Sables to Azores and the Mini Transat to Guadeloupe. The boats are small – 6.5m in length – carry a big sail area for their size – up to 120m<sup>2</sup> – and will reach up to 17kts downwind. They are sailed single- or double-handed. They have sophisticated electronics – most importantly an autopilot. Without the pilot, a solo skipper could not launch and recover spinnakers or rest effectively while under way.

Sailing a Mini is technically and physically demanding. Although I've sailed for over 10 years, I was taken aback by the noise and constant jarring. Mini regattas are typically 250 to 500 miles over two to four days, enough to find yourself at the margins of your capabilities. This can happen easily if weather or other circumstances prevent you from eating and drinking properly, or from getting enough sleep.

Offshore sailors sleep for 20 minutes at a time. My routine was to take a good look around, check the AIS to see if there were boats nearby and if any represented a danger, and then set my kitchen timer and slump onto my beanbag. If I was lucky, I'd get my 20 minutes before the collision alarm went off or the boat broached or did something similarly hideous.

The delivery trip from my training base at La Rochelle to Lorient was a bit of a baptism: 140 miles; up to 40 miles offshore; overnight; wind gusting up to 28kts. I was accompanied by my friend Tanguy Delmau, an experienced racing sailor, who also joined me for my first event. That trip, and the first race, gave me basic experience to work from, and a couple of weeks later I completed the return journey single-handed.

It was the first time I'd sailed a fast boat at night. I remember the white crests of waves racing towards us out of the darkness. And fully offshore there are no lights and I found myself using the stars to steer by, which struck me as quite magical. To my surprise, I quickly overcame anxieties about being a long way offshore. There are few obstacles to worry about, the workload is usually lighter, and it is easier to sleep.

During the season I completed single- and double-handed races of between 100 and 300 miles. I retired from my only 500-mile solo event with just over 100 miles to go. I thought I'd looked after myself very well, but when the wind got up after the Ile de Re bridge,



Image courtesy of Jim Thomson

there was simply too little left in the tank. Like many sports, the game is largely played in your head, and you need experience to manage that well. Offshore sailors commonly have hallucinations. When sleep deprived, it seems your dream state breaks into your consciousness. With me it was nothing too weird, just a sense of garden trellis and foliage forming around lights.

My last race – from Deauville to Roscoff – started well, moving to ninth out of 30 in the upwind charge off the Normandy beaches, but the following morning the autopilot and instruments failed. I could have retired into Cherbourg, but I wanted to finish even though it meant being on the helm for the last 100 miles. Sailing fast through the night, but making little progress against the strong tide near the Casquets, my head kept dropping. Fortunately, I was double tethered for safety, and after sunrise, I managed some sleep in a calm near Guernsey.

I arrived off Roscoff well within the time allowed only to find the Race Committee had gone to the pub, and I would have to spend another night at sea. But I was glad not to have given up and the experience made me feel I could actually do this.

By early September my visa was running out and it was time to return to Scotland. It would have added a little glory to sail all the way, but with a string of gales in the Irish Sea, I stopped at Plymouth, and *Stiuireadair* completed the journey by road.

But I'd chalked up 500 miles of solo sailing, some of it quite challenging, and I felt at home in Atlantic France and the Channel. Not bad considering last winter I never made it further than Largs.

The plan is to go back for the 2023 season and finish the job. *Stiuireadair* is getting a refit; I am working on the budget; training will resume in March. The Mini Transat 2023 may be fully subscribed by the time I've qualified, but let's see.

ALEC FRASER, SKIPPER  
MINI 821 *STIUIREADAIR*

## Bridge by Zorro

Solution to the problem on page 10

It is clear to East that with 5 points in Dummy, and 11 in their own hand, that South must have virtually all of the other honours. Therefore, the contract relies on making five Diamond tricks from Dummy's hand – plus the ♠A, ♠K, ♥A and ♣A.

South knows that, if the Diamond finesse is right and the suit breaks reasonably, there is no problem. Equally, if the finesse fails when ♦Q is led, there is still no problem, for South has a second Diamond to enter Dummy. So, East must thwart this plan by ducking the first Diamond trick. South is likely to repeat the finesse, hoping for the ♦K to be in West's hand. Assuming West follows suit showing that they (and South) both started with two Diamonds, East can safely play the King, and Declarer may now only make six tricks. Note how *both* sides gain from losing the first Diamond trick.

A further example hand is given below, this time from Declarer's perspective alone.

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

Dealer: South Vulnerable: All

South	West	North	East
1C	Pass	1H	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the ♠J. As Declarer you can see three tricks in Spades, two in Clubs and one in Diamonds. Therefore, three Heart tricks are required. The first essential move is to win the Spade lead in hand to preserve the ♠Q for as long as possible as the entry to Dummy. Now insist on losing the first round of Hearts by playing low in both hands. If a Spade is returned, again win the trick in hand, and lead a second Heart to an honour. This will guarantee three Heart tricks and the contract so long as the suit breaks 3–3 or 4–2.

(With acknowledgement to *Collins Bedside Book of Bridge* <sup>Z</sup> and specifically the chapter by Danny Roth, Preserve Communications.)

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**fsb** <sup>83</sup>  
**MEMBER**

## Killearn 10k Places Sell Out in a Day

Places on the starting line for the 2023 Killearn 10k went on sale in early December and sold out in just over 24 hours.

It was by far the fastest sell-out we've ever had. Organisers were amazed by, and very grateful for, such incredible support from our wonderful runners. We're hoping the enthusiasm was at least partly down to the success of last year's race. The weather was kind, and we've had great feedback from the runners about our new timing system from Perfect Timing Scotland. It allowed us to offer accurate line-to-line times for every runner and give live updates on the finishers as they came in. We'll be doing all we can to bring in more improvements this year.

A top line-up of sponsors will be helping us take the event forward, and we're delighted to welcome friends old and new to the 2023 team.

West Homes return from 2022, this time as main sponsors. They were tremendous, engaged partners last year, and we are very excited to team up with them again. Arnold Clark offer yet more great support to the village by coming aboard as silver sponsors and are joined by our

steadfast friends from the local we're all blessed to have, the Old Mill.

We're also delighted to welcome back A Total Clean, Killearn Pharmacy and S. Mac Joinery Solutions as bronze sponsors, and to have Cameron House on Loch Lomond join us for 2023.

We're proud to be working with such terrific local businesses, and we're hoping more local firms will help us out by donating prizes, as they do so generously year after year.

We've got a few months of hard work ahead of us to prepare for the race on Saturday, 3 June, and the committee is beavering away behind the scenes to get everything sorted out.

Work is also progressing to get ready for the Killearn Mile, which will be run again before the start of the 10k. It's a delight to us to see how much local families enjoy this event, and we're looking forward to seeing lots more smiling faces on the starting line this year.

Thank you Killearn for all your brilliant support. We hope as many of you as possible will join us in the park on 3 June.

DAVID MCKAY

## Rugby Round Up – U18 Tours and Ladies' Touch Rugby

As Scottish rugby fans enjoy their national team's performances in the Six Nations (at the time of going to press anyway!) and look forward to the Rugby World Cup in France in the autumn, club rugby moves towards the climax of its season.

At Strathendrick, both the 1st and 2nd Senior XV's should finish mid-table in their respective divisions, which is a creditable performance given the relative youth of the 1st XV and the opposite of the 2nds! The Midis have completed their competitive fixtures, but are still playing friendlies. The Minis are looking forward to their Annual Charity Tournament at Fintry on Sunday, 23 April.

The club organises tours at various age groups, and this season there are two special foreign tours underway to conclude players' time with the Midi/Youth section. This year's U18s are going to Sweden in mid-June, and the U18s of two years ago (who couldn't tour due to



Covid) are on a long-planned visit to New Zealand!

The fastest growth area in rugby in recent years is, however, girls' and women's rugby. The Girls play at four different age groups up to U18, but at Strathendrick the Ladies enjoy touch rugby. This is a non-contact form of the game which encourages

skill development, is great exercise and good fun. The Ladies play on Monday evenings on the Balfron astroturf or at Fintry. No prior experience is necessary, so new recruits are most welcome to join in: ladies, why not give it a try?

For further information, please contact:  
[nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com](mailto:nick.hawkins01@btinternet.com).

NH

# Equestrian Vaulters wins Scottish and British Championships Titles

Balfron High School pupil Sally Henderson (16) won the Scottish Senior 2 star Championship in September 2022 and then went on to become British Champion in the same class in October at Bishops Burton Equine Centre. In both competitions she was vaulting on Highland Mist, lunged by John Eccles and Joanne Littlejohn, both of whom are well known in the sport as former world champions, coaches and judges.

Equestrian vaulting is gymnastics on horseback. Sally first started vaulting at the age of 4 after seeing a display by Riders of the Storm at the Drymen Show. She trains at Wee County vaulters near Tillicoultry. She has been competing since she was six years old, and held 10 Scottish Championship titles in Individual, Team and Pairs competitions, vaulting on a number of different horses. Sally has also obtained her Level 1 coaching qualification and enjoys lunging her own horse.

Highland Mist, whose stable name is Logan, is a nine-year-old Irish sport horse who first started vaulting in 2018, but Covid lockdowns meant that Sally and Logan only started competing together in 2021.

The competitions involve a compulsory round of set moves and a freestyle round. Sally was in first place after the compulsory round at both the British and Scottish championships competitions, and secured victory with a 'Romeo and Juliet' themed routine set to the hit tune from the 1968 Zeffirelli film which many will know as the music for Steve Wright's programme on Radio 2. Sally designed her own freestyle costume which was made for her by her mother, Clare.





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Deanston	Killearn	Strathblane	

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha, Croftamie, Strathblane 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 plan for the future. For further information about us and a downloadable application pack please visit our website [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk).

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# Killearn Tennis Club Sets Sights on Growth in 2023

The conclusion of 2022 saw a busy time for the club, both on and off the court!

Following the challenges faced by many community sports clubs as a result of Covid-19 and the recent economic environment, the committee got together in November and December to create a fresh plan for the club for 2023 and beyond.

We are passionate in the belief that the tennis club has the potential to grow and further benefit our community, and we have identified some key focal areas for the year ahead.

The vision is very simple: Killearn Tennis Club will welcome people of all ages and abilities to the club, and provide new and existing members with easy access to fantastic outdoor tennis, an excellent coaching programme and a sociable sporting environment, while offering great value for money.

Underpinning that vision, we have an exciting schedule of activities throughout the year which will offer something for everyone. Ultimately it is about encouraging as many people as possible to enjoy tennis, making the most of the local facilities that we are fortunate to have in the village.

In January we carried out a survey of our members, and they provided some valuable feedback and helpful suggestions which we will incorporate into the plan going forward. Thanks to everyone who took part.



On the court, the weather did limit playing as expected, but we have seen regular play under floodlights and also happening on days without frost.

There are now WhatsApp groups set up for social tennis, and these players have managed to organise games most weeks through the winter.

If you would like to join in simply get in touch, the more the merrier.

There are a few key updates to share with *Killearn Courier* readers:

- We are working in partnership with Active Stirling to deliver Health Week events hosted at local schools, hopefully starting with Balfron High in the spring.
- Following the generous donation in 2022 by Derek and Morna Knottenbelt, local residents and directors of Equine Medical Solutions Ltd, the club has purchased new equipment specifically for junior players, and we encourage youngsters to utilise it.
- There will be advertisements for the coaching programme to look out for soon. You can book coaching for adults and juniors via the website, or simply contact Shaun Tulloch ([shaun@10outoftennins.com](mailto:shaun@10outoftennins.com) or 07850 221397).
- We are setting up inter-club friendlies to restart our competitive programme through the spring, beginning with men's and women's doubles. There will be more information on our Facebook page once the calendar is confirmed. If you are interested in friendlies, just let Gillian Johnstone know: [gillianajohnstone@btinternet.com](mailto:gillianajohnstone@btinternet.com).

We look forward to welcoming *Courier* readers to the courts in 2023. Best wishes from the committee. Roni, Gill, George, Laura, Phillip, Jamie and Shaun.



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# Marie Christine Bowie 1941 – 2022

Chris was beautiful, smart and kind, with a strong moral compass and an incredible sense of humour. She loved to laugh and was fun to be with. We met at a party at university. For me it was a real 'South Pacific' moment, seeing Chris across a crowded room. I was in love, Chris however, had other ideas. It took me four years and five marriage proposals before she eventually agreed!

Chris was incredibly proud of her Yorkshire roots. She grew up in Mexborough, a coal mining town. The local grammar school is where her love of literature, music and poetry began. She often spoke of the English teacher who inspired her. John Fisher had taught Ted Hughes a few years before and in Chris he saw a talent. He encouraged her to take the entrance exam for Cambridge.

On the day that she was accepted, her local school declared a holiday and the children were all given the day off. Chris was one of the first women to get in to Cambridge from an ordinary grammar school. She knew the impact that a good teacher could have on the lives of young people and she was forever grateful to John Fisher. As am I, because if she hadn't gone to Cambridge, we would never have met.



In 1965 we moved to Killearn to a house that we couldn't afford. We didn't care because we loved the house and the village. We stayed in Branziert Road and then across from the tennis courts. Our final move was to the centre of the village where we have been for 45 years. Chris loved her garden, the birds, the deer and the pheasants.

Chris taught at Balfon High School for over 20 years, a job she loved. She carried on John Fisher's legacy by inspiring young minds. She made it her responsibility to help every child to learn in a way that suited them and their capabilities. Always kind and patient. History repeated itself when Chris encouraged Eileen, a student at Balfon, to take the Cambridge entrance exam. When she wrote to us after Chris' death, she talked of Chris' influence on her decision to apply. 'No, of course I'd never considered the possibility. But in her very characteristic encouraging but non-pushy way, she helped me to make my way there and have the experience of a lifetime.'

As well as working and bringing up the family, she was active in the village. Chris was chair of the School Board and had an instrumental role in the building of the 'new' Balfon High School. She stood as a Liberal councillor. She was secretary of the Community Council and President of Inner Wheel, and recently she has enjoyed writing for the *Courier*.

Her family has always been the centre of her life. She was fiercely proud of them, watching her three children grow up, choose great partners and more recently enjoying her two granddaughters.

Life will never be the same without Chris. We will all miss her terribly. She was and still is very much loved by all her family.

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## Rosemary (Rozie) Janice Parker 1945 – 2022

Rozie (as she was known to all) was born in Penn, Buckinghamshire, the younger daughter of Admiral Peter and Janice Skelton. Her father's career inevitably required him to move a good deal and, when suitable, his family moved with him. Thus Rozie's school career was subject to frequent change and in all she attended nine different schools. On leaving school, she took a medical secretarial course and went on to work for an eminent physician in Windsor and then in Harley Street.

In 1966 she met Jamie, and despite him working in Japan for a year, their courtship flourished. They married in Beaconsfield in 1968 and had their first home in Denham and while there, their first son, Angus, was born. In 1985 the family moved to live on the Moss estate in the Blane Valley. Two further children – a daughter, Sarah, and a second son, Andrew – completed the family, who in 1973 moved to Moor Road, Strathblane, returning to live in The Moss, Killearn in 1985. They recently moved to Broom Cottage in the centre of the village.

During her married life Rozie was greatly involved in charitable work. She was a Visitor throughout Scotland for The Children's Home Hospital in Strathblane, for Glasgow Seamen's Widows Mission and for the Elizabeth Finn Trust, and during the 1990s she served on the Management Committee of Strathcarron Hospice. Rozie's sensitivity and compassionate nature made her eminently

suited to dealing with the situations that she encountered in this work.

In her home life, Rozie's interests were gardening, fishing and walking with their Labrador dogs. She also loved listening to music. She was a skilled homemaker and hostess, with a warmth and friendliness radiating from her whenever a visitor came to their door. With her own family grown and living further afield, she welcomed her six grandchildren as they arrived – three grandsons and three granddaughters – the close family relationships giving her the greatest joy.

Sadly Rozie was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and her health declined in her later years. Her death just before Christmas brought sorrow to all who had known her and especially to her family.

A service of Thanksgiving for Rozie's life will be held on 31 March at 11am in Killearn Kirk. All who knew Rozie will be welcome.

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## Mary Crawford 1927 – 2022

Born Mary Margaret Brook in 1927 in Dawlish, Devon, Mary was the only daughter of William and Florence and little sister to brother Ronald. The family moved to Girvan, Ayrshire, when Mary was four years old. It was Girvan where she grew up and always considered her home. The merest mention of Ailsa Craig would send her into joyful reminiscences of an undoubtedly happy childhood.

Mary left school at 14. The death of her father meant she had to abandon any thought of further education to provide a wage to help support her mother. Her brother was in the army and posted overseas. She started work in Todd's, a Girvan shoe shop. The shop employed many cobblers who obviously delighted in her vivacious character. Mary loved her time there and would often recount stories of fun times.

These were the war years so enjoyment was in short supply. However, Mary would often reminisce about happy times going to dances and trips out with her pals. It was at a local dance that she met her future husband, Alistair. They married in 1952 and moved to Rothesay where their first child, Stephen, was born. Next, they moved to Auldhouse, where their second child, Irene, was born. Soon after they moved to the Gartness Road where their third child, Brian, was born. They stayed there for 20 years before a move to Laighparks Farm, Killearn.

When Alistair left farming, they moved to Dunblane where Mary was very happy for over 30 years and worked as a caretaker in a local hall up to her retirement.



This was a golden period for them both as they enjoyed spending time with their six grandchildren both at home and on holidays.

In later years they moved back to Killearn to be nearer family to help with Alistair's failing health. During this time Mary delighted in meeting the next generation of great-grandchildren, nine at the last count.

Although Mary missed the chance of further education in her youth, her natural intelligence meant that she was

a dab hand at crosswords and puzzles which entertained her in later life. She possessed a wealth of practical skills such as decorating, gardening, baking, sewing and knitting. There is not one grandchild or great grandchild that has not benefitted from Mary's knitting skills.

Mary never took herself or life too seriously. She had a great sense of humour and would generally lighten any mood. Her trademark grin when she had inadvertently caused chaos will be missed for ever. Although very personable and fun-loving, she was also a private person and eschewed joining clubs, preferring to do things her way and in her own time.

Mary passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on 15 December. For the last year Mary had fantastic care and friendship from a close team, and the family are forever grateful for this and wish to thank everyone involved. A collection at Mary's funeral raised £625 for Alzheimer Scotland – the family are most grateful for people's generosity.



# ALEXANDER STEWART MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for  
Mid Scotland and Fife Region



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# Rosemary Elinor Smith 1932 – 2022



Rosemary Smith, née Knox, was born and grew up in Colquhoun Square, Helensburgh, next to St. Andrew's Church where she learned to play the organ and sang in the choir. Loving to learn, she had a successful academic school career and also played in the hockey team.

As she grew up she and her friends would walk or cycle for miles around Helensburgh,

exploring the surrounding area and, as a teenager, was a part of the group of young people who congregated around the outdoor swimming pool or in Dino's café.

Soon after becoming 16, she gained a place in Glasgow School of Art but was too young to start immediately, so she spent a 'gap year' as a colourist in a Glasgow studio.

When, at the age of 17 she was able to start at the Art School, she loved the life and the experiences she gained there. She specialised in drawing and painting, and won the coveted Governor's Prize.

Always with an eye to stylish dressing, but with little money to spend on herself in her student years, she adapted patterns and made her own clothes and continued to follow this practice throughout her life, always being an individual, but stylish, dresser.

She met Allan when he was photographing in Helensburgh and both were students at the Art School at the same time. Allan had a Vespa and this gave the couple the opportunity to travel.

When they married in 1959 they built their house, naming it Denia after a memorable trip to that area in Spain. Here in Station Road they spent the rest of their lives with their daughter, Pauline, and two sons, Gary and Ross, completing their family.

Rosemary had taken a postgraduate teacher training course following her time at art school, and once their children were at school, Rosemary followed her career by teaching art at Balfron High School.

She continued to paint, specialising in landscapes and exhibiting her works which often revealed the inspiration she took from the views towards Loch Lomond from her home. She had also, in her youth gained the highest marks in her music exams and she kept up her piano playing, filling her home with music.

As the years passed and her children became adult, her family increased and eight grandchildren and two great-grandsons brought her great joy.

When the death of Allan brought sadness into Rosemary's life it was a mark of her personality that, with the support of her family and her own quiet acceptance and understanding, she faced life without him.

Friendly and hospitable, knowledgeable but never opinionated, it was always a pleasure to encounter Rosemary and to enjoy a conversation with her.

Whilst she enjoyed travels in Europe, it was Scotland and the surrounding landscape and a loving family life that gave Rosemary lasting joy and contributed to the quiet and calm personality that made her a valued friend and neighbour who will be greatly missed.

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## Jean Cole 1928 – 2022

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Jean was born in Norbury, south London, to Edward and Winifred Tucker. An only child, she displayed an interest in animals from an early age, and was delighted to receive for her 11th birthday her first dog, one of the many she owned throughout her life. After

attending Barnstable Grammar School whilst evacuated to Devon during World War II, then Croydon High School for Girls, she went on to the Royal Veterinary College, London. Her final year was spent at the Vet College's field station at Streatley-on-Thames, and it was while staying at a local guest house that she first met Irving Cole, who was at that time working at the nearby Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell.

After graduating from the Royal Vet College, Jean worked in a veterinary practice in Salisbury, where she and Irving were subsequently married in July 1955. By now, Irving was a lecturer at the Royal Technical College, Glasgow, so Jean moved north and they lived first in Glasgow, then Milngavie, finally moving to Killearn in 1962 to raise their young family, Sarah and Tim.

Jean continued to work with veterinary practices in Glasgow and Helensburgh as well as joining in village life. She was a member of Dumgoyne WRI and Balfon

High School PTA., and was on the committee of Killearn Horticultural Society, gardening being a great interest of hers.

One of Jean and Irving's abiding passions was for bridge, and they were active and successful members of the Killearn, Strathendrick and Drymen bridge clubs for many years.

Another area of Killearn village life where Jean and Irving made their mark was The Guild's annual sale of work. For the best part of nearly 35 years, they ran the book stall, helped out over time by Sarah, then eventually Sarah's husband, Eric, and their children, Anna and Jamie.

Irving's death in 2012 after 57 years of marriage hit Jean hard; they had always been a couple who did everything together. However, despite this and growing mobility problems, with support from Sarah and Tim, and neighbours and carers, she continued to live independently, playing bridge and enjoying visits from friends and her grandchildren. The death of her last dog, Pippa, in 2018, was another hard blow, bringing to an end almost 80 years of continuous dog ownership.

Jean always took a great interest in her family and friends. She was an indefatigable letter writer, an accomplished cook and baker, and always willing to help out where she could. She is sadly missed by all who were close to her.

## Lesley Anne (King) Alexander 1964 – 2022

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Lesley was born in Aithrey Castle, Bridge of Allan, to May and Robert King and grew up and went to school in Killearn and Balfon. A course in secretarial and business studies at Anniesland College was followed by working for several companies in Blanefield, Milngavie and Croftamie.

As soon as she was old enough to drive, she acquired a 50cc motorcycle and would use it to get to school. She and her friend Charlotte would ride around, sometimes switching jackets to fool onlookers as to who was driving.

She met Steven Alexander from Gartocharn and married him in 1987, but they parted a few years later.

Lesley and her much loved dog, Broom, were living in a flat in Croftamie when the building went on fire. She and Broom were praised for raising the alarm and ensuring all the residents got safely out of the building.

It was when Lesley was working at Volvo in Croftamie that she met Karen, and their firm friendship led to many fun adventures and weekends away together with the dogs.

After a successful time with Volvo, Lesley went on to work at Vardy Continental (later Mercedes Benz of Glasgow) and celebrated 25 years' service with them. It was there in 2006 that she met Jim Billington, who, at first, had to work hard to woo Lesley. However, his efforts succeeded and in time the two became close. For a while Lesley kept their relationship a secret from her parents, but

once she had introduced Jim to them, she moved into his home in Balloch and became a part of his family, along with Sarah and Thomas.

Later she and Jim moved to Drymen and took off on a camping holiday to Durness to celebrate being permanently together. In 2014, for Lesley's 50th birthday she acquired a campervan, which she named Bertha, and immediately she and Jim set off again for Durness and a more comfortable style of holiday. It was the beginning of many holidays spent away with grandchildren and dogs and much relished by all.

Last autumn, Lesley was found to have inoperable cancer. In her final days, her closest friends and family were at her bedside, keeping her company and sharing memories of happy times. She sadly passed away in Jim's arms on 3 October.

She was a loving partner to Jim, a dear daughter to May and the late Robert, a mum to Lara, a supporting figure to Tom and Sarah, a much loved Granny to Tommy, Kole, Bentley and Evie, and a dear friend to all who knew her.



## Gill Emmanuel 1951 – 2022

Gill was born in a village near Cardiff, the third of four children born to Margaret and Kenneth Smith. She was educated at the local primary school and then at Whitchurch Grammar School. Her childhood was filled by her passion for horses and many happy years were spent in caring for horses and riding bare backed across the Welsh countryside with her sister. She left school after gaining her O levels and joined her parents in Saudi Arabia where her father was working, returning after two years to work with the DVLA.

She was in her late teens when she met Clive, a stranger whose help she had requested to assist her out of a difficult parking situation. She offered him a lift and this led to him suggesting they met later for an evening out. It was to be the start of a loving relationship which lasted a lifetime. They married in 1972, and in the early years of their marriage had a number of moves as Clive's university career developed. The births of Rhian, Owain and Bethan completed their family, long-lasting friendships were made and opportunities were taken to travel. As their children grew older, Gill took a job as a classroom assistant, working with a blind boy. When in 1987 Clive was appointed professor at Glasgow University, the family made their final move, arriving in Killearn.

Gill's experience in the classroom and her love of children encouraged her to aim for a career in educational



support. Showing great determination as she combined her role of devoted wife and mother with returning to study, Gill pursued her studies at Strathclyde University, gaining a Masters degree in Educational Psychology. Her first professional job came in 1998 working for Renfrewshire Council and she then went on to West Dunbartonshire, where she was involved with early intervention and worked with children with Asperger's Syndrome. She gained huge satisfaction from her career, but took partial retirement in 2011 in order to spend more

time with her young granddaughter.

The couple continued to enjoy their travels together and had anticipated further exploration, but sadly Clive died soon after their 40th wedding anniversary in 2012. His loss was a great shock, but Gill faced widowhood with resolve, joining walking and cycling groups, taking pleasure in her dogs and delighting in her growing family of grandchildren. She continued to travel the world to visit the large circle of friends she and Clive had made and to see her son, Owain, in Portugal.

As her own health began to decline she did her best to retain both her independence and, supported by family and friends, her indomitable 'can do' outlook which characterised her life.

Gill's children want to pass on their heartfelt thanks to the Killearn community, who rallied around to make Gill's life fun filled in the last few years.

BP

# Golden Oldies

"She's a bit stiff, but I'd expect that given how old she is"

"He's just getting on a bit"

"She's slowing down a bit, but it's just her age"



Do you have an older pet in your household?

Have you noticed any changes in their behaviour/routines that you have put down to 'old age'?

Often we find it's assumed that a pet slows down automatically due to an older age - but have you considered the factors actually leading to them 'slowing down'? What if we could do something about them and help your older pet make the most of their remaining years?

Arthritis, for example, is thought to affect >80% of dogs over the age of 8 years old, and up to 35% over 3 years of age! The good news is, there are lots of ways we can help our arthritic pets live a pain free, happier life.

It's not all drugs either, although this is generally a factor. Alongside lifestyle changes, Acupuncture & physiotherapy can be extremely effective tools in multi-modal pain management. Acupuncture works by tricking the body into thinking it's being injured, when it isn't. The body then sends lovely natural pain relief to the areas targeted. We are now offering Acupuncture appointments at our sister practice Struthers and Scott in Doune - contact us to find out more!

Besides pain, there are also other conditions that may cause your pet to appear to 'slow down'. Dental disease, underactive thyroids, impaired organ function can all lead to issues, and can often be tested for using a blood or urine sample. Contact the practice to get your pet in for an MOT and see if we can make the most of their golden years!

Long term medications can be expensive, but helpfully many of these are discounted by 20% for those on our **Pet Health Club** - visit our website for details!



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## Elizabeth (Betty) Cameron 1931 – 2022

Elizabeth Brierley was born in Liverpool to Edith and Joe Brierley; she had two sisters, Josie and May, and one brother, Joe. Betty, as she was known to all, was an outgoing wee girl, but it wasn't an easy time. She was just eight when the war broke out, but years later she would still remember being bombed out their home three times. She was evacuated to Cheshire for a while with Josie and Joe, but the three children were not happy there. The person they stayed with only let them have their toys on the days when their Dad cycled all the way out there to check on them. Eventually they all ran away in the night and followed the train line back into Liverpool and home.

Back home, Betty went to the local school, was taught by nuns and that didn't suit her much better either. She left school as soon as she was 14 years old and began an apprenticeship with a firm specialising repairing expensive carpets and Persian rugs which came from large houses or hotels and sometimes from the great ocean liners that docked at Liverpool. It was a skilled job and Betty was good at it. But there was a life outside of work, too. Like most young people then, on weekends Betty would go to the dance halls in Liverpool with her friends, but it was a trip abroad that would change her life. Betty went on holiday to Germany with one of her workmates. Staying in a hotel in Bad Kripp, she met Hugh Cameron, a young man from Killearn, also on a visit there. This was the start of a life-long romance, long-distance at first, until they were married in Killearn Kirk by the Rev. H. MacLennan McLeod on 21 February 1959.

Betty got a job using her skills with a carpet firm in Glasgow. They started married life in Croftamie, but



few months later they moved to a brand-new house on Graham Road. It was a big change for Betty, coming from a city to a quiet village, but she loved it here, although she never quite lost her Liverpool accent. In 1962, Betty and Hugh became proud parents to their much wanted and much-loved son Derek, and in later years welcomed their daughter-in-law Karen to their family. Their home was always made complete by a much-loved cat, of which there was a long succession.

When Betty decided to return to work, she trained as an auxiliary nurse, starting at Gartnavel Hospital in Glasgow, then at the Burns Unit at Canniesburn Hospital. From there she went to work at Ballikinrain, a List D residential school, where she found the work challenging but rewarding.

At home she was a great needlewoman: knitting, crocheting and dressmaking. She was also an avid reader, often devouring several books in a week. But she enjoyed being physically active, too, and would participate in bowling, skiing, canoeing and mountain walking with enthusiasm.

Betty and Hugh took early retirement together. This gave them the chance to journey further afield and they enjoyed many happy holidays abroad, and made the most of the possibilities that life offered while still active. Together they celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary in 2019.

Sadly, in later years, major health issues led to her being hospitalised and then, needing nursing care at Oakbridge Care Home, where she was well looked after until, to the heartbreak of her family, she slipped away, going peacefully from this life to the next.

HC/BP



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## Robert Scott Chalmers 1948 – 2022

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Robert Scott Chalmers, known to everyone as Scott, was born in Motherwell to Gladys and Donald Chalmers. Scott had four siblings, being the eldest brother to Donald, David, Lorna and Linda. Scott grew up in Motherwell and then Lenzie before moving to England, where he finished his school life in Leeds. He was both academic and passionate about sports and was Head Boy at Leeds Modern, representing his school at football, badminton, cricket, athletics, basketball and tennis – earning so many first-team sew-on badges that he had to use both sides of his school blazer.

His academic passion extended to languages, which took him to France as part of his studies. This gave rise to a lifelong love of the country, particularly Brittany where he and his family holidayed annually together for many years.

Following his studies he met wife-to-be Janet in Leeds on a blind date. They married in 1972 and shortly thereafter followed three sons: Alistair, James and Richard.

In the early 1970s, Scott also began a career with the Natwest Bank which would last nearly 20 years. This job would move the family from Leeds to Stokesley, North Yorkshire, to Newcastle and then finally back to Scotland, settling in Killearn on New Endrick Road in 1988.

Scott was best known in the village as the tennis coach from 1990 until the early 2000s. He was given



an honorary life membership of Killearn Tennis Club as recognition of the many years of junior coaching he gave, for free, every Friday night.

In 1993, with his children grown, he took the step he had always wanted and set up business for himself. He started small with Scottish-themed socks and from there moved into pewter goods and clan crests, highland dress shoes, kilts, tailoring and sporrans and then onto bagpipes, *Scottish Clan Encyclopaedia*, and countless Scottish-themed websites. He slowly acquired businesses and invested in new equipment and people to ultimately build St Kilda Holdings, one of the largest Scottish Highland Dress and bagpipe manufacturers in the world. Scott was never happier than discussing the business and what it could do and how it could grow.

In late 2012, Scott was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and at that time was given just a couple of years to live. Like everything in his life, he looked at the positives, fought hard and managed to see 10 more years, including the birth of eight grandchildren who brought him so much joy.

Surrounded by his wife and sons, Scott passed away peacefully on 23 September 2022 at Strathcarron Hospice.

Scott was an endlessly kind and positive presence for all those who had him in their lives. He will be sorely missed.

THE CHALMERS FAMILY

## Patricia Leaning 1939 – 2023

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Patricia Leaning (née Aherne) was born in Limerick, the eldest of a family of 10 children. Her father was a banker, and his work requiring him to move frequently, so the family moved with him to a variety of places in Ireland. Living in a rural area, Pat had to cycle several miles to school. When her school life ended, she came to the UK in 1957 to train as a nurse, and when qualified began her career as a theatre nurse in Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

A few years later, Pat met John Leaning and they were married in 1964 in Dublin. After marriage, they moved to Birmingham, and Pat worked at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital as a theatre nurse. Then after a year they moved to Harefield and started their family.

In 1973 they moved to Killearn, where Pat stayed for the rest of her days. During her early years in Killearn she worked as a sister in the geriatric ward of Canniesburn Hospital and then as a sister in a care home as well as lecturing part-time in Paisley. When family responsibilities lessened, she took on a full-time position

as a lecturer in health care and did this for 15 years.

During her holidays she gave support to Killearn Scouts and helped with numerous activities and camps. After her retirement, Pat joined John on his business visits abroad and she visited her family in Australia for three months every year until 2019.

For the final few years of her life, Pat suffered from Parkinson's. She died peacefully in her own home, which she loved, in January.

Pat had five children – Richard, Gillian, Stuart, Roger and Ross. She also had eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Patricia was at the heart of her family, and will be missed so very much by John and all her family and friends across the world.

JL/BP



## PRIZE COURIER CROSSWORD

Set by PeeWit

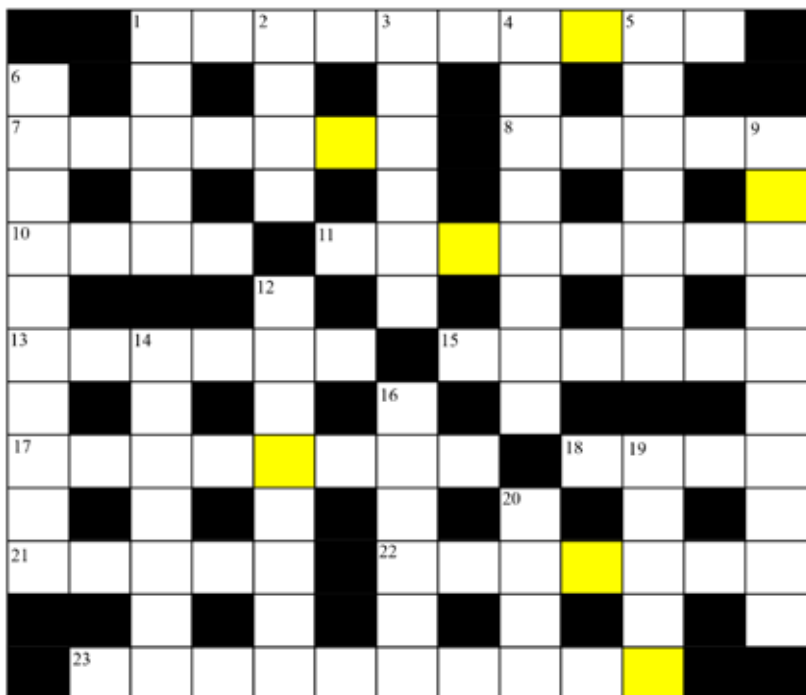
Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher to spend at the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier*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

### ACROSS

- 1 Fringe thug around the OK Corral (10)
- 7 Dumb elf perhaps tried clumsily (7)
- 8 Drives and gets rid of drug inside (5)
- 10 Drive out medieval contest that does not start (4)
- 11 Kitchen gadget used by chicken to plan laying (3-5)
- 13 Refute or get out of bed? (6)
- 15 When 11 finishes use this (6)
- 17 Get a tube around to find bread in Paris (8)
- 18 Seven years to scratch this? (4)
- 21 I heard public school had had a meal (5)
- 22 Irishman with hairs uncovered flies with them (7)
- 23 Hate lyrics made them react uncontrollably (10)

### DOWN

- 1 Peewit in air perhaps playing these (5)
- 2 Nothing English in the river (4)
- 3 Colour blind I go inside (6)
- 4,19 Area relights it without beginning of site around Killearn which you can follow (8,5)
- 5 Disease regularly occurring half inside short enclosure (7)
- 6 A strong car capable of being low-cost (10)
- 9 Lease stores right inside county (10)
- 12 Bury alien in cyberspace (8)
- 14 Large attempt has nothing on this discrimination (7)
- 16 One looks at celebrated ex-monarch (6)
- 19 See 4
- 20 Crystal container contains powder (4)



Solution to the last crossword: Across: 1 out of shape; 6 elf; 9 dermatitis; 10 golf; 12 Christmas Day; 14 Australia; 17 solve; 18 trier; 19 folk music; 20 convincingly; 24 amen; 25 iced coffee 26 site; 27 represents. Down: 1 odds; 2 tarn; 3 feather brain; 4 Heidi; 5 paintball; 7 Lloyds List; 8 fifty pence; 11 marshmallows; 13 Santa Claus; 14 assignment; 16 life cycle; 21 nadir; 22 a fan; 23 pets.

Winner of the last crossword: Debby Brown, Killearn

The letters in the coloured squares are an anagram of a place you might stop at when following 4, 19 down (3,4). Solve the crossword and find the answer to the anagram. This is the solution; email it or write the answer on a piece of paper and send it to the *Courier*. Instructions in the box below.

## Children's Prize Wordsearch

Find 10 words in the word search grid that are places in Scotland.

Eight of the words are: *Alexandria, Elgin, Falkirk, Hawick, Jedburgh, Motherwell, Oban, Wick.*

Can you find the other two towns, write them down and post it or email your answer to the *Courier* for a chance to win a £10 voucher which you can spend at the Co-op.

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

Instructions for sending it are given in the box below.

Well done to the winner of the last wordsearch:

Laura Gingles, age 10

Better luck next time to all the other 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 the postbox outside the Village Hall. Remember to give your name, address and a contact phone number before **2 April 2023**. Children, please give your age.

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

## Nature Notes – How Do You Like Them Apples?

Spring marks a change not just in day length and, if we're lucky, weather, but also the local bird assemblage for the next few months.

It's never an abrupt change, of course, and many winter species hang on well into the spring before their last ones and twos finally fly north for the endless days of Arctic summer. Thereafter, what have been common birds around Killearn during the colder months are completely absent, their places filled by summer substitutes from southern Europe and Africa.

Two gaudy garden species very much missed over summer months are our winter thrushes – redwing and fieldfare. Every winter, large, often mixed, flocks of these berry-guzzlers touch down in Scotland from Scandinavia. As wary as our other thrush species and more often found feeding in sizeable groups across fields and through woodland, individual birds will sometimes venture into gardens to find food. This is especially the case when it is extremely cold, while apples cut in half and placed on the ground will further help to tempt them in. Thrushes love apples.

This winter we were lucky enough to have two redwings and one fieldfare (at different times) jostling with the usual blackbirds and robins for first place in the queue for apples (and any other food) laid out on the grass. The fieldfare was particularly aggressive in chasing away rivals from its new-found patch, and spent more time doing this than actually feeding on what it was defending; one wonders if it actually burned off more calories than it consumed in the process!

Both species are very photogenic. Redwings (top right) are smaller, about the size of a song thrush, and sport a smart red flank patch and prominent pale supercilium (the stripe above the eye). Fieldfares (right), on the other hand, are nearer mistle thrush size and



have striking blocks of ochre, blue-grey and purple-brown in their plumage. Sexes are alike in both species. Overhead flocks are often heard before they are seen, so it's worthwhile learning the redwing's thin squeak and the fieldfare's bold chatter if you want to locate them. However, by the time you read this, you won't have too long left until the longer days urge them northward.

MARTIN CULSHAW

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the summer edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed on 12 August 2023.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 23 June 2023.

Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 23 June 2023.

Please send them to:  
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email: [courier@kcfc.co.uk](mailto:courier@kcfc.co.uk)

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