



Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 47

SUMMER 2020

£1



Noticeboard

The items below are provisional, and will depend on Covid-19 restrictions. Please check that the event is going ahead.

- 15 Sept **Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch** workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 1.30pm by Odile Hughson, 'The story of cashmere shawls and the Paisley pattern, with a French twist'. Visitors and new members welcome: £3 half day, £4 full day. Contact Susan Gray (strathendrickchair@gmail.com).
- 16 Sept **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Venue to be confirmed, 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; fiona.rennie@btinternet.com).
- 22 Sept **Colourful Killearn** Autumn meeting and AGM. Village Hall Committee Room, 8pm. Contact Mike Gray (550962; mike@kcfc.co.uk).
- 24 Sept **Drymen & District Local History Society** meeting. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2. www.drymen-history.org.uk
- 28 Sept **Monday Club** AGM. Village Hall, 2pm–4pm. Contact Pat Dickie (patogian@hotmail.com).
- 4 Oct **Killearn Kirk** Harvest Thanksgiving service, 10.30am.
- 5 Oct **Monday Club Badminton and Bridge** section start; information nearer the time.
- 15 Oct **Killearn Community Futures** Annual General Meeting. Village Hall, 8pm. Contact Mike Gray (550962; convenor@kcfc.co.uk).
- 20 Oct **Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch** all-day workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Visitors and new members welcome: £3 half day, £4 full day. Contact Susan Gray (strathendrickchair@gmail.com).
- 21 Oct **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Venue to be confirmed, 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; fiona.rennie@btinternet.com).
- 22 Oct **Drymen & District Local History Society** meeting. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2.
- 7 Nov **KCFC bonfire and fireworks display**. The Glebe, 7.15pm.
- 8 Nov **Killearn Kirk** Remembrance Service. War Memorial, 10.45am, followed by a service in the church.
- 13 Nov **Golden Years' Club** Bingo evening. Kirk Hall, 7 for 7.30pm–9.30pm. All welcome.
- 14 Nov **Killearn Kirk** jumble sale. Kirk Hall, 10am–12noon.
- 17 Nov **Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch** morning workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 1.30pm by Gillian Cooper, 'Sketchbook for Embroiderers'. Visitors and new members welcome: £3 half day, £4 full day. Contact Susan Gray (strathendrickchair@gmail.com).
- 18 Nov **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Venue to be confirmed, 8pm. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; fiona.rennie@btinternet.com).
- 26 Nov **Drymen & District Local History Society** meeting. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2.

Village Hall classes and clubs will be restarting as soon as they can – please contact the organisers.

- Just do Pilates** Mondays, 9.30am–10.30am. Also Wednesdays, 7.30pm–8.30pm and Thursdays, 11am–12noon. All levels welcome. Contact Willie McIntosh (williemac.justdopilates@gmail.com; 07733 406464).
- Monday Club** Monday afternoons, Main Hall and Garden Room.
- Stillness Moves – Meditation and Mindful Movement** Mondays 6.45pm–8pm, Main Hall. Best for those with some meditation and yoga experience. Contact Adelaide (07809 469572; ashalhope@stillnessmoves.com).
- Yoga class** Tuesdays, 10.30am and Thursdays, 7pm, Garden Room. Contact Craig Buchanan (craig@insideyoga.net).
- Tai Chi for Health** Tuesdays, 10.45am–11.45am, Garden Room. Contact Sukyee (sukyee.tai@gmail.com).
- Linda Turner School of Dancing** Thursdays, 4pm–6.30pm, Main Hall. Dance classes for children of all ages. Contact Lynda (01360 770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).
- Town Break Friendship Group** First Tuesday of each month, 1.30pm–3.30pm, Garden Room. www.townbreakstirling.org
- DIY circuits** Tuesdays, 6.30pm–7.30pm, Main Hall. Contact Fiona (07799 625993; fiona.rennie@btinternet.com) or Nick (07860 700928).
- Killearn Bridge Club** Tuesdays, 7pm–10.30pm, Garden Room. Contact Arthur Whittaker (07748 636312; www.bridgewebs.com/killearn).
- Yoga class** Wednesdays, 9.30am–10.30am. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah Fleming (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).
- Monaghan Tae Kwon Do** children's classes Wednesdays, 6pm–9pm, Main Hall. Contact David Monaghan (07472 210735; monaghantaekwondo@outlook.com).
- Dancercise** Fridays, 10am–11am. Low impact dance-based exercise and routines for over 50s, ladies and gents. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837; yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk).
- Taiji and Qigong** Fridays, 10.30am–11.45am, Garden Room. Contact Susanne Lin Jesem (07979 860754; susanne@dragonspringtaiji.co.uk).
- Dance for Parkinson's** Fridays, 12noon–1pm, Garden Room. Providing creative movement and dance to the Parkinson's and mobility disorders community. Contact Julie Symmonds (07496 231913; julie@danceforparkinsons.org).
- Buchanan Castle Bridge Club** Fridays, 2pm–5pm, Garden Room. Contact Lesley Nicholl (07720 978998; lesleynic7@icloud.com).
- Youth Club** Sundays, 3pm–4pm, Main Hall. One hour of activities for children aged 7–12 years. Contact Archie Wilson (07786 913573; archie@treesurgery.com).
- The following have suspended activities. Contacts for details:
Strathendrick Film Society – mikebath42@gmail.com
Kirk Guild – members will be notified when meetings restart
Strathendrick Singers – secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk
Arts Society Stirling – www.theartssocietystirling.org.uk

If you have dates of events for the winter issue of the Noticeboard (mid November to mid March), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; heather.mcarthur@virgin.net).

Letter to the Editor

We welcome your letters and emails. Please include your address (not for publication). We reserve the right to edit letters and emails.

Dear Sir

On my allowed Covid walks, I often go down Gartness Road. I don't know who owns the field with the trees, but the ash trees in that forest all look as if they have Ash Dieback. This should be checked because it would be terrible if any other ash trees became infected, and especially if the big ash tree in the Glebe caught it and had to be felled. I'm hoping whoever owns that field will read this and investigate.

A Killearn Walker

News in brief

The fabulous sum raised for The Brain Tumour Charity through sales of Mairi Macdonald's book, *Child of the Croft*, now stands at £908.12. She would like to thank all the people of Killearn and friends far and wide who generously donated. Her aim is to reach £1,000, and there are still a number of books available for sale at £7.50 each. Contact Mairi (07955 707824 or 550928) if you would like to donate and purchase a copy.

Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Show will be judged on 29 August, albeit a very different show in the virtual world. We thank all those who sent in entries, and encourage everyone to check the website for the pictures and winner information.

www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk

Stirling Provost Christine Simpson is extending support for Start Up Stirling as her Charity of the Year with a donation of £1,000 in light of the challenges the Coronavirus pandemic has caused the Third Sector. Start Up Stirling focuses on alleviating poverty, suffering and distress by running foodbanks, providing Home Starter packs for people starting a new tenancy following crisis, and an essential support service to assist people to access additional services such as money advice. <https://startupstirling.org.uk>

Advent Windows

We would like to organise an Advent Windows Trail in Killearn this year with windows throughout the village decorated and 'opened' each evening between 1 December and Christmas Eve.

If you are interested in participating and your house has a window that can clearly be seen from the street without people coming on to your property and you are happy to keep the window illuminated each evening after it is 'opened' until after Christmas, please get in touch with Glenda (550142) for further information.

GLEND A AND KATHLEEN

Editorial

Hello and welcome to our summer issue. When our previous issue was published in March, we never imagined how life could change during the intervening months. Despite navigating life with the virus, in producing this issue we have created something not dissimilar to our normal format. Our regular contributors sent us their articles, our team beavered away as they always do (many thanks) and inside, there are plenty of interesting articles to keep you entertained.

That said, the inescapable effect on our lives brought about by Covid-19 is the main focus of this issue. Our centre pages will give you an idea of how it affected residents as well as local businesses, and how people rose to the challenge. Many of us did not meet with family members, including grandchildren, for several months; likewise, meeting friends for a coffee or just a chat was not an option either. Thank goodness for social media, which enabled lots of us to keep in touch.

We at the *Courier* have been supported by our advertisers since we started way back in March 2005, and it was obvious to us that they were being affected by the situation. We decided that we would return the favour and try to help them out. Our solution was to give them free advertising space in this issue. We also considered those local businesses that don't advertise with us, but which must also be impacted, so we offered them free, business-card size adverts, too. In this way we hope to have made a small dent in the effect of the lockdown. Please support them.

Clearly the whole situation has had a huge effect on our daily lives quite unparalleled to anything we have experienced for many generations. Human nature being what it is, in the years to come, people will be interested in what it was like living with the virus, so we felt some sort of record ought to be kept. With this in mind, we contacted All Killearn Archives and suggested that we should seek to archive accounts of what it has been like. AKA responded enthusiastically to this proposal, so if you have a story you would like to tell, please send it to courier@kfc.co.uk.

Stay safe and enjoy this issue.

Ian

Cover Image

The cover photo of the Wellgreen was taken by Robert Bamford and remains his copyright. Our thanks to Robert for permission to use his image.

Killlearn Community Futures Company – become a member for only £1

Covid-19 has confined most of us to the boundaries of our village, if not our own homes. So I thought it was a good time to remind residents of the impact that Killlearn Community Futures Company (KCFC) has on the life and amenity of our community, through its many and varied working groups. Indeed the very pages you are reading are published by KCFC through the excellent *Killlearn Courier* team!

Obvious, as villagers take their daily exercise, is the work of Colourful Killlearn in planting and maintaining roadside tubs and wall-top troughs. Who can fail to cheered by daffodils in spring or begonias in summer? But their work goes beyond this in creating wildflower patches and caring for flower beds and other public spaces – activities sadly curtailed by physical distancing.

Less obvious, but just as important to one's constitutional, is the network of paths, cleared and repaired and litter-picked by Killlearn Paths Group volunteers, taking you beyond the urban pavements and into the surrounding fields, hills and incredibly beautiful woodlands. In addition, our Woodland Group manages the Kingdom area between Lampson and Beech.

More severely affected, but not daunted, by the pandemic are the Village Hall (temporarily closed and surviving by cutting as many costs as possible to reconcile with loss of income), the Hoolie (postponed until next year) and the Fireworks (approaching decision

time for this year's display). Killlearn Heritage Trail completed an archaeological exploration in the Glen and is inching towards establishing an historical trail around the village. Our Archive Group will be pulling together these threads of living history (it's happening all around us) for posterity.

The green credentials of the village are at the heart of our Sustainability Group – shopping locally (of particular benefit during the lockdown as local businesses have responded magnificently), re-using/recycling, energy efficiency and sustainable transport. A soon-to-be-launched electric bike loan project, funded by the Energy Saving Trust, will allow for an extended trial of one of these machines before committing to the considerable cost of purchase (see article on page 6).

Previous but enduring legacies to the village include the children's playpark and the Woodland Cemetery. All this is done entirely by committed volunteers and paid for through donations, fundraising and grants.

Membership of this amazing charitable organisation costs only £1 a year, so please join us – simply complete the form at <https://kcfco.co.uk/form.html>.

Enjoy these many amenities as you step out, but please spare an occasional thought for those that make it happen.

MIKE GRAY

CONVENOR, KILLEARN COMMUNITY FUTURES CO. LTD

convenor@kcfco.co.uk

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WE'RE GOOD TO GO

Say It With Flowers

Constrained by Covid-19, horizons have shrunk to the immediate and the local. Colourful Killearn has tried to make this slightly more bearable by lifting spirits with our usual cheerful displays of flowers throughout the village, the tubs and wall-top troughs hopefully being enjoyed and appreciated by residents taking their daily exercise.

While meetings and work parties have been cancelled, tending our planters is an essentially solitary occupation, so our volunteers have been able to maintain the spring display of miniature daffodils and violas and progress to the summer bedding scheme with a basis of begonias.

As is traditional, of course, the appearance of the summer flowers has marked the end of the good weather, although the rainfall does have the benefit of reducing the back-breaking task of lugging water about.

We are, however, in dire need of funds for future plans. Lockdown and social distancing has stopped our fundraising plant sales and contactless payment in the Co-op has drastically reduced donations to the collection tin located there. A cashless society is bad news for charities.

So, if you could just see your way to putting a little something our way, it would be hugely appreciated and entirely spent on filling Killearn with colour in the year to come.



Add your contribution to our Co-op tin or contact me (mike@kefc.co.uk; 550962) for other ways to contribute. Many thanks for your support.

MIKE GRAY

Congratulations to Primary 7

Primary 7 of Killearn Primary School followed in the footsteps of their predecessors and continued participation in Rotapeeps, a Rotakids Club chartered by Rotary International Britain and Ireland six years ago.

The Club appoints its own president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, and each pupil has a position allocated to them such as publicity, photographer and artist.

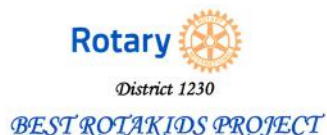
They participated fully in the aims of the Club, raising money for charity, and getting involved in the school and the community. They make their own decisions, keep minutes and have a bank account. Unfortunately, their 'season' was cut short due to the closure of schools.

In Rotary District 1230, which includes Killearn, there are 42 Rotary Clubs, most of whom have a Rotakids Club.

Each year, the District Governor recognises the best Rotakids Club in the District and, for the first time, the award was won by Killearn Rotapeeps.

So, well done to the pupils of P7.

TID



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Killearn Health Centre News

Fay Smith, Office Manager

Our dear friend and colleague, Fay, sadly passed away on 18 May 2020.

Fay was a central part of our team at the Health Centre for over 30 years, and as our Office Manager always worked incredibly hard to support our team and to ensure that our patients received the appropriate care and access to our services.

She was incredibly dedicated, not just to the practice but to the community she worked and lived in. She always managed this with a sense of humour second to none and was always supportive of all the young doctors we train.

We all miss her dearly, as we are sure the community she served does. She leaves behind a huge gap and will be missed terribly by all of us.

Covid-19

As we are all aware, it has been a trying time. We have had to adapt the way we work to ensure the safety of our staff and community. We thank all our staff who have worked hard during these unprecedented times.

While not clear what the future holds, we currently offer a range of telephone and video access to our patients. We anticipate this continuing for the foreseeable future. We will provide updated information via our website www.killearnhealthcentre.com.

Borrow a bike? – KELP can help

How about getting your hands on one of these beauties? KCFC's Sustainability Group is set to launch the Killearn E-bike Loan Project (KELP), a new scheme for adults of all ages within the village to let you have an extended trial of an electric bike for a month.



Largely funded by a grant from the Energy Saving Trust, with additional support from the *Courier* and the Fireworks Group, the intention is to promote cycling as healthy and green for local journeys. Exercise, fresh air and a reduced carbon footprint combined!

From sweaty experience, I'm well aware of the hilly nature of the area, but I can reassure you that the electric assistance these bikes provide make it a breeze – until I tested one it had been a long time since I'd made it to the top of the Ibert, still in the saddle.

The detailed operation of the scheme is still being finalised, but if you are interested in taking up this opportunity, please email me (mike@kcfc.co.uk), or drop a note with your contact details into the postbox at the entrance to the Village Hall.

In the first instance, priority will be given to key workers and volunteers undertaking community support who could use a bike instead of a motor vehicle.

I'd also be delighted to hear from you if you would be interested in helping to run the project, maintaining the bikes, training users or collating use data for the Energy Saving Trust.

MG

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Here's One We Prepared Earlier

Unfortunately, we have been unable to seed any new areas in the village with wild flowers this year as the sowing season coincided exactly with being locked down. However, the five existing patches continue to evolve. The more established are settling into a luxuriant growth of perennials and biennials, while the two most recent (opposite the Co-op) have been struggling with the spring drought. The onset of 'summer' should fix that!

The first year's exuberant palette of annual opportunists such as poppies, cornflowers and the like has given way to a more subdued mixture of herbaceous flowers, no less important to invertebrates and the animals that feed on them. There are still the divas, of course – red & white campion early on, followed by ox-eye daisies then the thistles and knapweeds – but look closer and you'll find a host of more retiring flowers. These range from tiny pearlworts and trefoil through self-heal, yellow rattle, orange hawkweed and vetches to deadnettles and raspberries (whether or not these are 'wild' is moot, but they have appeared spontaneously). Naturally the ubiquitous buttercups, daisies and dandelions also feature, much underrated in my opinion. Pretty and brightly coloured with a very long flowering season, they thrive on neglect. What's not to like?

So far this year (late June), I have counted 44 flowering species spread over the different patches, with



the wee triangle at the Village Hall clocking up 24 on its own. Plus, as you wander the highways and byways of Killearn, the verges, fields and woodlands offer up at least another 15 native wild flowers, as well as garden escapees and invasive aliens. Quite a diversity in our small corner of Scotland.



As restrictions ease, we'll see what we can do to create new wild flower islands but, in the meantime, enjoy the show.

KILLEARN WILDFLOWER GROUP



turnip the beet



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Killearn Village Hall Update

As I write – it’s the end of June and there are brighter lights ahead. ‘Community’ and ‘hope’ are two words which can help us focus as we step into the next phases.

‘Hope’. We’re looking forward to hearing the laughs and seeing the smiles as we reopen the doors at the hall. Its been a long three months for us all since the hall closed at the end of March. Our income streams closed off at the same time, but costs for things such as maintenance work and servicing have continued while our finances to the end of July 2020 have taken a huge dip. It will be another 12 months at least before we can hope to turn a corner and see things get back to a better position.

But our customers bring ‘hope’! We’ve been talking to those who host classes and activities on a regular basis in the hall and will be working with them to find a safe route back.

It’s been a truly difficult time for our wedding couples – having to change their plans – but we’re pleased that, along with Three Sisters Bake, we’ve put new dates into the calendar. Weddings are always special days and we hope that we can continue to welcome wedding couples and their families and friends to Killearn.

‘Community’. We hope that we can retain the community spirit that has shone through during the coronavirus lockdown. There are countless stories of people locally supporting others and working together



as a community.

Meanwhile, we’re looking for a new café operator at Killearn Village Hall and we want to appoint someone who will embrace the local community spirit and provide a café environment which offers warmth, friendly faces and an open door to both the Killearn community and visitors to the village.

We wish whoever takes over all the best and very much look forward to working with them. The Village Hall hopes to continue to host community events. Come and talk to us about parties, family activities, community ventures – we’d welcome the chance to help.

FIONA RENNIE

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Goodbye to the Three Sisters Café

Everyone in the village will know that Three Sisters Bake are giving up operating cafés, so that they can concentrate on building up their wedding enterprise. The Hall Committee are sorry to see them leave as the success of their café has not only raised the profile of the Village Hall but also of the village by attracting many from far afield to sample delicious food and stunning scenery.

However, it will not be a complete break, as they will continue to help the Committee organise weddings in the hall, an impossible task for a volunteer group without professional help. Weddings allow us to keep the fees for all other activities in the hall at a reasonable level as well meeting the substantial costs in running an old building.

Thank you, Gillian, Nichola and Linsey, for being such good partners and friends over the last five years and we look forward to working with you in the future. The *Courier* received the following letter from Gillian:

‘In the aftermath of the announcement of the closure of our cafés in Killearn and Quarriers Village, we’d like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to the people of Killearn and surrounding villages for your support over the last 5.5 years. It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to our many regular, local customers who over the years have become friends. ‘Our biggest challenge when taking on the café in 2014 was recruitment, due to Killearn’s semi-rural location. ‘However, it is now easy to say looking back that this challenge has become our proudest achievement,



allowing us to facilitate the creation of 100 jobs over the years, largely held by local people. We particularly struggled to recruit experienced hospitality staff and so over the years have employed and trained many local young people with no previous experience who otherwise would have faced limited job opportunities in the area.

‘Customers and employees have become friends and we are very sad to be saying goodbye to these friendships. We wish the future café operator the very best of luck in this space which offers the best views in a café we’ve ever seen!

‘Many thanks again for your support and kindness over the years.’

GILLIAN, NICHOLA AND LINSEY X
GILLIAN REITH, DIRECTOR // BIG SISTER



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The start of a new decade in Killearn will be remembered for the record rainfall in February. There were 11 days when more than 10cm fell with 40cm on the 21st. Once again there was widespread flooding with the emergency services in great demand. However, without rain, life would not be able to continue in the way we know it.

I rather like this short poem *The Art of Rain* by Mitchell D. Wilson:

Falling down, pooling up,
 Out of the sky, into my cup.
 What is this wet that comes from above?
 That some call disaster, and others find love.
 The harder it falls, the less it is nice,
 The colder it falls, the harder the ice.
 The rain has an art that I may not get,
 So I stand still here and get soaking wet.

So, why do some parts of the UK get more rain than others? The following table shows considerable annual rainfall differences throughout the UK with a clear divide between the much wetter north and west and the drier east and south. Across the entire UK, the annual rainfall is 885mm (37.7in).

Average Annual Rainfall East and South UK			Average Annual Rainfall West and North UK		
	mm	inch		mm	inch
London	622	24.5	Bristol	802	31.6
Norwich	636	25	Manchester	909	36.6
Newcastle	651	25.6	Glasgow	1124	44.3
Edinburgh	706	27.8	Ft. William	1809	71.2
<i>Records obtained from The Met Office for the period 1981–2010</i>					

The prevailing warm, moist, westerly winds ensure that the west of the UK is more likely to receive frontal rainfall from the Atlantic. These weather systems usually move from west to east and as they do so rainfall decreases. This is because the mountainous north and west forces the air to rise, cooling it and leading to condensation of water vapour

(from gas to liquid) leading to the formation of rainclouds (a term that meteorologists call the orographic effect).

Precipitation is defined as water that falls out of the sky in either liquid (rain) or solid (ice crystals, hail, snow, etc.) state. High up in the atmosphere, precipitation usually starts as ice crystals which grow larger within clouds until they become heavy enough to fall to the ground under the influence of gravity. If it is warm enough, this solid precipitation will melt as it falls, so eventually falling as rain.

Raindrops that are less than 0.065mm in diameter and fall close together are defined as drizzle, a phenomenon well known to Scots. Larger raindrops are classed as rain, which is further differentiated as light, moderate or heavy according to the amount that falls and the visibility.

The flooding with which we are becoming increasingly familiar may be caused by persistent heavy rain that is falling on ground that is already saturated. Run off swells streams which swell rivers and eventually overflow into populated areas. Flash flooding occurs when intense short-term rainfall cannot be dispersed by soil absorption, run off or drainage. The most frequent cause of flash flooding is the slow-moving thunderstorm, such as the one that flooded Tewksbury in 1995.

After the very wet winter here in Killearn, we have now embarked on a remarkable dry spell when from 19 March to 28 April, my weather centre recorded only 76mm (2.9in), the sort of rainfall falling in semi-deserts.

The jet stream held its position to the north of the UK, allowing high pressure to remain almost stationary and this enabled record hours of sunshine. May was the sunniest month the UK has seen since records began and from 1 March to the end of May, the average sunshine hours were 626. West Central Scotland has an annual sunshine total of 1,216 hours, but experienced 510.7 from 1 March to 31 May.

I keep reporting on records being broken across the UK.
 TOM RENFREW

Half-Yearly Summary for Killearn (2020)						
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
Highest Temp	12	10.1	12.2	21.3	27.5	27.0
Lowest Temp	-2.3	-2.6	-2.5	-0.2	-0.2	5.3
Mean Temp	5.5	3.8	5.1	8.4	11.2	14.0
Days Below Freezing	4	5	5	1	1	0
Highest Wind Gust	37	48	39	40	43	30
Monthly Rain	150.8	270	98.8	13.8	29.9	100.6
Most Rain in 24 hrs	33.4	40	12.4	4.8	7.0	16.0
Days without Rain	5	2	13	21	15	12
Cumulative Rainfall	150.8	420.8	519.6	533.4	563.3	663.9
<i>Temperature in °C, rainfall in mm, and wind speed in miles per hour</i>						

Bridge by Zorro

Given the nature of duplicate bridge, a decision was taken before the official lockdown to suspend the local bridge club and its associated class. However, some members have started playing bridge online, particularly through Bridge Base Online (BBO). This is an American-based organisation, whose servers were sometimes challenged by the vastly increased demand. At some times of day, there could be around 50,000 players worldwide logged onto the system! Other online bridge sites are available, especially for those looking for tutorials, however BBO enables you to play with your usual partner and even against an opposing pair you know and not just random people.

Meanwhile, here is a more local challenge. This hand comes from a recent match on BBO and shows the difficulties you face when you hold a singleton in your partner's bid suit. Do you try to guide them away from it during the bidding, or just keep 'mum'? Is the peculiar distribution going to help or hinder when you end up as declarer?

Often when you hold a very distributional hand, with a singleton or void, it's an indication of a similar distribution in the other hands. Therefore you might suspect a misfit with your partner right from the start. Here's a typical 'board 13'. How might you bid, what contract might you end up in, and how do you play it after the lead is made?

Dealer: North All Vulnerable

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

What should it be? See page 37 to discover whether you made the right choice. Z



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Living in Mandalay

In August of last year, I set off with seven other young volunteers from Project Trust to begin teaching in Phaung Daw Oo monastery school in the centre of Myanmar's second biggest city, Mandalay. After a year of preparation for this adventure, we were all keen to get going, and diving headfirst into Myanmar's rich and chaotic culture was very exciting. Having been closed to tourism until very recently, Myanmar's culture is quite unlike any other, with extremely kind and generous people who welcomed us in and taught us the language and strong Buddhist culture and traditions.

The school which I taught in was a city on its own, with 9,000 students who came in shifts throughout the day, and around 2,000 novice monks who lived within the school grounds. Teaching was quite a steep learning curve, partly due to the limited training we had and also because

of the variety of classes within the school. I wore a traditional teacher's uniform, a green longyi and white shirt, as green is the Myanmar colour of education. As the school was so big, there were several different departments. For example, one department was for children who had been taught in English since kindergarten, so this required a very different style of teaching to that which I had to use in my larger classes of 60 or so novice monks and nuns who had little to no existing English language skills. While this was definitely a challenge, I am very grateful for the skills which



this teaching experience has given me, improving my confidence and resilience greatly. These skills also included learning the Burmese language to the extent that I could communicate with my pupils and new friends.

When I wasn't teaching, I was

lucky to be able to travel to other towns and cities. Myanmar is a very ethnically diverse country, with over 100 different ethnic groups and languages. It was very interesting to see how each place that I visited had a contrasting culture and often different languages, some of which were influenced by the surrounding countries of Thailand and India, and some which were unlike anything I'd seen or heard of before.

My year in Myanmar with Project Trust was the best, most rewarding year of my life so far, and I am looking forward to returning to the school this summer to teach once more.

I am very grateful for the support of the Killearn Trust, along with other trusts, to make this experience possible and I hope that my extremely positive experience may encourage other people to do the same.

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Constant Hope in Turbulent Times

Some events come along once in a lifetime that can shake you to the core. Some things come along once in a generation that can transform the way we think and engage with others. Some things come along so rarely that the world catches its breath and we wonder how we will get through this.

This pandemic has been an event that does all three. It will change some individual lives permanently – those now dealing with loss and infirmity. It has changed the way we interact, and we have no idea how long this will go on for and no part of the community has been immune to its impact.

We see its continued spread across the globe, and with only limited hope for treatments being developed quickly, we can wonder how long will it be until we are free from its hold.

In the face of this, we have seen the great mobilisation of humanity, a rediscovery of neighbourliness and community, people running errands for those they hardly know, a watchful eye kept on those living around us. Frontline workers denying themselves, and their families, to help and care for others. New ways of doing things having to be invented as we go, a time of great change.

In times of great turbulence, we look for the fixed points of our lives to give us a sense of security and hope

– work, family, the things that are part of us. Yet even these have been thrown up into the air. Furloughing and social distancing have disrupted us to the very core.

As part of the Christian community here in Killearn, we too have had to face the greatest of challenges. Our buildings are closed and we are denied the opportunity to meet and encourage one another as we would have in the past. It is likely to be some time before churches can be opened up for Sunday services. We have had to develop new ways of ‘doing’ church, like web services and Zoom meetings.

In spite of all this turbulent change, for us one thing remains constant: the love of God expressed in Jesus Christ. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Hebrews ‘Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.’ (Heb. 13:8). God has not abandoned us, his loving care is there for all who ask for it, who reach out, without words, to encounter the God who draws near to us. Where is God during this pandemic? Right beside us, at the bedside of the dying, next to those who weep from loss, next to those who feel the anxiety of isolation, with those who help others even in the smallest of ways, and with you if you seek him. Jeremiah 29:13–14: ‘You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord.’

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And Now For Something Completely Different



With *Calamity Jane* twiddling her guns on the production shelf for the time being, FADS has had to dig deep to stay dramatically engaged during lockdown. In a first for us, we’re using Zoom to rehearse an original four-part radio sitcom, which will make its debut as a podcast, available through our website.

Written and directed by Ian Kidd, the comedy is set in a small-town bus depot, in a magical time before Covid-19. The business is going through hard times and the hapless staff have to get the buses out despite vandalism, terrorism, extreme feminism and a lack of optimism. Owner/Manager Keith Roache does his best, but he’s always one step behind lazy Jimmy, hopeless Carol, desperate Mags, womaniser Kenny, naïve William and camp Laurence.

As we write at the end of June, casting is almost finalised, the scripts are getting their final tweaks and the sound engineer is tackling mute buttons and unstable connections head on. We’re on the way!

Check our website for more information and subscribe to our blog to keep up to date with all the latest developments. www.fintrydrama.org.uk/subscribe



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The Box

In 2017, All Killearn Archive was given a small wooden box containing various old photographs and documents. The donor did not know the origin of the box, and after some initial investigation it was placed in store.

Recently, we revisited the box and digitised, catalogued and studied the contents in more detail. Included were five Ambrotype studio portraits of seated adults, four encased and one loose, which must date from around 1855 to the early 1860s when this type of photograph was popular. There were 12 photographic 'Carte de Visite', most with the names and addresses of the studio on the reverse which dated them from 1855 to 1891. Only one, from the early 1870s, had a name, 'Miss Agnes', written on the back. Other items included a death notification, greeting cards, memorial cards, wedding invitations, letters and envelopes, and receipts for payments. Most dated from between 1879 and 1904, with one envelope from 1928. What is the source of the collection?

The family name 'Fairlie' occurs frequently, and the 1881 census shows only two Fairlie families in Killearn. The evidence points to Archibald, a carrier, his wife Mary, and their eight children, aged from 3 to 15, who were living in Kirkhouse. One daughter, Agnes, was nine and may be the 'Miss Agnes' in the photograph.



The 1891 census shows Archibald, his wife and now just five children in Killearn, while by 1901, Mary is a widow, still in Kirkhouse, with three adult children, including Agnes. In 1911, Mary and Agnes are living together in Killearn, but no address is given.

The box contained an invoice from a Glasgow coach builder dated 26 August 1898 and addressed to Mr A. Fairlie, listing work carried out on a wagonette between July 1896 and October 1897. An outstanding amount of £2. 19s. 6d. is shown as paid in September 1898 and there is a receipt for this payment, dated 21 September 1898, but addressed to Mrs Fairlie, Kirkhouse. This appears to be settling a debt left by Archibald who died in March 1898. Also included are three receipts for payment by Mrs Fairlie for piano lessons given by Mr Oatley to Miss Janet Fairlie dated 1892. Janet is one of Mary's daughters.

Wedding invitations were also carefully preserved in the box. These include an invitation for Miss Janet Fairlie to a 1901 wedding in Falkirk and an invitation for both

Mrs [Mary] and Miss Janet Fairlie to a 1904 wedding in Killearn.

There are three invitations to the wedding of Margaret Fairlie, another of Mary's daughters, also in 1904. A Silver Wedding card dated December 1889, with no name or sender, corresponds to Mary's wedding to Archibald in December 1864.

The final piece of dated material is an envelope addresses to Mrs A. Fairlie, Ingleside, with a Glasgow postmark for 28 May 1928. Mary died in 1932 at the splendid age of 96.

The intriguing contents of this box suggest it was originally owned by Mary Fairlie. The Archive Group would be interested to know if any readers can cast any light on the box and its contents.

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Out of the fire and into the frying pan

Well, it had to happen sometime. I had thought about it, off and on, often out loud. My friends were exacerbated by my lack of action. I was mostly too busy to worry much about it – what with the family, organising PTA meetings and KCFC AGMs – until 2012.

Why 2012? That was the start of the independence campaign, and it belatedly occurred to me that I might find myself in a pickle. You see, I wasn't a British citizen, and although I had indefinite leave to remain, I was having trouble finding out how I could regularise my position in the country I'd lived in for 40 years without being 'British' first if 'yes' won the day.

In the end, it was the 2016 vote to leave the EU that decided me. I had already done some preliminary research online, and I started saving up – it's a surprisingly costly business, applying for citizenship. I took a deep breath, and began the process in January.

One of the first things I did was to engage an experienced solicitor. Applications can be complicated and I wanted to make sure all the masses of paperwork were in order (and there were masses of paperwork) because my worst fear was that I'd find myself with neither citizenship nor leave to remain. I was given excellent legal advice, all the form filling was online, my two referees were happy to support me, and I was only required to appear in person at what felt like an interview but was apparently simply a document check. Every different stage cost: £1,349.20 for the application itself and the 'document check' another £60 (that was cheap –



there was a sliding scale, amazingly, depending on day and time), photographs and the solicitor, of course. I did manage to save £50 by being excused from taking the Life in the UK test due to old age!

It all went smoothly. My case was straightforward, but the procedure was nevertheless alarming. It is astonishingly difficult to prove you have lived somewhere for five years when only certain kinds of documents are allowed as evidence. Luckily, between the solicitor and Stirling Council, I was able to pull everything together. During this process I found immigration documents I'd forgotten I had ever needed and although none were demanded, they did prove useful: they lent weight. And there is no doubt that being an English speaker was a distinct advantage.

The process brought home to me how terrifying it must be for others equally qualified to apply, but whose lives and chances haven't been so lucky. How tempting is it to dispose of paperwork you don't realise you will need for an application you don't know you will be making? And how to cover the cost?

My application was submitted to the Home Office in February and I was told it might take four to six months for a decision. Much to my surprise, I was emailed at the end of May – success! The last, necessary, step is a citizenship ceremony (which costs a minimum of £80), but these are not taking place for the moment due to Covid-19. So I'm left in limbo temporarily, but with high hopes.

NB

Community Council Update

The Community Council has held three meetings by Zoom during lockdown, two of which included the public. Not a lot has happened due to lockdown, but our role throughout this period has been to ensure all Stirling Council information and help contact numbers are brought to the attention of the community, primarily through our websites.

We have obtained a grant of £500 towards expenses for the village Covid group. We are continuing to monitor the situation, and ready to take any action necessary where assistance is required.

There are not many planning applications being forwarded but the main issues remain as follows:

- The Killearn Hotel – discussion between the developer and the Council is progressing, with responses being given to issues as these are presented.
- The hospital site – Cala has submitted an application and discussions are also progressing. Stirling Council has requested more smaller houses, increased landscaping and changes to the

proposed road layout within the development. The Community Council has some issues still to be discussed with Cala in respect of the link to the village and crossing points over the A81.

- Affordable housing in Lampson Road – the full Section 75 agreement (details) has now been finalised between Rural Stirling Housing Association and Stirling Council. The Housing Association now intends to submit its detailed proposal.
- Finnich Glen – the application is being processed by the Local Authority. More immediate attention is being paid by Stirling Council and the police to alleviate the present parking and litter issues.

Work of the Community Council will continue throughout the summer recess. Our next meeting is scheduled for 16 September, with a venue still to be finalised.

In the meantime we look forward to meeting with the community again and hope everyone will stay safe.

JIM PTOLOMEY, CHAIR

Making History by Doing Nothing

There is no doubt that the exam candidates of 2020 will be held up as examples for years to come of why students should do their best in their prelims. Due to the coronavirus, SQA exams were cancelled for the first time in history and all three groups of students who were preparing to take their exams this year were unable to do so.

The result is that these students will have to hope that their work from the past year has been good enough for them to achieve the grade they were working towards. In some cases, people do the work they are given throughout the year without putting much effort into it, but when it comes to the exams, they work very hard. This strategy wasn't an option this year. Without the exams to fall back on, there was suddenly no room for improvement when it came to grades.

Furthermore, the students who were planning on leaving this year after exams had their final term cut back by two months. So no graduation, no exams and an early goodbye.

Alternatively, cancellation of exams could have been looked at as a convenience for a few students. There are some who do their best work when they don't have the fear of being tested and are not limited to completing their best work to a specific time limit. Now that the grades are decided by work produced throughout the year, these students have the opportunity to show what they are

capable of when they are not in a stressful situation.

Fortunately, the SQA are doing everything in their power to make sure that everyone's hard work is fairly represented. The SQA released a statement saying: 'We want to ensure that young people across Scotland get the results they deserve.'

They are doing this through four steps: using teachers' estimates; checking coursework and awarding appropriate grades; delivering results and certificates; and allowing appeals.

The appeals system was discontinued a few years ago and replaced by re-marking. This is where the exam paper is checked for any marking mistakes, for instance where a student might have lost a mark unfairly or been given a mark they didn't deserve. The appeals system existed in case a candidate felt they had been given the wrong mark, when the SQA would look over the coursework that the student had completed throughout the year and reward them appropriately.

Given the current situation, an appeal system is the only logical choice as there will be no exam papers for the SQA to re-mark.

At the time of writing, the teachers had already sent in predicted grades for their students and all that was left to do was to wait.

Students will have received their grades as usual in early August.

MG



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Innovative Solutions at Claylands Help Fight Climate Change

Local residents travelling to Fintry will have driven past Claylands Farm and probably noticed the major developments and perhaps heard about an anaerobic digestion plant there, but not realised its significance. Sandy Nicolson and his management team invited the *Courier's* correspondent to visit to reveal the mysteries of what goes on and the massive contribution that it brings – not only locally, but also on a national scale.

There are three main activities on the site: a large and modern dairy farm, an anaerobic digestion plant and a prawn farm. The latter two are built to the very latest engineering designs, call for a high degree of knowledge from the operational staff and are at the forefront of this technology in UK.

First, the farm. The herd of 650 cows produces seven million litres of milk annually which is supplied to Grahams Family Dairy at Bridge of Allan. About 70 per cent of the food

for these cows is produced on the farm and around half of their waste is collected to be fed into the anaerobic digester (AD). In addition to the dairy, the farm produces 150 tons of beef from male calves, female beef calves and cows past their milking life, for supply to Scotbeef Ltd, Bridge of Allan and United Auctions Mart Stirling. The farm also produces around 800 grass-fed fat lambs annually, sold at Stirling.

The Claylands business, managed by the Nicolson family in the area, is run in conjunction with other farms, and their agri-contracting business. As well as family labour, there are 20 full-time staff and additional seasonal labour during harvest and lambing.

The farm's crop of grass silage has to be of the highest quality in terms of sugar content and dry matter. It is then harvested in dry conditions so that it is suitable for efficient feeding to both the cows and the AD plant, a key to the profitability of both businesses.

The second activity is the digester plant, which is fed with energy crops (grass silage) and agricultural wastes (slurry and manure) from the dairy farm along with Glengoyne distillery co-products (draff, malt pellets, pot ale and pot ale syrup). The biological process of anaerobic digestion produces biogas from this mixture. The biogas is piped out as fuel for the electrical generators. The remaining liquid waste product (digestate) is taken into a separator where it is dried into fibre and the rest taken away as a fertiliser.

Part of the liquid digestate is spread on the farm and other local farms and has proved to be a great nutrient source, reducing the reliance on artificial fertilisers by 70 per cent over the last four years. The digestate is also dried using excess heat from the AD plant to produce inert animal bedding which is eventually recycled back to the digester in slurry.

The farm runs completely on renewable energy from the AD

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plant produced by two 6MW generators (approximately equivalent to three wind turbines), fuelled by the biogas. The heat energy developed during this process is saved by passing the gas and digestate through heat exchangers and then to other areas where materials have to be heated, thus saving electricity.

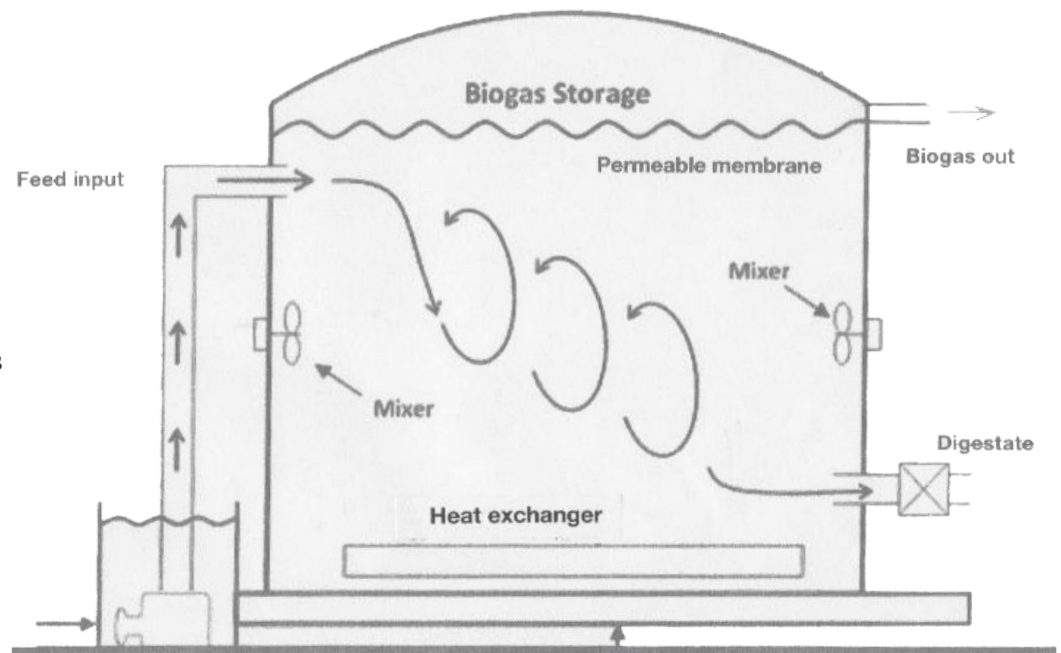
The exhaust from the generators, similar to natural gas but with half the CO₂ emissions of fossil fuels, is passed through a heat exchanger to provide energy for heating in the prawn farm, maintaining the policy of saving every source of heat across the site and increasing efficiency.

While 15 per cent of the electricity generated is used to meet all the demands on the farm, the other 85 per cent, transformed to 11KV, is purchased by the National Grid and is enough to supply all the electricity requirements of Killlearn, Balfron and Fintry put together.

The third activity at Claylands is perhaps the most unusual and innovative part of the farm: 'Great British Prawns' (GBP) which is the first company of its kind in the UK. GBP is set up to provide high-quality, fresh, locally produced and responsibly farmed King Prawns for the UK market, thus cutting the thousands of food miles incurred from sites in South and Central America and South East Asia.

The aquacultural procedure in use calls for large land-based tanks filled with warm water to accommodate prawn larvae. These are then grown on in the tanks matching the temperature and salinity conditions found in the Pacific Ocean. After reaching market sizes of 25–30g, they are harvested and sent as a fresh product to market. GBP originally needed to import prawn larvae, but now this practice has been reduced and replaced with prawns bred naturally by the company in its own hatchery.

At Claylands, 15 large plastic tanks the size of small cars are held between 28° and 32°C utilising waste heat and electricity from the AD plant. The tanks are connected together to form a closed water recirculation system and as the prawns develop, they are moved through the system before being harvested. Prawns are carnivores, and the system protects the younger ones from being predated by the older prawns. The prawns are fed with sustainably sourced marine protein feeds. The water is kept clean and clear throughout their development, there is no waste in the cycle, and no pesticides, antibiotics or additives are used.



At full capacity, GBP will produce up to one ton of prawns each week and deliver them fresh from tank to table within a few hours.

Claylands Farm is a major contributor to the economy of our area and supports the national aims of combatting climate change. It employs over 40 people, uses produce from local farms and the Glengoyne distillery, generates green electricity for use on the whole site and also exports it to the grid.

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The Wine Merchant

The impact of this year has been as significant on the wine industry, as every other area of our lives.

It has long been the norm that the Old World has shared centuries of experience with the New World, but as harvest overlapped with lockdown in the Southern Hemisphere, the industry saw a reversal of this flow of knowledge. In New Zealand lockdown came early, but the harvest became classed as essential work. However, while the New Zealand grapes could be picked, both exports and local wine sales were banned for a period. There may have been demand at the end of the supply chain, but there was no way to move the wines to their final point of sale.

The wine trade group in Europe reports that the crisis has resulted in a 30 per cent drop in volume and a 50 per cent drop in value, with a real risk of the wine lakes of yore returning as the routes to market cannot be reinvigorated before the next harvest. Even the release of the top châteaux wines in the world through the Bordeaux En Primeur campaign saw a drop in prices of 15 to 30 per cent.

The big brand names should be fine, but this year could see the closure of many wineries unable to survive and revive. So, when you find yourself back in the wine aisle, either in reality or virtually, and are choosing your evening tittle, this really is the time to support the little guy.

ET

Broadband Update

Major work regarding broadband has stalled due to Covid-19, including the update for the Digital Scotland Where and When site to reflect the new R100 contract.

The Branziert continues to be the most problematic area within the 30mph village. Poor speeds and disrupted connections are primarily due to the service being provided over Exchange Only (EO) lines – the connection runs right back to the exchange over metal telephone lines and the connection from the premises onto the street cable is known to be a weak spot. If you can't get any satisfaction from asking your landline ISP to improve matters (10Mbps down and 0.8Mbps up should be possible), then some help is on the horizon.

An alternative to a 4G (mobile) connection was broached at the June Killearn Community Council meeting that may provide another possibility. Killearn Broadband Group (KBG) previously assisted rural homes and businesses to the southwest of Killearn to achieve stable ultrafast speeds. Having investigated options and completed preliminary survey work, a stable superfast service could be made available to the Branziert area, subject to sufficient interest. If you live in the Branziert, and improving your current internet connection is something you'd be seriously interested in, please contact KBG through the contact forms of either KCFC or KCC.

DOUG ASHWORTH
CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP



Tai Chi for Health Class

Until the village halls re-open, I will be in Killearn Play Park on Tuesdays and The Village Communal Garden by the Millenium Hall in Gartocharn on Thursdays, 10am to 11am for Tai Chi for Health .

Weather permitting. Booking is recommended in advance to ensure social distancing recommended by the Scottish Government Guidelines.

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The Spirit of Our Ancestors

The programmes remembering VE Day this year I found particularly touching, especially those including old black and white footage. To see the outpouring of happiness and relief in the crowds dancing in the streets was wonderfully emotive, and these bits of ancient film have the same effect every time they're shown. Even though the knowledge of the on-going fighting in the Far East hovered over the celebrations, a time of rejoicing was surely earned by those caught up in the European conflict. The dancing was spontaneous and the joy unconfined. And the people who were there never forgot it.

What I found myself also noting was that many of the people were dancing through the ruins of their city, which gives rise to lots of other questions. What happened to those ruins? We've all seen the footage of heaps of rubble and skeletal remains pointing to the sky, but how on earth did they move it all? And where did they put it? It may sound a naïve question, but what physically happened? Whatever the answer, the people around at the time moved the debris and rebuilt their communities. It must have been a massive task, undertaken by an exhausted population, but they did it.

Comparisons have been made with that post-war time of trial and the current emergency we are all living through. I would suggest that what we are being faced with is not similar, but parallel. How do we rebuild what used to be the structure of our lives? Hopefully the restaurants and concert halls will rally. Hopefully the city stores will recover in some form. And hopefully a spirit of enterprise and determination will win somehow over dismay and economic hardship. If the post-war transformation of our cities proves anything, it's that as a species we're good at rebuilding.

I don't think I'm the only one who feels that the restrictions we have lived with for so long are not all bad. At the time of the spring lockdown, we were blessed with breath-taking weather, of course, which helped a lot, although maybe not for the residents of high rises who could only view it from inside. As far as the village is concerned, there was a sort of serene silence about the place when the lockdown started. There was only an occasional car, and not a single plane to shatter the peace. Skies remained unmarked by vapour trails, and birdsong was uninterrupted by the combustion engine. Even the delivery vans, for which much thanks,

A Verse in Time of Covid

It really is weird
And just as I feared
Our friends we can't meet
We pass in the street
And what is the day?
It's so hard to say.
Why get out of bed
When they all stretch ahead...
Nowhere to go and nothing to do
Just watch the telly; the odd sweet or two?

But hang on a mo, it's not all bad, you know.
Give the house a de-sleaze or grow some nice peas,
Catch up on the phone with someone alone
And hear birds sing, no planes flying.
The weather's been lovely, get out in the sun,
See you at Christmas, when we hope it's all done.

A RELATION OF W. MCGONAGALL, TWICE REMOVED

seemed to deliver quietly. There was the sound of little children playing, some of them on the pavement, evidenced by the chalk marks of new and old games. Old Endrick Road sported a game of peevers (hopscotch to those from foreign parts), which raised all sorts of nostalgic sensations. And then there was the whoosh of bicycles, and the sound of heavy breathing from the runners, waving as they crossed the road to maintain the regulation distance. Friendliness pervaded, and so far has remained.

And there were other wonderful developments. According to *Springwatch*, the resurgence of nature and wild life during the pandemic has been dramatic and surprisingly fast. We were forced to give nature a chance, and nature rose to the occasion, in spades. Surely it is incumbent upon us not just to go back to all our bad old ways. We must, we really must, do better.

And surely we can also look forward to a time when we can hop on the bus to town, browse for an hour in Waterstones, and meet friends for lunch.

JOYCE BEGG



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An Explosive Situation

We were house-hunting again. In the '70s, we were often searching for the perfect house. Ideally it had to be in or very near to Killearn and we had to be able to afford it. If it fulfilled the first criterion, we soon realised that it was unlikely to fulfil the second. It was not an easy task.

Our two sons, then aged eight and ten respectively, were utterly bored by the entire house-hunting procedure and would create diversions. They would frequently ask to go to the bathroom or they would remark, in deafening whispers, 'Are we going to be much longer, because there isn't anything for us to do.'

However, the house we were looking at on this occasion intrigued them. Its setting was a children's paradise. It was surrounded by trees, fields and bushes. There was a wood and there were several outhouses, a stable, a pigsty and a herd of Shetland ponies grazing in one of the fields. The owner's son told us that his father, who had owned the house until his death, had a passion for collecting things and never threw anything away.

There were at least two brand new electric tractor-style motor mowers in the large stable. There were cardboard boxes, wooden boxes. One end of the stable was full of empty wine bottles which he had collected and stored as part of his project for insulating the entire house with broken glass. There were boxes full of brand-new shirts and sweaters.

The son of the owner told us that he intended to have a thorough clear-out before the house was sold so we were

not to be put off by the contents. This was a relief to us and a huge disappointment to the two boys.

'Can we go and play in that shed thing again?' they pleaded. The owner's son seemed as keen as we were to oblige them.

'They can't do any harm in there,' he assured us. 'That stable is just full of boxes. There is nothing of value at all.'

The boys explained that they had been playing 'shipwreck'. The game consisted of leaping from box to box without putting a foot to the floor. This seemed harmless enough, so we agreed and embarked on a final tour of the house whilst the boys continued their 'shipwreck' game.

It was the following day when a friend rang to ask us whether we had seen an item in the evening paper. It was apparently entitled 'Edinburgh Bomb Squad called to house in Killearn'.

It seemed that on examining the boxes, the owner's son had found them to be packed with a substance which was subsequently identified as gelignite. His father had planned to use this to remove the massive stumps of several oak trees which had been blown down in the hurricane in 1968. He was not allowed to proceed with this plan because the aqueduct carrying Glasgow's water supply from Loch Katrine ran through the garden.

However he never threw anything away!

CHRISTINE BOWIE



THANK YOU KILLEARN
and to everyone who has been there for us, you're amazing xxx

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THE OLD MILL
KILLEARN
AT HOME

Beer Fest – 2020 Style

This year's Beer Festival may not have been quite what we were used to, but thanks to Paul Doherty and Catherine Ward, we still made it a night to remember.

With live performances online via Zoom and Facebook live, we were entertained by a host of local talent including Mick and Nancy MacNeil, Katie O, Richie McHugh, Lauren MacColl, Martha L. Healey, Jen McLean and Robert Baxter.

One amazing thing that has come out of lockdown is finding out how many wonderfully talented people live right here. Hopefully they will let us book them early to come play live in the garden at Killearn Beer Festival 2021!

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who got involved in The Old Mill's Facebook live events. It lifted our spirits to feel a part of such a brilliant community

Particular thanks must again go to Paul and Catherine for their can-do attitude and for getting stuck in and making my ideas a reality – and for forcing me to make my on-screen virtual debut. You guys are fab!

Also massive thanks to Mr Colin Banks for serious stamina in putting on his Virtual Pub Quizzes throughout lockdown. Big love to you big man.

ALICE SILVERWOOD



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Andy's Fresh Fish

To all our loyal customers in Killearn, we at C Lyons Fresh Fish would like to let you know that as from Wednesday, 22 July, Andy Reardon will be continuing on this round as he has done for the past 14 years, but he will be working for himself, trading as Andy's Fresh Fish.

We would like to wish Andy all the very best in his new venture, and would like to take this opportunity to thank all our customers over this past year for their business. CELESTE & IAIN LYONS

The Fish Van calls weekly
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Wednesday Afternoon – Killearn
to arrange a call
please phone 07957 75803
andrewtreardon@icloud.com

Covid-19 Archive

The centre pages of this edition feature information collected from a number of residents, businesses and organisations in the village. To all who have contributed, we give our grateful thanks for the time and energy in offering accounts of their experiences.

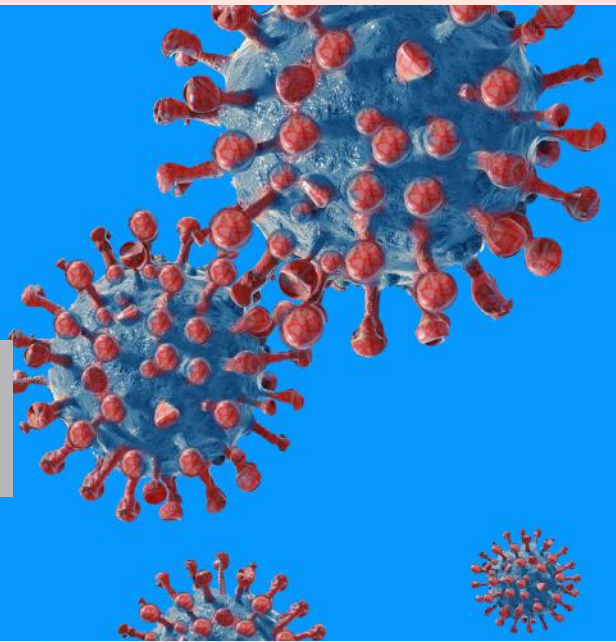
We are now preparing a fuller collection of material covering this unique period in our lives. This will become part of the history of Killearn and will be deposited with All Killearn Archive, one of the working groups of Killearn Community Futures Company.

We are appealing to ALL who might be interested in submitting a written account – or even a series of notes or photos – on life in the village under the Covid-19 lockdown measures. Your experiences, thoughts and feelings will add to this story and will be greatly valued

Please send your contributions by email (courier@kfc.co.uk) by 18 September.

KILLEARN and the CORONAVIRUS

A story of adaptability, innovation
and massive contribution



Does history repeat itself every 100 years? In 1720 there was an outbreak of plague, 1820 saw a cholera epidemic, in 1920 the country was in the grip of Spanish flu, and now in 2020 we have Covid-19 caused by a coronavirus.

The first two cases of Covid-19 were confirmed in the UK on 31 January, although there may have been earlier cases that went undetected. As the frequency of cases accelerated over the weeks that followed, it became clear that something very frightening was happening.

Yet when the first British death from Covid-19 was documented on 28 February, few people anticipated that exactly four months later the official figures would indicate more than 311,000 cases and over 43,500 deaths. Many think the real figures were much higher. Killearn has not escaped for there have been confirmed cases of Covid-19 and, very sadly, several deaths.

By mid March, it had become clear that unprecedented measures were needed to deal with the situation, so on 23 March the prime minister announced a UK-wide lockdown.

With the devolved administrations in agreement, the British public was instructed to stay at home, except when shopping for basic necessities, taking one form of exercise a day, dealing with medical needs, and travelling to and from work when absolutely necessary.

These measures were imposed in Scotland until 29 May, since when there has been gradual easing, but at the time of writing nothing approaching normal life. There can be little doubt that the measures were necessary, yet they carried enormous costs.

Previously successful businesses came under threat, and workers lost their jobs or saw their income reduced. Enforced separation means that death often came in the most harrowing circumstances, and family celebration and support for newborns became a thing of the past. Children's education was severely disrupted. UK-wide, the incidence of anxiety and depression more than doubled.

ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

The new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) was first reported in the Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019 and the first cases of Covid-19, the infectious disease caused by the virus, were confirmed in the UK in January 2020.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses several of which are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

These viruses get their name from the appearance of a halo or crown when viewed under a microscope. 'Corona' is the Latin word for crown or halo. The appearance of a crown comes from the spikes that poke from the surface of the virus. The spikes are used as a kind of key that binds with receptors in some human cells – especially in the lungs.

Inside the cell, the virus releases genetic material that tricks the host cell into replicating the invading virus thousands of times. A swarm of new virions – entire virus particles – then burst through the cell wall and move on to infect other cells. Each coronavirus virion is around 120 nanometers in diameter, meaning about 750 of them could fit across the width of a human hair.

After being expelled from the body, the virus is believed to survive for up to several days on some surfaces. However, despite this apparent longevity, the virions can be destroyed with warm, soapy water, which breaks apart their fatty membrane. Hence the advice that regular handwashing and not touching one's face are important in reducing the risk of contracting the virus.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

We feel very lucky to live in such a beautiful place where we can go outside, go for walks, say hello to friendly folk even though we have to cross the road, and have people willing and able to help others.

The lockdown affected the lives of everyone in Killearn. Few people complained about its imposition, and many felt that, if it had to happen, there could be no better place to be. Many Killearn residents have houses with gardens rather than flats with communal outdoor space, and the beautiful countryside was a great location for the ‘one form of exercise a day’. The glorious weather in April and May proved a bonus. Yet everyone had to adjust and many suffered enormously. Some had to adapt to working at home while coping with home schooling and caring for young children. Others experienced the implications of enforced isolation, with children in particular reporting being bored and missing their friends. The adjustments were not simply at the personal level: the shops, services and facilities that make Killearn a vibrant community all had to change. Here we take a look at a few examples of these changes – the story is one of adaptability, innovation and massive contribution.

HEALTH CENTRE AND PHARMACY

The whole village is in their debt.

Pivotal during a health-related emergency, Killearn Health Centre and the Pharmacy remained open throughout the lockdown, but both took measures to minimise infection.

Footfall was restricted to three or four patients in the Health Centre at any one time, and two customers in the Pharmacy. The Pharmacy implemented a one-way system, with a barrier placed in front of the counter, screens to separate staff and customers, and payment by card not cash.

At the Health Centre, telephone consultations replaced face-to-face meetings as much as possible, although home visits and appointments continued where necessary. The use of sanitisers, personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings was mandatory for Health Centre and Pharmacy staff.

Patients contacting the Health Centre with symptoms indicating Covid-19 were directed to the Assessment Centre in Stirling.

Patients who were shielding or self-isolating were given appointments when no one else was around. When such patients needed to collect prescriptions, they were advised to telephone the Pharmacy



from the car park and remain in their vehicles while goods were placed in the boot or on the back seat.

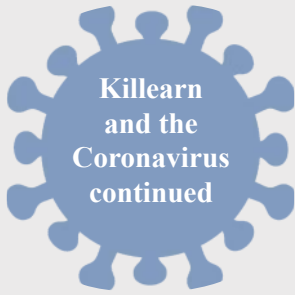
Trossachs Search and Rescue delivered prescriptions to those living in outlying areas and those self-isolating, as well as distributing PPE to community groups and providing cover for Stirling Council’s Technology Enabled Care Service (an alarm system for elderly people living in their own homes).

Assistance from the Search and Rescue team proved invaluable in easing what proved to be enormous

pressures on Pharmacy staff. When the pandemic became official there was a sense of panic in the public – enquiries to the Pharmacy became non-stop, and the demand for prescriptions was colossal.

Staff worked above and beyond the call of duty, even to the extent of not taking public holidays.





SCHOOL AND CHURCH

Killearn Primary School closed for face-to-face teaching once the lockdown began, but online material prepared by teachers was sent to pupils together with information about online access.

Stationery was provided, and a 'help yourself' supply of jotters was available in the Co-op.

At the same time, the school buildings remained open as a care facility for the children of key workers. With the changeover

achieved in a single weekend, the facility served the whole catchment area, and took children aged 0 to 14 years. It was staffed by teachers, classroom assistants and early years specialists, working in shifts 8am to 1pm or 1pm to 6pm.

With the school closed for other purposes, the Community Council had to find alternative means of functioning. For instance, its May and June public meetings were held via Zoom, and by all reports this format was a great success with many people contributing.

Following advice from the national Church, Killearn Kirk was closed for the duration of the lockdown, with the minister, Rev. Stuart Sharp, delivering online a talk for young people and a shortened service (two hymns, a reading, a talk and a prayer) for the adult congregation.

The minister carried out his pastoral duties by telephone rather than face-to-face. Looking ahead, he recognised Covid-19 as creating 'a time of significant change', with the church needing to find new ways of operating to avoid exposing people to risk while remaining available to everyone.

Along with the kirk, the Kirk Hall was also closed, apart from use by Neighbourhood Food, an organisation based in Drymen, which serves locally-sourced foodstuffs to those unable to shop for themselves.

The hall's use by the Blood Transfusion Service also continued.

Rev. Sharp recognised Covid-19 as creating a time of significant change



SOCIAL & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

The Village Hall was also closed, although in a socially distant fashion committee members carried out DIY and maintenance work.

Weddings were mainly postponed rather than cancelled. With the Kirk and Village Halls both out of action, the organisations that use them either closed temporarily or found alternative modes of functioning.

Some members of the bridge club continued playing through Bridge Base Online.

Guides, yoga and Dancercise went online, as did Shona Nicolson's STRONG Nation classes. STRONG Nation involves high-intensity, music-led workouts.

Local sports clubs generally closed during full lockdown, with many reopening with safety restrictions on 29 May.

However, with exercise permitted throughout the period, cycling and walking blossomed. Mugdock Cycles probably did not anticipate Covid-19 when they planned to open in the old bank premises, but their arrival certainly coincided with massively increased demand for bicycles.

As regards walking, many local paths and walkways were cordoned off during the lockdown, some would argue unnecessarily. However, the Glen was a welcome exception, with many walkers enjoying the annual carpet of bluebells. And hats off to



Balfron Golf Society, who not only kept their golf course open for walks but, via prominent notices, positively encouraged visitors to enjoy 'the peace, quiet and wonderful views'.

Shona Nicolson reported actual benefits from the Zoom-based class format. She could 'connect with more people than ever before' and the format allowed recruits 'to take a class from the comfort of their own home, even switching off their camera if they don't want to be seen working out!'



SHOPPING AND CATERING

The Co-op and Hewitt & Aker remained open throughout the lockdown and were busier than ever.

Perhaps people were unwilling to travel for groceries or even consciously shopping locally to support local businesses.

Indeed, an additional source of foodstuffs appeared: with the aim of ensuring that ‘people in the villages, especially the elderly and vulnerable, had access to food and essentials’ the Beech Tree transformed its restaurant into a click-and-collect grocery service. The service will continue next year.

Most other shops were closed, although Endrick Blooms

compensated with a phone, email and delivery service. Hit initially by the postponement or cancellation of events like weddings, they introduced online ordering and non-contact delivery of weekly promotions, such as bouquets of gerbera, larkspur, peonies, or scented sweet peas.



Truffle Events was affected by the same postponements and cancellations as Endrick Blooms, but they too adapted. They moved to an up-market delivery service on Saturday evenings for their Supper Club menu.

Similar approaches were taken by Turnip the Beet and the Old Mill, both of which offered meal delivery services and cook-at-home meals. Indeed, the Old Mill is such a major part of village life that they embraced Facebook Live: events such as Banksy’s pub quiz, an open mic night, the Old Mill’s Got Talent show and the virtual beer festival made sure they stayed in touch with everyone and brought the village together. Each event was a huge success and attracted hundreds of viewers from all over the UK and abroad.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Support within the village didn’t just come from existing organisations – significant new initiatives also emerged.

These include the Killearn Covid-19 community hub page where helpful information was posted such as details of local businesses that would deliver, how council services were changing and updates on government guidelines.

Volunteers distributed leaflets to every house offering support, with named individuals who would do shopping and bring news to those unable to do this themselves.

As a spin-off, about two-thirds of the 32 households in Drumbeg Loan joined a WhatsApp group and used this to welcome new neighbours, show pictures of grandchildren born but not yet visited, offer jigsaws and tomato seedlings, advertise charity initiatives, and share information on

everything from bird song apps to online literary festivals. There was a feeling that everyone was getting to know each other better, and a party was planned for when normal life returns.

Many will be aware of the rainbow pictures that children drew, and the well-supported clapping for carers on Thursday evenings. Fewer will know of the Maryhill Integration Network, an established group of volunteers (three of whom live in Killearn) who deliver English language tutoring to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. With face-to-face teaching impossible during the lockdown yet the need, if anything, even greater given social isolation, the group switched to mobile phones, WhatsApp or Zoom for weekly classes in conversation,



comprehension and grammar.

Under many people’s radar too will be a network called Scotland Sewing Scrubs. Early in the lockdown, a local woman responded to a request from St. George’s Hospital, London for assistance with making scrub hats. She recruited helpers (locally and across Scotland) and they got to work sewing – sometimes up to eight or nine hours a day. Using recycled cloth, the group made hundreds of scrub outfits, scrub masks, scrub hats and bags, which the co-ordinators sent or hand-delivered to Forth Valley and Glasgow hospitals, local care homes and doctors’ surgeries, with the surplus despatched to London.



The initiatives we have highlighted here have involved imagination, commitment and hard work and, together with many other contributions, are greatly appreciated. Yet the appreciation will always be bittersweet. There has been terrible and often very private suffering within our community too, and many suspect that had different strategies been followed nationwide, some of this suffering could have been avoided. Debates around such issues will continue for many years. Having painted a small part of a bigger picture, we conclude by re-echoing a Killearn business and ‘thank everyone for their hard work and willingness to serve and help us through this momentous time – this is what a real community is all about’.

2020 is a time to remember when community spirit saw true Killearn neighbourliness and when small acts of kindness and goodwill brought everyone together.

As you can imagine, all the carefully laid plans for Club events over the spring have been blown away by the effects of Covid-19. We are hoping to have a couple of summer events if restrictions are lifted and members feel able to participate: our CarBQ will hopefully be possible in August, a scenic run in September, and a rescheduled AGM in October, before our winter programme begins again in November, which our committee have moved ahead to plan. Nothing like trying to get ahead of the game!

Some of our members have been exchanging anecdotes and online video clips as a diversion during the enforced isolation. Others have been pursuing more practical activities: making bespoke mud flaps, changing a clutch, restoring a rear axle, organising welding repairs to body shells and chassis, three major rebuilds (to different stages of completion), and even cleaning the hull of a steamboat.

One member intrepidly took part in two virtual car tours with their challenging quizzes. One was round the Scottish Highlands over four days starting in Perthshire before heading up to Braemar and the Whisky Trail on Speyside. This was followed by another four-day tour of northern Italy, starting and ending in Trieste, heading through the Dolomites on some spectacular mountain roads. It would be great to drive them in reality when it's possible to travel abroad again. Details of the tours can be provided if anyone wants to have a go.

One word of warning, perhaps too late now: don't leave your cars standing without running your car's engine periodically to charge the battery. Owners have had to replace batteries in several cars when they were



discovered to have gone totally flat.

If you would like to know about Club plans before the next issue of the *Courier*, please contact our Secretary at SCCC.info001@gmail.com.

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Hub G63: What buying local looks like

As those who live in Killearn and the surrounding villages know, we have some of the country's best local producers on our doorstep. Hub G63 and NeighbourFood bring all these suppliers together in one place to provide residents with seasonal veg boxes, waste-free rice and grains, staples like eggs and fresh bread, and access to 'foodie' suppliers. New providers continue to be added.

In common with everyone else, lockdown needed some quick thinking. Before, Killearn residents would drive to Balfron High School on a Thursday night to pick up their order. When that became impossible, Doyle's solved our venue problem, but when full lockdown was declared, and stock piling became widespread, G63 Neighbour Food orders went through the roof – our market sales increased by 400 per cent. We had ample volunteers, but Doyle's became too small a venue to effectively socially distance.

McLintock Hall in Balfron and Killearn Church Hall leapt to the rescue as distribution points, enabling us to safely deliver the massive increase in orders. Having an existing resilient community organisation like Hub G63 meant it was possible to successfully adapt when Covid-19 hit. Our strong network of food producers and suppliers truly rose to the occasion to cover the massive increase in orders and source fresh produce, flour and yeast at a time most supermarkets couldn't. The flexibility

of locations like Killearn Church Hall and our excellent network of producers and volunteers made this possible. It has been heart warming to be a part of a resilient and caring community.

A week into lockdown, we took on The Village Shop in Drymen to help us cope with the increased sales and volume of food being distributed. The shop offers basics like milk and eggs, pantry items, and newspapers and magazines. We also aim to be a waste-free shop, so we're delighted to be going back to the days of 'bring your own' containers for a range of grains, rice and legumes – always adhering to strict hygiene procedures, you bring your jars and we will fill them for you.

We have also started a community garden in Drymen beside the football pitch and Ruth has been known to hand out the harvest for free in the Village Shop. Please do pop in and see what we have. The Drymen shop is open 8am–1pm every day.

The shop and Hub G63 aim to keep providing a resource for those who are tired of buying food with thousands of air miles, when there are so many truly excellent suppliers on our doorstep. We want to return to a simpler system for getting food. We are a community endeavour, and would like to again thank Killearn Church Hall for housing us during such a difficult time.

CATHERINE O'HALLORAN



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Exploring Chile

Earlier this year, I took the fourteen-and-a-half-hour flight from Heathrow to Santiago, the capital of Chile. This marked the start of my third visit to Chile, and the plan as always was to work on research projects with colleagues in Santiago and then take a holiday with my husband. Stretching 2,670 miles along the Pacific coast with the Andes dominant throughout, there is plenty to see and do.

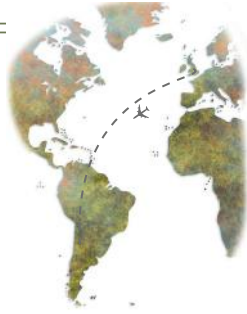
By many measures, Chile is the most prosperous South American country, with roughly two-thirds of the population enjoying what might be called a 'middle-class lifestyle'. The bedrock of the economy is mineral extraction: Chile is the world's largest producer of copper. However, fishing, agriculture and, of course, the exquisite wines are also important. For most of the period since achieving independence in 1818, Chile has had elected governments, and this has contributed to its relative strength.

Nevertheless, there have always been tensions, all relating to the deep inequalities in Chilean society, and sometimes these explode into political unrest. The dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet from 1973 to 1988 was, in part, a violent response to attempts by Salvador Allende's elected government to address inequalities of land and mineral ownership.

My recent visit coincided with further unrest, this time focusing on health, pension and income inequalities, and a constitution that dates from Pinochet's regime. There have been violent demonstrations and instances of extreme police brutality, and the situation remains unresolved.

One specific inequality lies with school education. Over 60 per cent of Chilean provision is fully or partially privately funded, with the remaining state-funded provision of very low quality. This is where my own work fits in, for I have been helping colleagues in Santiago develop and evaluate new approaches to the teaching of science in state-funded schools. The approaches are grounded in research that I conducted in Cambridge, and my role in Chile is to share my experience. During my visits, I also typically give lectures and talk with postgraduates.

We work hard, but have fun, too. Barbecues are not unknown, with copious quantities of pisco sour (Chile's 'national cocktail'). Chile's vineyards are all immediately north and south of Santiago and I have visited several with my colleagues (and sampled their produce, of course). Once we went by minibus to Valparaiso, a city of colourful buildings and street art that is



Above: Square and Street Art, Valparaiso

perched on cliff tops and linked with its seafront via ancient funiculars. Now a World Heritage Site, Valparaiso was a bustling port in pre-Panama Canal days, with a sizeable British community (immortalised in Isabel Allende's novel *Daughter of Fortune*).

Always sad to leave Santiago, I have now travelled with my husband to the far north and far south of the country. Mind-boggling for someone from the west of Scotland, rain has never been recorded in parts of the Atacama Desert, which covers the north. This is where most mineral extraction takes place – remember the 33 miners rescued from underground entrapment in 2010 – and it is also the site of many prehistoric cultures. I have seen Chinchorro houses from 5000 BC, well-preserved thanks to the extreme aridity. There are also incredible rock formations, and high in the Andes the unforgettable El Tatio geysers. Leaving base

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Killearn Heritage Trail, trials and tales ...

before dawn and after two hours on a dirt track, a plateau is reached where 64 blowholes spurt boiling water onto the frozen ground.

Chile in general is extremely seismic, experiencing frequent earthquakes and containing about 10 per cent of the world's active volcanoes. Some of the most iconic volcanoes can be found in the southern Los Lagos region, for instance Volcán Osorno and Volcán Villarrica, where we hiked on our most recent trip. On an earlier trip, we travelled even further south to the Torres del Paine region of Patagonia, again enjoying spectacular hikes together with the wildlife – condors, flamingos and guanacos.

Sadly, we have yet to see a puma, but perhaps we should have returned for a fourth visit when Chile was in coronavirus lockdown: with the streets deserted, pumas were spotted in Santiago suburbs! CH



Images from top: El Tatio geysers; Volcán Osorno, Los Lagos; Torres del Paine, Patagonia

Throughout the lockdown, work on the Killearn Heritage Trail (KHT) project has continued, albeit the original schedule has been considerably delayed.



Interpretation boards – guiding residents and visitors around the historic features of the village – have been designed and the content assembled. Planning permission has now been granted, but there is not time to produce and install the boards and launch the Trail (given constraints on public events) this season. So the ‘big reveal’ will now be next spring.

In the meantime the KHT website is progressing. Not only will the route of the Trail will be posted with an accompanying quiz to help keep youngsters engaged, but there will also be maps showing the development of the village through the ages. There will be more detail on our ancient buildings plus pictures of times gone by from the All Killearn Archive collection. Suggested walking and cycle routes with related documents, links, references and sources of information will be made available. The website will be launched with the main Trail early next year.

What next?

Killearn Hospital

We all know of that mysterious complex down at the bottom of Station Road. Lying disused for almost half a century Killearn Hospital is now a series of derelict, single-storey



Photo courtesy of All Killearn Archive

buildings on land opposite Oakwood on the A811. Cala Homes are planning a housing development there. But what did Killearn Hospital do? What was it like working there? The KHT project is interviewing people who worked there and can retell their stories. Doctors, nurses, auxiliaries, cooks, cleaners, patients or visitors could all help us recount life in ‘Killearn’s NHS’. If you knew the Hospital and can help our research, or have interesting photos, please contact Nick (07860 700928).

Killearn Glen excavation Part II

In the summer of 2019 the KHT project excavated a site in Killearn Glen with a squad of enthusiastic volunteers led by professional archaeologists. The team rediscovered a previously unknown building, probably dating from the 16th century, and a shard



Photo courtesy of Kay Roxby

of early medieval pottery. Many questions remain concerning the origins of that building and the adjoining site – so the KHT project plans a follow-up dig in 2021, with the support of Killearn Trust and *Killearn Courier*. Watch this space for further details.



Police Report

As we find ourselves in unprecedented times, we hope that everyone stays safe until we can get back to as close to 'normal life' as we can.

Since lockdown was imposed we have been busy dealing with persons who have breached government guidelines. More often than not, guidance and education have been used; however, fixed penalty tickets have also been issued when appropriate.

Each summer the Forth and Endrick area is visited by many people, the main attraction in Killearn being the Devil's Pulpit. With the easing of restrictions this became very busy with people and vehicles resulting in vehicles parked inappropriately along the verges and at entrances which should be kept clear. Hopefully, a solution to these issues will be found so the place can be visited and enjoyed.

We have devoted a great deal of attention and extra resources to the area to try and ensure vehicles are parked in a safe area. Individuals have been contacted and advised to move their vehicles, others have been moved while about to park, fixed penalty tickets have been issued and vehicles have been uplifted. A check on one particular vehicle, revealed that the driver had driven there without either a full driving licence or insurance for the vehicle.

There have been no housebreakings since the last issue. Please remain vigilant, however, and report anything suspicious. Due to a greater demand for bicycles since the start of lockdown, there has been an increase in bike thefts and recently, two unattended bikes were stolen from the Killearn area.

Concerns regarding speeding are echoed throughout all the villages and Killearn is no exception. Speed checks are ongoing, so please watch your speed at all times.

The current priorities for the Forth and Endrick area remain antisocial behaviour, road safety, theft, and community engagement and reassurance.

Shut out scammers

Doorstep crime affects some of the most vulnerable within our communities. It manifests in many forms including online and telephone scams, exploitation by persons known to the victim and the fraudulent activities of unscrupulous persons purporting to be bona fide tradespeople.

Police Scotland launched its #ShutOutScammers campaign in partnership with Trading Standards, to advise the public how to spot a rogue trader or bogus caller on their doorstep.

Covid-19 and physical distancing guidance presents a unique set of circumstances and is an opportunity for criminals to exploit the crisis to their economic advantage. As limitations on movement and social interaction begin to ease and the ability to have outdoor work done resumes, there is a concern unscrupulous traders may target the most vulnerable in our society.

Rogue traders and bogus callers operate throughout the year, but incidents generally peak in May, June and August. Current restrictions mean more people are at home rather than at work, and as a result they may encounter more doorstep callers.

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If you receive an unexpected and unknown caller at the door, we recommend that you:

- always ask for identification
- never feel pressured into making an on-the-spot decision and never hand over any money until you have received appropriate paperwork (contract/ service agreement/invoice) and understand what the terms and conditions are
- always verify ID and research companies before agreeing to any work being undertaken; it is recommended to get three quotes for a piece of work

Look out for family members and neighbours who may be seen as an easy target by rogue traders. Encourage them to phone the police if they are in any doubt about someone who has turned up unannounced.

If you would like to receive advice and guidance on preventing crime, please get in touch or visit scotland.police.uk and search for 'shut out scammers'.

Mobile Devices

You'll notice that my colleagues and I now carry some additional technology when we're out and about. The devices are part of the Police Scotland 'mobile working' project whereby all operational officers are being issued with electronic notebook/personal digital assistants in order to speed up routine tasks, such as noting statements, and avoid the need to return to the office so often

during the course of a shift. Other advantageous features enable each officer to carry out checks on the street using national databases, without having to wait for a slot to talk to the Area Control Room. Historically, on busier nights it was often impossible to get air time to carry out checks owing to ongoing incidents elsewhere. We can also receive emails and carry out numerous pieces of paperwork required in the course of a shift.

Hopefully that will explain why you see officers sitting on their 'phones' at the side of the road from time to time. We are either answering emails, speaking with local residents, or obtaining details of the incident we are being sent to.

Who are we?

PC Steven Graham and PC Gary Martin are the ward officers for the Forth and Endrick area, which incorporates Killearn and surrounding areas. We are based at Balfroon Police Office, and can be contacted at the office, on 101, or at ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk.

We regularly publish information and appeals online. The local Twitter feed can be found at @StirlingPol, and the local Facebook page can be found at 'Forth Valley Police Division'.

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Scam Alert – Stay Safe!

Over the last few months, you may have seen reports of a huge spike in the number of scams, or perhaps you've unfortunately had some personal experience. Examples include fake emails and phone calls about refunds from HMRC, inability to deliver parcels, checking that an item has been correctly ordered, invoices for things you know nothing about; there are also some doorstep scams.

These may initially appear genuine, but they are all designed to obtain personal information, infect your computer or take your money. Apart from the usual spelling mistakes, check the sender's actual address (rather than just the short identification). Often the short name is wrong ('Amazzone' not Amazon) or even the domain part of the name ('Covid c.uk' rather than 'Covid.co.uk').

With the arrival of NHS contact tracing to deal with new cases of Covid-19, there is further opportunity for scammers. The NHS never requires any financial data, nor will you be required to purchase products for testing. A genuine NHS contact-tracing caller should only ask you to isolate. You can find out more at [nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare-scams) along with information about how to avoid being taken in by scammers.

It's hard to anticipate every type of scam, but if someone cold-calls or emails you, be suspicious – it's probably a scam. Get them to identify themselves by giving you specific information that they should have if

they are genuine, such as a BT telephone account number. Don't volunteer anything.

They may give you a number to call to confirm their 'genuineness'. Wait at least 15 minutes before you call and in the meantime check independently whether the number is genuine or use the number on existing paperwork you have. As the caller may try to hold the line open after you hang up, call a friend's number first to ensure the line has cleared down properly.

If you think an email is suspect, do not click on any link. Don't open it. Just delete it. And definitely do not reply – this only confirms that they have found a live email address.

Many scams can appear genuine – that's how they trick you. If you are in any doubt, ignore the too-good-to-be-true offer, delete the email or hang up the phone. Above all, be very wary about all unsolicited approaches.

If you're worried that you, or someone you know, is being scammed:

- Look into installing a call blocker to help combat telephone scams.
- Talk to the bank immediately if there is any suspicious activity or transactions from the account or credit card.
- Report the scam to Citizens Advice who will give you advice on what to do next, and report the scam to Trading Standards.

DOUG ASHWORTH

Football Club Update

It certainly is a very different 2020 than we could have imagined. By now, we were hoping that the boys would be flying high halfway through the league season and hopefully on their way to a cup final or two. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has meant that there will be a gap in the history books for season 2020.

However, plans are in place to make sure we hit the ground running next year and an interim 6-a-side league is being discussed by the clubs in the Forth & Endrick League, to be played in the early part of 2021. This would be a welcome addition and ensure everyone can get back playing as soon as it is safe to do so.

Off the field, our 59 Club is still going strong, thanks again to all who participate, and other fundraising events are being finalised for later in the summer – after all we will still need funds to pay for the deep clean of the changing rooms and all that hand sanitiser next year!

Watch out for our events on local noticeboards and social media pages.

In the meantime take care, stay safe and remember to wash your hands so we don't get any extra time and penalties with this virus!

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On Your Bike

Thanks to the new cycle shop in Killearn, that is exactly what many local people are doing. Residents have been delighted to see the old bank building rejuvenated into Country Cycles. The fact that this transformation happened during the dark days of lockdown added to the joy of seeing a new business come into the village and flourish.

Local man Keith McLellan, Fraser Glass and colleagues Stu, Aaron, Crawford and Aiden have been busy setting up the business and meeting the instant and growing demand for bikes. The company also operates Mugdock Cycles in the Country Park and the cycle hire centre at Loch Katrine. Both of these operations were hit by lockdown, but the cycle shop in Killearn was open for business under the legislation in place at the time.

Keith said the aim was always to open in April, but the hardest thing was getting the physical renovations done and the impossibility of getting an essential phone line during lockdown. The upside of opening this spring was the fantastic weather with lots of people having time on their hands coupled with the desire to get out and about on a bike. Electric bikes are one of Country Cycles big sellers and have encouraged people who would not normally do so to get on a bike. Even regular cyclists are being converted. Keith says an e-bike puts a smile on everyone's face.

All those associated with Country Cycles have a long association with cycling and are passionate about it. Led by manager Fraser, they offer good knowledgeable advice based on their years of experience.

The Killearn shop stocks a range of quality makes including Cube, Santa Cruise, Saracen and Ridgeback, and styles, such as mountain bikes, recreational multi-purpose, road bikes, children's and the increasingly popular e-bikes. Parts and accessories from helmets to basic clothing are available and bike repairs are carried out on site. E-bikes will be available to hire.



In looking to diversify the business, the availability of the Killearn premises was perfect. The surrounding countryside, views and short commute to work made the venture ideal. Plans for the future include running open-day challenges and social nights within the shop, all subject to Covid-19 regulations.

Keith and Fraser are also keen to see the cycle path network improved between the neighbouring villages, allowing people to commute or have leisure jaunts between villages, stopping off for whatever refreshment best meets the needs. This improvement of cycling connectivity requires local government commitment and has been under consideration.

If you are visiting the shop, take note of the wall covering at the entrance which is the aurora borealis over Balfron.

Country Cycles is open 9.30am–5pm, Monday to Saturday and 12.30pm–5pm on Sunday.



Dean Lockhart MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
For Mid-Scotland and Fife

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Please feel free to contact me if you think I may be able to help you :

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A Rising Rugby Star

Abbé Bruce began playing rugby in her second year at Balforn High School at age 13, and enjoyed competing against other school teams. She wished to play more frequent and competitive games, so joined Hillhead Jordanhill RFC in 2015. This proved an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for her, allowing her not only to develop her rugby skills, but also to make good friends along the way.

Abbé attended her first trials and gained regional selection for the Caledonia U16s in the 2017–18 season. During this time she also moved up to play U18s rugby with her club.

Scottish Futures U18s selection was next on the agenda and she was pleased to make the team. Their first fixture was against England at Preston Grasshoppers with Abbé starting at 10, the pivotal fly-half role!

By the end of season 2018–19, she had earned selection for Scottish

Futures U18s 7s training squad. Abbé spent the summer of 2019 training with the 7s, resulting in a Home Nations tournament in Swansea and an U18s place in the squad for the Rugby Europe 7s championship in Poland.

Abbé returned to club rugby for season 2019–20. Along with a group of SRU players in her age grade, she was invited to spend a day ‘team building’ with the Royal Marines at Faslane Naval Base. This was a challenging, fun and hugely rewarding day for them all.

She successfully made the Scottish Futures U18s squad for a second season.


In late October, after turning 17, she completed the SRU strength test protocol, which earned her a senior women’s debut, again starting at 10,



for Hillhead Jordanhill RFC in the final against Watsonians.

Despite the events of 2020 putting a hold on sporting events, Abbé is keen to resume training and will attend trials for Scotland U20s squad. She will also be studying sports science at Edinburgh University.

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The 10k that wasn't

The first Saturday in June is normally a big day in Killearn when Main Street and the park throng with happy runners from near and far who come to participate in the Killearn 10k and Mile.

The kids are excited at the chance to race their pals, and the grown-ups are thinking of medals, personal bests, completing their first-ever race, or perhaps even a well-earned pint or two at the beer festival in the afternoon. If we're lucky (and we tend to be) the sun is shining.

But 2020 is far from a normal year. When what should have been race day dawned on 6 June, the village was quiet, with an empty feeling about it. The pipe track should have been swarming with runners but instead there were only a handful of walkers – along with one or two runners tackling the course on their own.

The 10k committee announced back in March, five days before the start of lockdown, that this year's races could not go ahead. In the scheme of things, a race event is a small loss. We all still felt it though. It was a sad time, but no other decision was possible.

Mass gatherings had already been banned by then – and clearly would remain so for some time to come. We considered postponing until later in the year, but all our preparation was geared to June. We also couldn't be sure that our marshals and volunteers would be available later in the year or that restrictions would have been eased sufficiently to allow us to run.

For all our sadness, we knew we had made the right decision, and we were lifted beyond measure by all

the wonderful support we received in the days after the cancellation. There were so many small but precious examples of the human warmth and spirit we have all seen so often in these difficult times.

While our terms and conditions state that entry fees are non-refundable, and many runners told us refunds weren't necessary, we decided to return entry fees to all. Messages of commiseration and encouragement flooded in. People told us how much they would miss the event, and how they looked forward to its return.

Many of our partners who make the race possible kindly offered to roll costs over to 2021. Particular thanks are due to our timing company, Perfect Timing Scotland, for their help. All our partners, runners, marshals, volunteers and supporters will indeed help the Killearn 10k return, better than ever, in 2021.

Registration for the main race will open in the usual way in early December. Watch this space for updates, and get ready for a really big celebration. We all deserve one.

DAVID MCKAY



Bridge by Zorro

Solution to the problem on page 11

North had a fairly minimal opening hand, but highly distributional. With two biddable suits, he correctly chose to open with Spades. It is the longer of the two suits, a major suit, the higher-ranking suit, and finally more pre-emptive.

South was also faced with a distributional hand, but with 6-5 in the red suits correctly bid 2♦. North was too weak to go to the 3-level so repeated his Spades. South probably expected North's rebid of Spades, but with a strong hand offered her second suit of Hearts. North suspected a misfit, but 3♥ is forcing and, given his good Clubs and South's lack enthusiasm for Spades, decided to try 3 No Trumps, which became the contract. North's suspicions about a misfit were confirmed when East led ♥3, and he saw two singletons in dummy.

After the lead, North can see eight tricks in dummy after ♦A has been played, with the ninth trick coming from ♠A. He can also see eight tricks in hand after ♣A and the two missing Spade honours have been played, with further tricks coming from the Heart honours in dummy. However, the danger is becoming trapped in dummy, and eventually having to lead Hearts into East's hand.

For that reason, the ♠9 escape card must not be played until the last possible moment.

After ♥3 lead, North might let it run to his 10. Surely East's lead means he has the jack? However, even if he takes it with one of South's honour cards, he can still make his contract. Whatever he decides, North should play to (or play) ♣K, which East will probably take with his Ace. If East holds back, North should play to ♦Q. Looking at dummy, most Easts will not follow with ♦A at that stage. Assuming this happens, North should flush out ♣A with a second Club, leaving East with an impossible dilemma. If he puts declarer into dummy with a red suit, North will play a further Heart honour and continue with high Diamonds until he draws the Ace. He still has the ♠9 to get back to his hand and cash his winning Clubs. If East returns a Spade (after winning with either of his Aces in fact), North should win in hand no matter what West plays and cash his clubs, exiting with a Spade. Now West cannot make a lead that denies North the contract.

Thanks to everyone who has been helping to get us through these difficult times. Hopefully, you and your family have stayed healthy, and we all look forward to being able to return to our physical tables and clubs in the autumn. Stay safe.

Anyone for tennis?

An empty tennis court on a fine day is not a joyful sight, but it was one we got used to for the best part of 10 weeks as Covid-19 meant no play for a sizeable chunk of Killearn Tennis Club's season.

Government restrictions and Lawn Tennis Association guidelines were clear: for safety's sake, our courts had to be padlocked. So we had tennis weather, but no tennis.

Compared with what others have lost, it hardly registers, but we're sure there were many small pangs of regret and frustration as our members passed courts they couldn't use.

We had a long wait. It was 29 May before the restrictions imposed in March were eased sufficiently to allow some play. Curbs remained in place. The courts were only opened for singles play, the exception being doubles play involving one family or two households.

Strict social distancing was imposed, and thanks is due to the committee members who gave up their time to prepare for the safe return of play. A one-way system for entering and leaving was put in place, along with a queuing system and hand sanitiser on the courts. The Club provided members with tennis balls for their exclusive use, to further reduce any risk of infection. The requirements of our insurance obliged us to restrict play to members only.

Perhaps the most significant change was the introduction of an online booking system, with all courts having to be booked before play. The Clubspark system is simple to use, either on the web or via the Clubspark Booker app. But if any members are having difficulty with it, please get in touch via Facebook or at killearntennisclub.org.uk.

Once we got back on court, we were reminded just how enjoyable our game can be – a perfect way to shake off some of the lockdown cobwebs. The 'new normal' can be stressful and trying, and that makes the small pleasures of life more important than ever.

If you would like to enjoy some tennis in excellent facilities and a scenic location, why not join us? Membership information, and more, can be found on the website and our Facebook page.

DAVID MCKAY

Rugby Round Up

In common with all team sports, rugby was 'sidelined' by Covid-19. Soon after the lockdown began, Scottish Rugby took the decision to make the 2019–20 club season null-and-void so there was no promotion, relegation or cup finals. At international level the Six Nations may be belatedly completed.

However as a close contact sport, rugby faces more challenges than most to safely return to full play. Scrums – with 16 players bound closely together – rucks, mauls and line-outs all present difficulties if social distancing is to be maintained.

Scottish Rugby has produced a staged Route Map back to training and playing, mirroring the Scottish Government's plan. At present, there are no dates attached – it all depends on the suppression (or otherwise) of the virus.

So as the *Courier* goes to press there is little prospect of full contact rugby happening at club level before October at the earliest. Modified forms of the games – such as Touch – may well engage junior and senior players in the meantime.

At Strathendrick, a new Club Captain, Duncan MacEachern, Vice-Captain, Craig Mundell, and Club Coach, Doug Smith, have been appointed for the seniors – so once the whistle blows, the club will be raring to go.

Visit the Club website at www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc or Facebook pages for up-to-date information.

Helping a Clubmate

Kerr Hamilton, a young player from Balfron High School and Strathendrick, was badly injured in a road traffic accident earlier in the year. His clubmates decided to rally round and help support their teammate. Members are now collectively running '5000 miles' as training inspiration and – to date – have raised over £6,000 in donations to help provide equipment and adaptations at Kerr's home to assist him. If you would like to contribute to the effort, go to <https://uk.gofundme.com/f/strathendrick>. All at Strathendrick wish Kerr all the very best for a good recovery.

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Curling – Sweep Up

The 2019/20 season ended somewhat dramatically due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Various players were becoming reluctant to play by the second week in March, but all the clubs were holding off for instructions from Active Stirling. This came on Monday, 16 March, when the financial penalties were lifted followed by total closure of The Peak on the Tuesday night. In common with many organisations, the programmes were not completely finished and AGMs have been postponed for a later date.

In the mixed club matches, the Spring League was left with one round to play. Fiona Glass's team is in the lead by 2 points, but four of the other five teams are tied in second place. The intention is to finish the League at the start of the 2020/21 season.

The Closing Bonspiel was cancelled. Fortunately, however, the Pairs Bonspiel had already taken place, and 12 pairs took part, with those of Walter Macgowan and Maureen Royston and Sheila Sturrock and John O'Neill each winning 5 ends. The former pair were declared the winners by scoring 11 shots to 6.

A few members played in the Beattie Points competition at The Peak. As the leading Strathendrick player, Mike Jackson retained the Points Trophy.

The Club successfully defended the Low Road competition in the Jim Carswell Cup Province knockout. This was achieved by beating Balfron in a 'sudden death' draw to the head after tying on 6 shots each.

The Club was lying in third place in the Robert Paterson Shield Province league when it was abandoned with two rounds to be completed. These matches will not be completed as there is a clear winner of the League.

The Ladies Section were more fortunate than the mixed club, as they completed the Rowan Salver Spring League before the closedown. The winners were Rita Harris' team of Gail Pain and new members Jane Weir and Katherine Kelsey. The Ladies Closing Bonspiel, however, seems to be ill-fated, having been cancelled for the second year running.

Congratulations to Fiona Glass, Sally Macfarlane, Judy Mackenzie of Buchlyvie and Kirsty Letton from Ayr who won the 2020 Ladies Grand Masters at Greenacres.



Kirsty Letton, Judy Mackenzie, Fiona Glass and Sally Macfarlane with the Ladies Grand Masters Trophy

Club members were saddened to hear of the death of long-term member, Maurice Rennie. Maurice represented the Club in many competitions, was Treasurer for seven years and was awarded Honorary membership.

We are now looking ahead to a question mark for the future. Bookings for the 2020–21 have been submitted, as this is necessary for the allocation of ice. If and when the season will start is a total unknown at the time of writing.

For more information about our curling activities, please visit www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk. We are a very friendly club and enjoy a variety of social events. Our curling standards cater for all ranges of abilities, so if you are interested and want some exercise in a friendly atmosphere, contact Di Jackson (550314) or Gill Smith (550726) or visit our website. GS

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Flora Morrison Connal 28 January 1928 – 24 June 2020



Flora was very much a Killearn girl, born in Knowehead in the Square, the daughter of Thomas and Catherine Ponton. Her dad, son of the local gamekeeper, had served with great distinction during the Great War and lost an arm and so was a bit limited in what he could do in terms of work. Flora attended the local school in the early '30s, finishing her schooling at Balforn and leaving at the age of 14.

Her first job was as a telephonist

in Killearn Hospital and from there she transferred to Gartnavel General Hospital as a medical secretary, a rung up on her career ladder. She cared about how she dressed and was always immaculate in appearance.

She and Willie met at a local dance, when this 'townie' ventured out into the country, and that chance encounter started a relationship that would see them marry in the Old Manse, Killearn, in 1953 and share their lives until Willie's passing in 2008. Initially they lived with Flora's dad on Main Street and she cared for him until his passing. She and Willie got one of the new houses in Buchanan Road in 1959 and this became the family home, where they brought up their children Sandra and Stuart, and was Flora's home for the rest of her life.

In the course of her life, Flora saw many changes, some easier for her to deal with than others. Not big on social media, she would prefer to speak to you, face to face; if not, then the telephone would have to do. She

would frequently send handwritten letters or notes, perhaps taking the chance to display her penmanship. Flora was a keen walker around the area, especially with her friend Hilda, and together they enjoyed a Sunday in Milngavie at the bingo. The walking and socialising also gave her a chance to meet others and have a blether, and she was widely recognised throughout the village.

Flora was a warm, likeable and generous person, with a gift for engaging with people. She was annually involved in the Church's Christian Aid collection and this gave her the chance to chat to people on the doorstep. Though very much a 'Killearn original', she did enjoy getting away on holiday with Willie and they spent many happy summer holidays in Sorrento. In recent years, however, Flora's health began to decline, requiring time spent in and out of hospital, and her condition became increasingly frail. She passed away on 24 June and was laid to rest in ground that she called home.



We would like to thank the community for their patience and support during this time.

Special thanks to:

- ❑ *Adrian & Nick from Trossachs Search & Rescue*
- ❑ *Volunteers, neighbours and Fintry Resilience Team who have collected prescriptions for those shielding*
- ❑ *Local dentists, businesses and schools for supplying PPE*

Opening Times

<u>Monday to Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
9.00 – 18.00pm	9.00am – 17.00pm

CLOSED FOR LUNCH each day 1.00-2.15pm

Fay Smith Tribute

On Monday, 1 June, Killearn residents turned out in large numbers to pay their respects to Fay Smith as her funeral cortège passed solemnly through the village en route to her funeral in Stirling.

Many people gathered to pay quiet, sad tribute to Fay, lining Branziert Road, at the top of Beech Drive, along Main Street and Balforn Road on the way up to the Health Centre where

Fay worked as Office Manager for many years. There was also a gathering at Balforn Health Centre.

Having worked for the NHS for three decades, Fay was a well-known and well-liked figure in our community. Since very few could attend the funeral due to Covid-19 restrictions, this was an appropriate and moving means of people paying tribute.

Fay's husband Alan, son Gary and daughter Lesley were greatly appreciative of this spontaneous, warm gesture of love and respect by the local people at this sad time.



Maurice William Rennie 29 June 1934 – 6 Apr 2020

‘Aye... I fell off a dyke and burst my eardrum when I was a wee boy’

Tales about him, from him, were hard won. Explaining why he didn’t hear so well, he’d wink and smile – did he really consider his a disability?

‘Maurice’, ‘Mo’, ‘Moss’, or ‘Wull’ talked little – not lest he could improve upon the peace surrounding him. He listened. He watched. And he quietly went about supporting Ebeth, Fiona, Ian, Susan, Molly, Heidi, Rudy and Django. Not with a fuss or judgement, just a humble pleasure.

He skated on the frozen lochans around Bankfoot, ran, with wee sis Anne to catch the bus, and played football, rugby and tennis growing up. Left Perth as a young surveyor and met Ebeth in Ayr Pavilion. In ’62 they were engaged, married early in ’63, honeymoon in the snow at Carrbridge.

Newcastle City and Washington ‘New Town’ soon beckoned. After over a decade in Geordieland, a return to Scotland – Killearn, in 1977.

Job in Glasgow, kids in local village school, both Maurice and Ebeth got involved – Parent Teacher Association, Tennis Club, Speakers Club, Strathendrick

and Buchanan Castle golf clubs, Curling Club – Maurice had a role in all at some time. He much cherished the friendship of the locals he met there.



He loved athletic and artistic expression, following rugby at West of Scotland and Stirling County, and enjoying Scottish music with Ebeth at Celtic Connections.

Most of all he liked outdoors. He walked. A lot. He knew a bird from its song or flight, and fascinated in natural beauty of all kinds as he strode up and down our village walkways and local golfing fairways.

He might have bunked work and jumped the Hampden turnstiles in 1960 for the Real Madrid v Eintracht Frankfurt epic, or squeezed among the throng a decade later to see Doug Sanders miss his putt at St Andrews, but

his highlight reel is of hand-held walks with Ebeth – on the beach or links land at Dornoch, on the West Highland Way, in Islay, Skye and Harris, or sitting at the table amongst the buzz of family chatter with the clan he quietly helped create.

Rest now, Mo. You did a grand job.

IR

Thomas Harrison Douglas 5 July 1928 – 27 April 2020

In 1940 Tom was evacuated from Edinburgh to the United States, and often said that his time as a scholarship cadet at Western Military Academy, Illinois, and vacation work as a hotel bellboy were the making of him.

In 1945 he began an apprenticeship in civil engineering and when qualified, worked at Balfour Beatty in London, where he met Patricia Shiers. They began married life in Kenya with Tom working on the new Wanjii Hydroelectric Scheme, a project which operates to this day.

In the 1950s he worked on hydroelectric projects and designed the waste water system for Livingston New Town centre. The Dinorwig pumped-storage scheme in North Wales and the service tunnel at Edinburgh Castle are testimony to his skills in the UK, but his



contributions to civil engineering are worldwide, from dams in China to the tunnels in the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland.

In the 1990s he was honoured to become visiting professor of civil engineering at the University of Strathclyde and chairman of the Association of Consulting Engineers.

Away from engineering, Tom loved Killearn, his home of nearly 50 years in Drumbeg Loan, the community and the tennis, only moving away after Patricia’s stroke in order to provide the care she required.

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Charles John Hutton Brown 19 October 1938 – 3 April 2020

Charles Brown was born to Willie, a GP in the west end of Glasgow, and Chrissie Brown, and was the younger brother of Jean. He was educated at Glasgow Academy and then at the Royal College of Science and Technology, graduating in civil engineering.



In 1966 he married Isobel and almost immediately the couple moved to Canada, where he worked on projects in some remote areas. Their first son Tim was born during that time.

The family returned to Scotland, settling first in Bearsden and then moving to Killearn, where they made their home in 'Greenend' and where their second son Jamie was born.

For a while Charles worked with various engineering companies before setting up his own company, Scimitar Engineering, which successfully took on a wide range of projects. Further study gave him the title of European

Engineer (EUR ING), signifying his qualifications and experience would be recognised throughout Europe.

When not working, Charles was an enthusiastic and successful rally driver, and with his friend Neil as navigator, competed in some 280 rallies. He was much respected on the circuit, winning many rallies and even a national competition. He also had a passion for flying and was close to gaining his pilot's wings when a heart attack on the runway put paid to that activity.

He was a fond father and grandfather, and he and Isobel enjoyed the company of their grandchildren, Emily and Harry, often taking them on overseas holidays and sharing adventures with them. The arrival of Lucy, somewhat later, in the family was the opportunity for an especially close relationship to develop, with grandpa joining in her imaginative games.

Charles was a man of considerable strength of character, but was modest, equable and philosophical. His genial nature meant he was easy in his relationships and he was highly regarded by all those with whom he had contact.

In latter years he had a number of health problems which gradually reduced his activities and the sudden death of Jamie in a car accident delivered a dreadful blow to the family. Charles bore all this with good grace and fortitude. His passing leaves his family with a lifetime of happy memories.

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Catherine Genevieve Kinnear 1 December 1951 – 22 March 2020

Catherine was born in Glasgow, the middle child of a family of five girls. When she left school she worked in several jobs until she found a way into nursing and here discovered her vocation. It was when she was nursing at Killearn Hospital that she met John Kinnear. Their relationship flourished and they married in 1971. Their family was complete with two sons, Roy and Paul. They lived for a time in Fintry and then moved to Killearn.

Catherine was always a worker, combining her nursing duties with raising the boys and keeping a comfortable



home. Her home and family were the main focus of her life, and she delighted in welcoming family members and friends who never left without having had a meal or some of her delicious baking. Her house was also never without one or two dogs who were loved by the family, although if John questioned the need for another dog, he would come home to find one sitting in the living room. She was a strong-minded woman. Her family continued to grow and she delighted in the addition of seven grandchildren whom she loved dearly.

Catherine had a heart of gold, was always ready to lend a hand and to give support when needed. She was a much-loved wife, mother, daughter-in-law and sister, and had many happy times visiting her sister Joan in Canada and enjoying holidays with her family.

Sadly her health took a downward turn, which was hard to accept and endure for someone who had led such an active life. Her passing in March has left all the family with a heavy heart at the loss of a dearly loved woman of strength and compassion. May she rest in peace in the arms of angels.

THE KINNEAR FAMILY

Violet Lilian Boyd 3 February 1924 – 4 April 2020

Violet Boyd, 'Vi', was born in Liverpool, the third daughter of the Rev. Joseph and Margaret Edwardson, with her two older sisters, Dorothy and Anne, and her three younger brothers, James, Joseph and David. She had a happy vicarage childhood, later helping her father by organising a group for disadvantaged teenage girls called 'The Campaigners' (similar to Girl Guides) with weekly activities. There was also an annual May Queen Festival to raise funds to take the girls on holidays each year to the Isle of Man.

Vi qualified as a primary school teacher and while she enjoyed teaching infants, she often had 50+ children in a class and so was very happy to become a full-time housewife after her marriage to Douglas in 1956. Katy was born in 1958, followed by Malcolm in 1960.



In 1962, Vi and Douglas moved to Killearn. Vi loved village life and joined many organisations including the Monday Club, Badminton Group and Curling Club. She also taught Sunday School for 14 years and supported Douglas in his role as Church Elder.

Douglas and Vi's hospitality and dinner parties in the '60s and '70s when they lived in 'Whinfield', Drumbeg Loan, were legendary and Douglas' sudden death in December 1980, aged only 54, was heart-breaking. Friends were wonderful and, comforted, Vi chose to stay in Killearn, moving to Station Road and concentrating on her beautiful garden and her love of painting.

She thoroughly enjoyed bridge afternoons with friends, possibly proving to be a better player than she ever let on!

Vi also enjoyed many trips to Australia, spending family time with Malcolm, Gladys and her dear grandchildren, Scott and Samantha.

At age 93, she flew to Australia one last time to attend Malcolm's wedding to Elaine, and was delighted when Katy also found happiness again, marrying Ian in 2018.

A final glorious Christmas was spent with her beloved family in a large country house near Bridge of Cally. Katy and Malcolm were fortunate enough to be able to say goodbye to their adored, stylish, caring mother before she passed away from pneumonia on 4 April 2020.

'She lived for those she loved; and those she loved remember.'

THE BOYD FAMILY

PRIZE COURIER CROSSWORD

Set by PeeWit

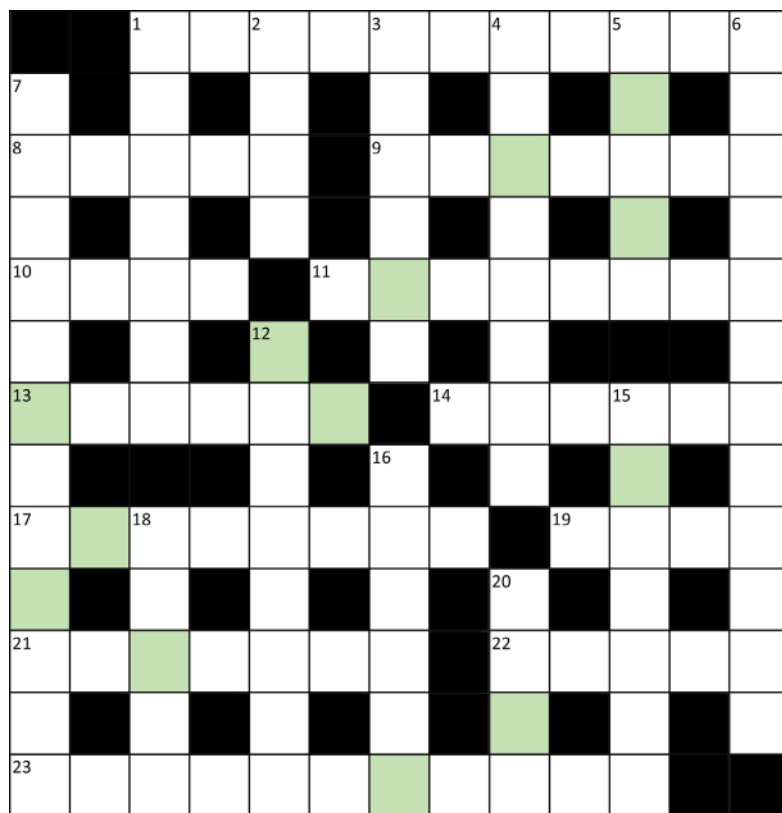
Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days and Covid-19. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank both the Ambassador Theatre Group and Co-operative Food for their generosity in providing the prizes for our competitions.

ACROSS

- 1 The carnivorous threat around us (11)
- 8 In the far Ural countryside (5)
- 9 This classic car is a ray of light (7)
- 10 Parts of a curve sound like biblical craft (4)
- 11 Damn, epic problem for the world (8)
- 13 Wealthy bride held a Cockapoo (6)
- 14 Drink with respect to a late meal (6)
- 17 Requirement to stay in when singular hair has fallen (8)
- 19 A list of superior males first to last (4)
- 21 Spot invaded by American bear (7)
- 22 New in the region of an amphitheatre (5)
- 23 The bemused masked bride got off (11)

DOWN

- 1 Foot problem on a horse could be a vegetable (7)
- 2 Regulation causes king to go short (4)
- 3 Grandmother is second in the car (6)
- 4 Bird builds with avian mud, he's in his element (8)
- 5 Man in the drink suffers this watery fluid (5)
- 6 Type of house is round but only half round (12)
- 7 Blowed if he might lose his licence (12)
- 12 Find warm source of power (8)
- 15 Make believe before care (7)
- 16 Gunners surround magic stick in this country (6)
- 18 Actors could be plastered (5)
- 20 A thousand query this, used to combat lac (4)



Winner of the last crossword: Stephanie Lyner, Killearn

The letters in the coloured squares make up a three-word anagram (4,4,5) which is advice during the 11 across. Solve the crossword and find the answer to the anagram. The anagram 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.

Solution to the last crossword: Across: 1 Snowdonia; 8 actor; 9 partner; 10 idealism; 11 into; 13 notice; 16, 14 Loch Lomond; 17 alarmist; 19 acclaim; 20 ditto; 21 knife-edge. Down: 1 surplise; 2 oppose; 3 dare; 4 non-unionist; 5 air condition; 6 national park; 7 streptococci; 12 porridge; 15 blamed; 18 Dane.

CHILDREN'S PRIZE WORDSEARCH

You should find 10 words in the word search grid that are **birds you might see in Killearn**.

Eight birds are: *buzzard, crow, dunnock, goldcrest, nuthatch, pigeon, rook, swallow*.

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

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 competition@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 **30 August 2020**.



Winner of the last Children's Competition, Evan Lindsay, Killearn.

Martin in the House

At the time of writing, in some shape or form, we are still in lockdown. For many people it has been possible to adapt readily to a much more restricted way of life despite the various challenges. For others, however, the pandemic has brought about a siege mentality – it has been difficult not to lose hope or a sense of perspective, even when not touched directly by the virus.

Nature can help. Whether it's part of a daily walk or just what you see when you look out your window or potter about your garden, wildlife is there to be gazed upon, studied and appreciated. In turn, it can be life enhancing and inspiring. It can keep us going.

We're lucky to have all sorts of flora and fauna on view in and around our village. Many species visit our gardens and provide us with rewarding views and interactions. Nesting birds in and around my garden this year have included great spotted woodpecker, jackdaw, rook, house sparrow, dunnock, blackbird and song thrush. None of them is particularly unusual, but this year, with more time spent at home, I have been privy to much more of their nest building and breeding activity than in previous years.

One of the highlights for me has been watching a pair of house martins construct their nest under eaves at the back of the house. Nothing I haven't witnessed before – every year between one and three pairs do the same, depositing dried mud at various spots around the house and garage. But this year's nest building, which can take three weeks at the best of times, was definitely disrupted

by the dry spring, meaning that mud was initially less available for construction. Watching the pair slowly entomb themselves inside their convex cup, until only the narrowest slit remained as its entrance, felt as if they were joining me in a battering down of the hatches.

Sometimes nests fail because the weather causes them to collapse or because predators, such as crows, tear them down. Sometimes the nest remains intact, but no young fledge – possibly due to a parent succumbing or a lack of available insect food. But generally the nests are successful with young birds fledging and, if conditions are favourable, a first brood is followed by a second in mid summer. Fledglings then have to feed up and develop flight muscles to join their parents for the epic journey back to sub-Saharan Africa.

This year, nature seems to be more on show than ever – tamer, less disturbed and more productive, with many sights for sore eyes from our kitchen windows. In happier times ahead, never take it for granted. MARTINCULSHAW



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We may be able to build in other communities in the future – 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.

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the *Courier* winter edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 14 November 2020.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 25 September Contact:
Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 25 September. Please send them to:

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