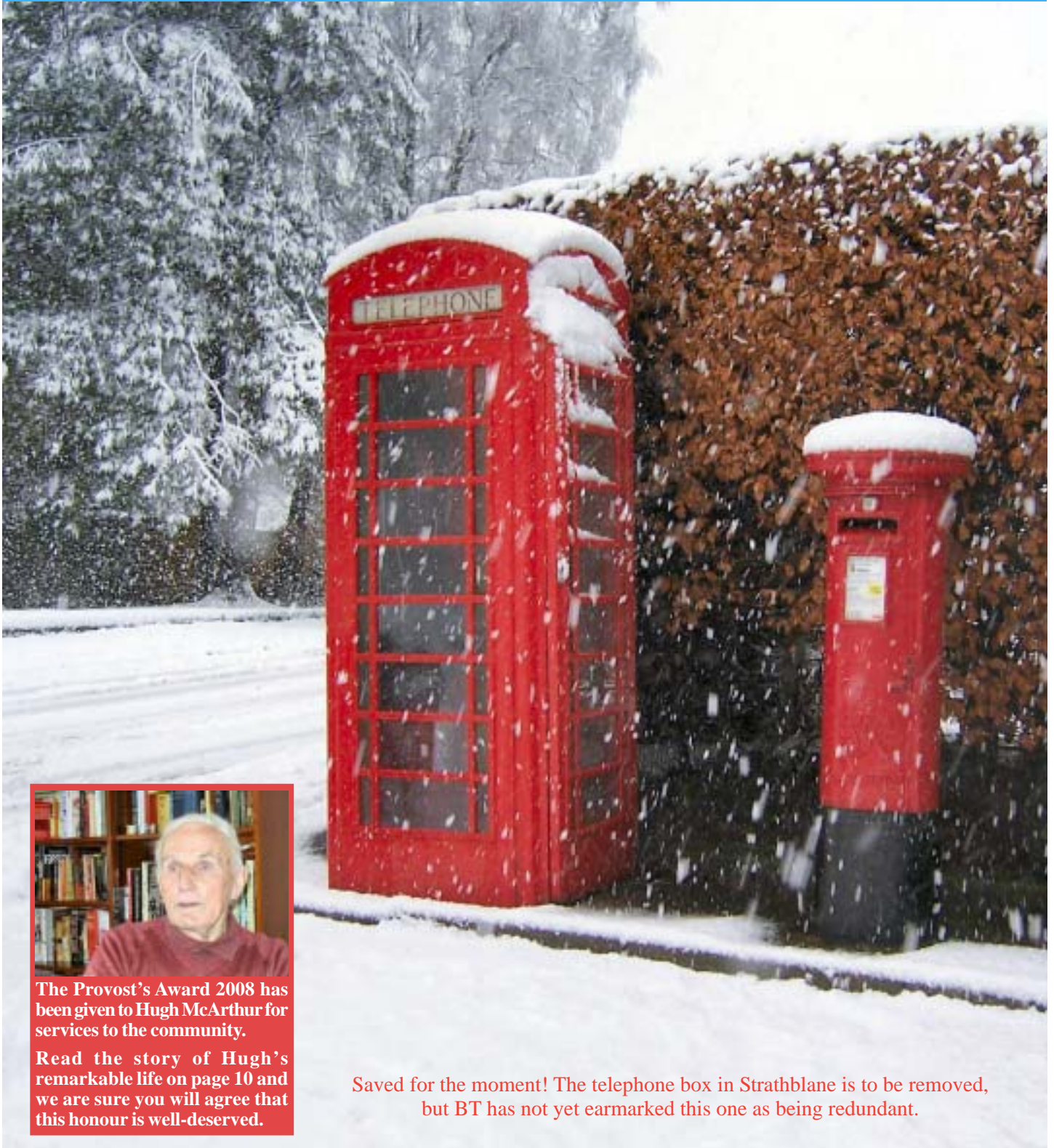




ISSUE 12

WINTER 2008

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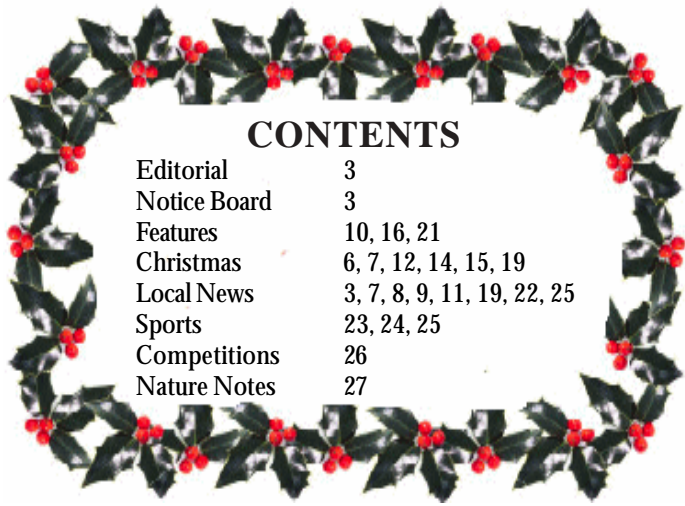


The Provost's Award 2008 has been given to Hugh McArthur for services to the community.

Read the story of Hugh's remarkable life on page 10 and we are sure you will agree that this honour is well-deserved.

Saved for the moment! The telephone box in Strathblane is to be removed, but BT has not yet earmarked this one as being redundant.

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS



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MacKAY – MacCALLUM



Killearn's Barry MacKay and Donna MacCallum from Stirling were married on 4 October at Stirling Registry office, followed by a reception at the Golden Lion. Pictured are Barry and Donna with best man, Martin Gingles and bridesmaids, Donna's sister, Tracy and Barry's sister, Jemma.

Killearn Courier
published by:



KILLEARN
COMMUNITY FUTURES COMPANY

Anyone wishing to contribute to the Spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 14 March 2009.

Advertisements and Artwork All adverts should be handed to one of our Advertising Executives by *Friday, 31 January*. Contact *Gwen Stewart* on 550856 and *Sara Hudson* on 550806.

Contributions All contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by *Friday, 31 January*. Send them to: 2 Elder Road, Killearn or email to courier@kfc.co.uk.

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Editorial

Welcome to the final edition of the *Courier* for 2008. It's hard to believe that the end of another year is imminent and by the time you read this, 2009 will be only about six weeks away.

It's been a right mixed bag of weather during 2008, with some really hot days and some really wet ones. It seems to me that there were more wet days than dry ones, but never mind, Christmas will be upon us before we know it and that's a time of the year that always cheers us up. To get in to the spirit of things, we've produced a bumper Christmas edition which I hope you enjoy.

For example, there are articles about various Christmas activities, including a bit of history about Christmas trees – and there's even a competition where you can win one! Still in the Christmas 'vein' we wondered if there was anything we could suggest that might make for a less costly and stress-free Christmas. Bearing in mind the current financial situation which is affecting all of us, we thought about the cost, both in time and fuel, and the hassle-factor of crowded city shopping. For example, think about how much you spend on fuel driving to and from the nearest 'big' shops to fight your way through the Christmas crowds. Shop locally is the answer! On your behalf, our advertising 'executives' sought gift ideas from our advertisers and you can see the results inside. I'll bet you didn't know you could get so much locally.

So, why not give it a try and support our local businesses; not only would it be good for the Community but it would also be good for you. Wouldn't it be so much more enjoyable to deal someone you probably know instead of some anonymous counter assistant?

Anyway, from all at the *Courier*, we hope you have the kind of Christmas you wish for.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ian



20 Nov	Killearn Parish Hall AGM	Village Hall	8.00pm
21 Nov	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>Riffi</i>	Balfron Campus	7.30pm
21 Nov	Strathendrick Country Dance Club <i>Annual Charity Dance</i>	Village Hall	7-11.30pm
22 Nov	Teenage Cancer Trust Charity Ceilidh <i>Tickets £10 from David Bird 550708</i>	Village Hall	7.30-Late
27-29 Nov	FADS Christmas Show – <i>Sleeping Beauty</i> <i>Tickets & Information, 860078</i>	Fintry Village Hall	7.30pm
28 Nov	Drymen History Society – <i>Restoration of the Kibble Palace Talk by Ewan Donaldson</i>	Drymen Village Hall	7.45pm
29 Nov	Guild Sale of Work	Church Hall	2.00pm
29 Nov	Mother & Toddler Craft Fair	Village Hall	10am-4pm
30 Nov	Get Reel, Family Session	Village Hall	3.15pm
30 Nov	Get Reel, St Andrews Day Family Ceilidh	Village Hall	3.30-6.30pm
2 Dec	Get Reel, Last Session	Balfron Campus	4-6pm
4-6 Dec	FADS Christmas Show – <i>Sleeping Beauty</i> <i>Tickets & Information, 860078</i>	Fintry Village Hall	7.30pm
6 Dec	PTA Christmas Fayre	Village Hall	10.30am-1pm
6 Dec	Friends of Guiding – Visit Santa <i>Tickets £4 from Old Mill Shop</i>	Church Hall	10am-1pm
7 Dec	Forestry Winter Bird Day	David Marshal Lodge, Aberfoyle	11am-4pm
12 Dec	Annual Festive Whist Drive (SCUA)	Village Hall	7 for 7.30pm
13 Dec	Wee Green Market	Village Hall	9.00am
14 Dec	Forestry Christmas Fun Day	David Marshal Lodge, Aberfoyle	10am-4pm
19 Dec	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>Ratatouille</i> <i>Children's Matinee</i>	Balfron Campus	2.00pm
9 Jan	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>Down by Law</i>	Balfron Campus	7.30pm
13 Jan	Get Reel, Come & Try	Balfron Campus	4-6pm
20 Jan	Get Reel, Classes Start	Balfron Campus	4.00pm
22 Jan	Drymen History Society – <i>Members Night – Short Talks by Members</i>	Drymen Village Hall	7.45pm
31 Jan	PTA Burns Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10am-12noon
1 Feb	Get Reel, Family Session	Village Hall	3.15pm
4 Feb	Horticultural Society, <i>Assam Adventure</i> <i>– Talk by Mike Thornley</i>	Village Hall	7.30pm
7 Feb	Strathendrick Singers Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10.00am
13 Feb	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>I'm Not There</i>	Balfron Campus	7.30pm
26 Feb	Drymen History Society – <i>The Gene Genie</i> <i>Making sense of DNA – talk by Dr Durie</i>	Drymen Village Hall	7.45pm
5 Mar	Rotary Senior Citizens Concert <i>Central Police Band</i>	Village Hall	7.00pm
7 Mar	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>Mama Mia</i>	Balfron Campus	7.30pm
8 Mar	Friends of Guiding Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10am-12noon
21 Mar	PTA Stars in Their Eyes	Village Hall	7-9pm
21 Mar	Strathendrick Film Society – <i>Two Days in Paris</i>	Balfron Campus	7.30pm
27 Mar	Drymen History Society – <i>The Scottish Diaspora – Talk by Hugh Allison</i>	Drymen Village Hall	7.45pm
31 Mar	Strathendrick Singers Spring Concert	Killearn Kirk	7.00pm

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KILLEARN PHARMACY

Colourful Killearn

Our AGM was held on the night of 7 October. The plants in the tubs did their best in the less-than-summery weather and at time of writing the geraniums are still going strong and looking colourful. We would like to thank Eden Christmas Trees for once again donating a lovely tree for outside the Church. It certainly brightens up that corner and there have been many favourable comments from villagers in previous years. This year's Christmas tree will be on show from early December until January.

Killearn has been awarded a Certificate of Merit in the *Keep Scotland Beautiful Neighbourhood Award Category*; well done to all involved.

Catherine Peters 1950 - 2008



A great many people in the village and beyond were shocked when they learned of the death of Catherine on 5 August 2008.

Wife of Jim and mother of Derrick and Grant, she was a 'weel-kent' figure in the Community with her ever ready smile and sense of humour.

For many years, Catherine was a leader of the Cubs in Killearn. Many young men who are former Cubs and who are perhaps now fathers themselves, will remember Catherine with great fondness and will no doubt recall her involvement in their weekly activities in the then Scout Hut situated behind the Old School off Main Street. Particular memories might well include Cub campfires at suitable sites in Killearn (where burnt sausages were the order of the day) or 'badge' days at Ballikinrain.

Catherine was buried in the Woodland Cemetery in Killearn and her popularity was evidenced by the huge number of people who attended her interment. A further mark of affection for Catherine was displayed by the fact that £730 was raised for Cancer Research by donations from friends and family.

TID



Christmas comes early for the Courier

The *Killearn Courier* has received an early Christmas present in the form of a £500 grant from Clydesdale Bank to spend on a much needed software upgrade thereby ensuring that we can continue to produce your community newspaper.

The donation is part of Clydesdale Bank's Staff Volunteer Grant Programme, which provides cash to groups in which its employees are involved. The grants are provided through the *Yorkshire & Clydesdale Bank Foundation*, a registered charity established by the Banks in 2008. Dougie Bell, an IT Manager with the bank, applied for the grant on behalf of the Killearn Courier Group.

Dougie said: "During the production of our last issue, we learned that our printer, in line with all other printers in the area, could no longer accept and process our copy using our usual computer programme. It was very out of date, so we were delighted to receive this grant from the Clydesdale Bank to replace the software."

The *Killearn Courier* is delivered free to approx 1,000 households, three times yearly, with production costs covered by the support of our advertisers. The newspaper is produced and distributed entirely by voluntary effort.

Irene Swankie, Community Affairs Manager at Clydesdale Bank, said: "We like to encourage our employees to become involved in voluntary work within the community and our grants programme is one of the ways in which we do this."

I think all this is really a very happy Christmas story.

Ed.

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KCC Update

Traffic Management Plans

Consultation has recently been carried out on proposals to introduce new traffic management measures in the Main Street with plans displayed on the notice board and KCC website.

Proposed for 'the Bank corner' are new centre-line markings, incorporating red-coloured surface, new junction markings at the exit from the Square onto the main carriageway and new and replacement signs to highlight the bend. It is proposed that the bus stop and shelter are relocated to the area in front of the Spar, and the improved footways along the north side of Main Street, including dropped kerb pedestrian crossing points, will provide better links between the Spar and Wellgreen and that there should be a more formalised access to the Spar car park.

Community Police Officer

PC David McNally, stationed at Balfour Police office, has recently been appointed Community Police Officer for Killearn. We welcome him to this post and look forward to seeing him in and around the village.

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Choose your own and pay a sensible price.

Special credit crunch Christmas offer

6ft, 7ft and 8ft, Standard Cut Nordman Firs for only £20.00 plus a free tree for the kids

All trees netted for easy transport home or ask about our home delivery service.

There will be an opportunity to purchase lights, artificial trees and unique decorations for your tree and home at our Christmas shop.

Santa will be visiting the Farm so you may be lucky enough to catch him!

There will also be a selection of animals to view at the Farm including: Reindeer, miniature Donkeys, miniature Pig, Rabbit, Cows & Sheep.

Christmas Opening Times from 1 December 2008:

DAILY MONDAY TO FRIDAY: 9AM-6PM | SATURDAY AND SUNDAY: 9AM-5PM

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CHILDREN'S COMPETITION

WIN A CHRISTMAS TREE OF UP TO 8FT PLUS A CHILD'S TREE FROM EDEN CHRISTMAS TREES.

Complete the following quiz (*clue - read the article on page 6*). Competition open to children 12 years and under. Bring your completed quiz along to Edenmill Farmshop by Friday 4 December 2008.

1. What age are trees when we plant them?.....
2. How many trees does Eden sell each year?.....
3. How many years does it take for a tree to grow?.....
4. How many centimetres should a tree grow each year?.....
5. How far apart are the trees planted?.....metres
6. What method do we use to shape trees? (*circle correct answer*)
a) top pruning b) side pruning c) centre pruning
7. How many trees are there at Edenmill?.....

NAME..... AGE..... PHONE NUMBER.....

Winner will be notified by telephone after the closing date.

GOOD LUCK!

Everything You Need to Know about . . . CHRISTMAS TREES

The Courier's intrepid reporters followed in the steps of local primary school children and visited Edenmill, off the Stockiemuir road, to discover more about our much loved Christmas trees. And where better to go, as one of the country's biggest Christmas Tree growers, selling 10,000 each year, Edenmill are stalwarts of the British Christmas Tree Growers Association . . . and they're local!

When you think about it, it does seem a strange custom to cut down a tree and bring it into our home,

to then adorn it with baubles, lights and tinsel. So why do we do it? It dates back to a 7th century monk, St Boniface who used the fir tree as a symbol of the Christian faith when spreading the word of God in Germany. It was Germany which



was to become the epicentre of the Christmas Tree custom and trees were first decorated with crafts and candles in the early 16th century. Queen Victoria introduced the custom to Britain from her German relatives and due to her popularity, it quickly spread as the 'must have' Christmas accessory. The taller the tree and more lavishly decorated, the more affluent the family, it was a Victorian status symbol.

The introduction of central heating to most homes in the 1970s saw the demise of the Norway Spruce as the nation's most popular Christmas tree. It loses its needles, unless well watered everyday, and by the 12th day, can often look very sorry for itself. An important factor when each tree has around 150,000 needles! Nowadays we have a good choice of type of tree, see left.

Around 150 years ago, trees in Germany became endangered due to their tops being cut off for use at Christmas time and laws had to be passed to protect them. At Edenmill we learned how things have changed and how, careful planting, cultivation and felling ensures an annual supply of appropriately sized and shaped trees. Trees are planted when 3 years old, 1.2m apart and then felled when they are 10 years old. With good drainage, weed control and fertiliser, they are expected to grow 30cm each year. Centre pruning ensures an attractive shape with some types being more labour intensive such as the Noble Fir. At Edenmill 10,000 trees will be planted in a year to replace those harvested, keeping the total number at 100,000.

Provided care is taken in looking after the tree, Christmas trees should survive over four weeks and should not be purchased before 1 December.

Bringing trees into our centrally heated homes accelerates the shedding of needles but there are a few tips to help keep them looking healthy throughout the season:-

- *Make sure the tree is fresh when purchased – branches should not be dry and brittle and needles should not drop off.*
- *Keep your tree outside in a cool place, preferably standing in water until required indoors.*
- *Before bringing indoors, cut half an inch off the butt in order to open up the pores.*
- *Mount in a water-holding stand or wedge in a bucket with pebbles/rolled up newspaper and water every day.*
- *Place your tree away from direct heat.*

As an alternative to the simple 'cut tree', consider the choice of trees with bare roots, root-balled trees or container-grown trees. The former have been extracted with their roots, with a slight chance that these trees will survive if planted out after Christmas. Root balled trees are carefully prepared and dug up with minimal disturbance. If potted in moist soil, they have a reasonable chance of survival if planted out. Container grown trees have been grown for at least one season in their pots and therefore will be small, seldom more than three feet. These should be cared for as house plants.

Guide to Type of Tree



Norway Spruce

The 'original' Christmas tree, with a conical shape, distinctive fragrance but tendency to lose its fine rich green needles.

Nordman Fir

The original non-drop tree with broad soft green needles, a wide conical shape with dense branches ideal for decorating.



Noble Fir

The Christmas tree. A very heavy tree with blue-green needles and beautiful fragrance.

Fraser Fir

A favourite in America. It has blue-green needles that are short and soft. Firm branches make it easier to decorate. Fresh citrus fragrance.



Blue Spruce

A low drop tree with blue foliage and strong limbs that can hold heavy ornaments.

Scots Pine

Fast growing with the widest natural range of any pine, growing right across northern Europe and Asia. Best needle retaining tree with very long needles giving a lovely pine scent.



Lodgepole Pine

Tall and slender, the needles are in bunches of two and are spirally twisted.

Rotary Hosts Canadian Visitors

The Rotary Club of Strathendrick recently played host to a group of Canadians who spent a few days visiting each club in the District to learn about the culture and meet and exchange ideas with individuals in similar professions. The team consisted of a retired bank manager, a photographer and land agent, a journalist and musician, a Geographic Information Systems specialist with the Canadian government and a teacher of Maths and Spanish. Each team member gave a very professional presentation to the Strathendrick Club covering their job, interests and a little about the area in which they live.

Along with their Rotarian Hosts, the group visited local landmarks such as the Falkirk Wheel, Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument. They also visited Balfron High School where they received a very warm welcome and they were most impressed with the facilities there



The picture shows (from left to right): Robin Hood (Team Leader), Wayne Gibson, Sarah Burton, Bill Stoddart, Leah Dawonik, and Ryan Jillard

ROUNDUP OF WHERE TO BUY YOUR TREE LOCALLY

Armed with the information on the left about Christmas trees, you now have to decide where to go to buy one. The buying of *The Tree* has become a Christmas outing for many families and the experience offered by vendors differs.

At **Edenmill** you can buy your tree and fit it out with decorations, lights, the entire ensemble while your children visit the miniature donkeys, miniature pig, reindeer, cows, sheep and pet the rabbit, all washed down with a warming glass of mulled wine or juice. Pick up a wreath for the door and locally sourced meat and turkeys from the farm shop. Trees are on sale from 1 December and Edenmill can be found off the Stockiemuir Road opposite Auchengillan Scout Centre. See their

advert or visit the website www.edenchristmastrees.co.uk.

The **Forestry Commission** sell around 100,000 Christmas trees each year and our local outlet is at the David Marshall Visitors Centre in Aberfoyle. Here Nordman firs, Norway Spruce and Scots Pines are sold from 29 November throughout December, 10 – 4 pm daily. Special Christmas Fun Days are on 13 and 14 December with festive activities for all the family including a Christmas Treasure Trail and a visit from Lomond Mountain Rescue on the 14 December.

Euan and Flick Duff at **Wester Auchentroig**, Buchlyvie, offer the choice of either buying a ready cut tree or heading off into the undergrowth to choose and cut your own tree. This is

an increasingly popular option and wellies are a must. Flick turns her professional cooking skills to producing mince pies and sells her homemade jams and chutney. The Duffs grow Nordman fir, Fraser fir and Norway spruce. Wester Auchentroig is located on the B835 between Buchlyvie and Ward Toll, 2 miles from Buchlyvie.

The Sawmill at Branshoggie on the Fintry road is a no frills traditional tree seller. Beware not to scatter the hens and take your wellies if it's muddy. The McArthur brothers will give good personal service in choosing your tree.

Living Christmas Trees Ltd sell container trees from their premises at the Ballochruin Bridge, off Blackhill Crossroads, Balfron Station.

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STRATHENDRICK CLASSIC CAR CLUB

Chairman's Report

It has not been great summer weather for classic car enthusiasts (or, that matter, for anyone else) but nevertheless our cars have been out and about.

Our summer run, together with cars from the Helensburgh Classic Car Club, took us through parts of the Campsie Hills and the Trossachs, finishing with a buffet at the Buchanan Arms Hotel in Drymen. A run with the Scottish Western Thoroughbred Vehicle Club (based in Milngavie) took us by scenic back roads to Crieff, with another buffet lunch, this time in the Hydro, and a visit to a working steam railway in Comrie. On both occasions the sun managed to shine.

With the advent of autumn we moved inside, with monthly meetings. The first, on 8 October was a get-together in the Beech Tree Inn, though with a brief run in company beforehand. On 19 October some of our cars joined others from Oban Classic car Club and Highlands Classic Car Club in a run to Fort William, and another lunch! At the November meeting Dr Bob Sharp gave a talk about building and renovating cars.

For more information about the club, please contact the secretary, Phillip Pain, on 01360 550752. RJL

Member's Car No.3 1971 Rover P5b



Mercedes recently claimed that its CLS 500 was the world's first four-door coupé, with high side panels and cut down windows. This car, a Rover P5b coupé, beat them to it by 40 years.

Initially brought out in rather staid saloon form, it was the first Rover built without a separate chassis, but featured Rover's traditional 'gentleman's club' interior. Performance was poor, due to the old fashioned six-cylinder engine. Rover purchased an aluminium V8 engine from America (which went on to power a whole series of cars, including the Range Rover) and fitting this to the P5, and lowering the roof line, transformed the car's performance and looks.

It was much favoured by politicians as their official cars, and the Queen Mother had one.

This car, a 1971 model, has been extensively rebuilt, and now stays in Killearn

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Buchanan Monument Update

Who says no one reads the Courier?

In our last edition, we mentioned that the Buchanan Society was concerned that the "handsome, newly-rebuilt wall" would be damaged, yet again, by vehicles.

Since then, Daniel, the proprietor of the Black Bull Hotel, has placed a line of bollards along the side of the wall in an effort to stop vehicles colliding with it.

Well done, Daniel. Many thanks for your community-spirited actions.

(Would you believe that already, one bollard has been hit?) *ED*



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• Bathroom Suites	• Decking
	• Pressure washing

(This list is not exhaustive, if you do not see your job listed just phone.)

**Call 01360 551100
or 07748754583**

Killearn Village Hall Renovation and Development *the story so far. . . .*

In early 2008 a Village Hall Development Group (VHDG) was formed to examine the opportunities for renovation of the Village Hall in response to the current and likely future demands of the Killearn Parish community.

The Group visited a range of village halls and youth clubs throughout Scotland and held meetings with all interested parties and current Hall users. Local opinion was sought via a questionnaire which was distributed to every household in the Parish and also Killearn Primary and Balfon High Schools.

An analysis of all views and responses received was carried out and a sub-committee was set up to examine how these views could be reflected through the development and renovation of the Hall at an affordable cost. The analysis identified the following areas for development and improvement:

- Youth club
- Reception area and suitable kitchen for weddings and functions
- Meeting rooms doubling for changing rooms for stage performances
- Maximising views over the Glebe to the west
- Area for meeting, coffee and displaying archives
- Adequate storage

Meetings were held with five architects, two of whom made a presentation to the committee in response to the brief



based on providing the facilities outlined above. Following the presentation, Alisdair MacDuff, McEachern MacDuff, Stirling was selected. Collaborative work is now developing an acceptable plan which will provide the additional facilities for the Village Hall at the budget price which the committee has set at £1 million. When that has been achieved the plans will be presented to Stirling Council's Corporate Asset Management Department for their consideration as owners, along with the need to agree the future lease structure for the Village Hall.

It is hoped that the proposed plans will be presented to the Killearn community for their approval by the end of 2008 or early 2009.

Village Hall Development Group members:

Brian Simmers (Chair), Daye Tucker (Chair KCFC), David Clark (KCFC), Michael Pell (Chair Village Hall committee), Pam Campbell (Stirling Council - Village Hall owners).

Sub-committee members:

Brian Simmers, Richard Hunter (KCFC), Dudley Gee (property developer), Bruce Montgomery-Smith (chartered consulting engineer/project manager for Church Hall), Michael Pell.

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Hugh McArthur



Hugh McArthur moved with his family to Killearn from Crieff in 1939 when his father took up employment as a gardener, first to Mr Pringle of Whiteflats (now White Court) and then to Mr Innes of Garteneaglais. Hugh attended Balfon High School, at that time much increased in size with evacuees. He became interested in agriculture and spent some time at Auchincruive College.

On the death of his father in Airdie, the McArthur family moved to Glasgow but Hugh returned to Killearn to work for Dan Paterson at Laighpark. Being in a reserved occupation Hugh was not called up but served in the Home Guard for three years. From Laighpark he moved to Ibert Farm and later to a market garden at Campsie Dene, Blanefield. He met Jessie at the local youth club, married her in 1949 and they moved into Lettreburn. They have one daughter, Mary.

In the post-war period there was a drift away from farming and although Hugh continued working on the land he was open to other possibilities. By the merest chance, he noticed a newspaper

advertisement, applied and began a new career as an agricultural representative for Crockets, the ironmongers. He describes how he drove a Land Rover towing a caravan, fitted out with a great variety of agricultural equipment, around 300 farms, many in this area. He notified the farmers by postcard a week before his visit and, by virtue of his agricultural experience, he had his caravan stocked up with gear appropriate to the season. He speaks of Crockets as having been very good to him; but it would seem that he was also a hard working and successful representative of their business.

It was through his work with the Sunday School that Hugh became interested in teaching. Encouraged by Ian Hunter, Headteacher of the Primary School and the Minister, Rev Jack Skelly, he went to night school to obtain the necessary qualifications and then applied to Jordanhill College of Education and was accepted as a mature student.

Upon qualifying in 1968, he was appointed to Sighthill Primary School in Glasgow and there he remained, teaching all stages, but at his happiest with the P7 class, until his retirement at the age of 67. After that he continued as a supply teacher until stopped by the authorities at the age of 70! Right up to the present time he returns to Sighthill every week to spend a day "helping out". Hugh says: "I'll never leave Sighthill, but Sighthill might leave me." The high rise flats are being demolished

and the school roll has dwindled to around a hundred.

Working life apart, Hugh has spent a life in serving and supporting the community of Killearn. He was a Sunday School teacher for 40 years, 25 of which as Superintendent and he is the longest serving (47 years) Elder of Killearn Kirk. He was treasurer of the Recreation Club, a member of the Burns Club and has had a 40-year involvement with the Old Folks Committee of which he has been a driving force, going on foot to many houses in the village, selling raffle tickets to raise funds to provide a summer outing and a Christmas treat for the elderly of the village.

A keen footballer in his youth, he has maintained his support of Killearn Football Club and is now an Honorary Vice-Chairman.

As well as his close involvement in the life of the community Hugh is renowned as a deltiologist – a collector of postcards. He has a great collection of historic postcards of Killearn and eagerly attends postcard fairs to enlarge his collection.

Anyone who has spoken with Hugh will know that much of the history of our village lies in his memories and his recall of times past, some of which the Courier has been proud to include. He is renowned for his support and work for the institutions of the village, continued over a lifetime and for his courtesy, his gentleness and his self-effacing manner.

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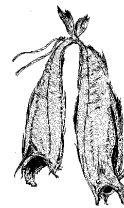
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Start-Up Awareness Workshop

Stirling Enterprise (STEP) Business Gateway will deliver a FREE Start-Up Awareness workshop at the Buchanan Arms Hotel, Drymen from 12noon to 2pm in 26 November 2008.

Aimed at the residents of Killearn and the surrounding communities who may be mulling over a business idea or at the early stages of getting a new enterprise off the ground, the event will look at Business Planning, Marketing, Finance and IT (website), as well as practical issues and sources of assistance. Following the workshop, there will also be an opportunity to speak to a Business Start-Up Adviser, on a one-to-one basis for further advice.

Business Start-Up Adviser Jim Fraser commented: "The afternoon will be a relaxed and informal information session, ideal for anyone keen to explore the idea of self-employment, or those at the early stages of getting started in business for themselves for the first time."

For further information, or to reserve a place on the workshop, please contact Keeley Davis.

Phone: 01786 463416 or

email: kdavis@stirling-enterprise.co.uk

Sponsored Walk in Eastern Cape

Strathendrick Film Society committee member, Mrs Elizabeth Copp, took part in a 40-mile sponsored walk over four days along the stunning Wild Coast of South Africa's Eastern Cape Province to raise badly needed funds for community projects in Eastern Cape through Action for Southern Africa, as well as strengthening Scotland's links with the Province. Walkers were committed to raising substantial sponsorship by individual

or collective effort, and are looking for generous support from all friends of South Africa. Elizabeth said:

"... Wonderful experience in every way. Walk much harder than I had anticipated due to unusually bad storm. The 'way' was blocked by huge boulders thrown up by the huge waves meaning that we had to clamber over stuff which took much longer and was not good for the old knees."



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Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

Christmas – the time of year when families sit round and share a perfect meal while the snow falls outside and the tree (which of course hasn't dropped any needles) twinkles merrily in the background. In reality this perfect image rarely happens.



Something often goes wrong with the dinner. It rarely snows. The children bicker constantly. And one poor person spends the whole time clearing up.

The fact is, Christmas is never perfect. But that most certainly doesn't mean Christmas can't be fun. A few years ago my parents decided to spend Christmas here in Scotland rather than with my grandparents in England. This was a big change for us as every year we followed the same tradition down at my grandparent's where we were surrounded by aunts, uncles and cousins. And yes, it was a quiet Christmas – very different to the Christmas we were used to. Yet it was a thoroughly enjoyable one. We did all have to make a bit of an effort but it paid off. In fact, we have chosen to spend Christmas here on several other occasions. And while not all of them have been perfect we have always managed to enjoy ourselves.



As I have got older I have lost the magic of Christmas slightly. It is easy to feel it is an anti-climax or that is too much effort for one day, especially now I have to buy my own presents and there isn't the excited anticipation of a visit from Father Christmas. But you still have to make the effort to enjoy yourself. Although it is a cliché repeated often at this time of year, we must also consider ourselves lucky that we have family to spend Christmas with and that we will get a delicious meal and lovely gifts on the day. There are many people who won't have any of these things.

For me, Christmas is about spending time with my family, eating good food and enjoying each other's company. Christmas isn't about presentation or your own expectations. It is important to make an effort and have fun or it will just blend into another day. As the song goes "*Halleluiah, Noel....Be it heaven or hell, the Christmas we get we deserve.*"

MR



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Photo Shoot

This edition of the Courier includes three fine pictures of Killlearn and its environs.

This photograph of Wilson's Pool (left) on Endrick Water near Boquhan was taken by Fraser Phillips.

On the front page is a snow scene outside Spar taken in January 2007 by Jenny Wilks.

The aerial shot of the village on page 21 is copyright Keith Kemsley. If you would like to buy a copy, please contact Nick Hawkins by emailing him: nick.hawkins@bbc.co.uk All profits will go to support your community newspaper.

Do you have an interesting, unusual or beautiful view of the village or its surrounds? If so, we would like to include it in a future edition. For further details, please contact courierphoto@kcfc.co.uk.

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TAKE THE HASSLE OUT OF CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

How many of us are bracing ourselves for Christmas shopping in the busy city centres, slowly edging our way into Buchanan Galleries car park, queuing at checkouts or encountering parking rage in the supermarket car park when some newcomer nicks into the space you've been impatiently waiting for. It's easy to lose the Christmas spirit. Many of us have opted out to some extent by going on line but sometimes it just isn't the same as browsing in a shop, speaking to the shopkeeper, being able to pick up an item or see its true colour and then being able to take it home with you that day.

There is an option; **Take the Killearn Challenge**

You'd be surprised what there is in and around Killearn; things that are a bit different; quality foods; and in a time of tighter purse strings, something for every pocket. Reduce the stress levels and the fuel miles and prepare to be surprised and inspired. Here's a taste of what's out there.

- 1.** Turn down the heating and snuggle up with a designer hot water bottle from Panik Gallery or give gift vouchers towards a painting. www.panikgallery.com
- 2.** Don't forget that hanging baskets are not just for summer bedding plants, brighten up a garden with the gift of a winter basket or box from Spadework. Phone Alan to order 07855 311512.
- 3.** Treat someone to a wonderful plum pudding and brandy butter made in the Country Kitchen at Herons Court. To order, telephone: 550122 by 9 December.
- 4.** Jars of homemade (and probably home-grown) redcurrant jelly never go amiss at this time of year – pop into the Guild Sale of Work on Saturday 29 November, 2pm in the Church Hall. Or drop into one of the Christmas Fayres in the Village Hall and pick up some gifts at the same time as helping out a local organisation: 29 November, 10 – 4pm Mother & Toddler and 6 December 10.30 – 1pm Killearn Primary School PTA. Don't forget the Wee Green Market on 13 Dec.
- 5.** Instead of flowers, surprise Him or Her with a delivery of exquisitely presented champagne, wine or Glengoyne whisky from Endrick Blooms, prices from £10 excl. delivery, telephone 550404.
- 6.** Hand turned wooden candlesticks, bowls and lamps made from locally sourced hard woods. Commissions also taken. Contact archie@wood-business.co.uk
- 7.** Gift Cards for Debenhams and vouchers for other high street retailers. An easy option for a tricky gift. Yes – you can get them in Killearn! – from Janet in the Post Office, in Spar.
- 8.** Beckham Signature – the new fragrance for Her and for Him from Victoria Beckham or the new Kate Moss fragrance, Velvet Hour. All available from Killearn Pharmacy.
- 9.** A surprising stocking filler – award winning Stornoway Blackpudding from D. MacDonald Butchers. They'll never guess what it is but satisfaction guaranteed!
- 10.** Glengoyne Distillery's Master Blender Session – a 2 hour course where you create your own blended whisky to take home. £25. Contact 550254 or visit the shop at the distillery.
- 11.** Stock up the fridge with locally sourced meat from Edenmill Farm Shop, Stockiemuir Road – and when they say 'locally sourced' they really mean it; Aberdeen Angus beef produced at Edenmill, pork from Balfroon, Lamb and eggs from Fintry and venison and game from neighbouring estates. If you're worried about food miles this Christmas, this is a place to come.



CHRISTMAS SHOP LOCALLY

12. Distinctive Highland Stoneware made and hand painted in Lochinver, Sutherland. Platters, bowls, mugs and dishes available from the Wishingwell Farmhouse Coffee and Gift shop in Gartness.

13. Simply to pamper or improve well-being, a massage tailored to your needs from qualified practitioner Rhona Smart in her tranquil and relaxing treatment room in Killearn, or for that perfect present – a gift voucher. Telephone 550882.

14. For an eye catching array of table decorations, candles, napkin rings and glassware visit Town & Country Designs. A range of prices and unusual goodies ensures that you can have the best dressed table in town.

15. Kids stocking filler toys from SPAR, a good selection and look out for their beer and wine promotions in the run-up to Christmas.

16. Traditional Italian Panettone from Pestle & Mortar in Blanefield. Real panettone, handmade by the Filippi family for over 30 years - a lovely gift to take when visiting. Stop off when passing and pick one up, as well your supply of quality specialist cheeses.

17. A real Christmas treat for Her – The Ultimate Body Treatment from LMH Hair and Beauty. Overcome the stresses and excesses of the Festive season with this relaxing treatment to hydrate and detoxify your skin, £60. Gift vouchers available. Telephone 551160.

18. Khyloris Flowers wonderfully presented gift basket of 'Flowers, Wine & Chocolate' – bound to be something for everyone in this festive gift. Prices from £30. Telephone 551016

19. We all have part of the garden that we've been meaning to get around to clearing out and change. As a different gift to give to each other, get MacColl Landscaping in to do the job for you. Contact Scott on 07727 045939.

20. What woman doesn't like bags?....(not the ones under the eyes of course!) The Old Mill Gift shop has a fantastic range on handbags and in particular travel bags from Ness. A range of plaid purses, weekend, flight bags and luggage. For whatever the destination...travel in style.

21. Help those New Year resolutions with a gift of personal training or gym membership at Aizle Fitness, Ballat Crossroads. Contact Kerr on 440900 or 07766 355378.

22. Send a pair of Arbroath Smokies to anywhere in the UK from Stuarts Fresh Fish, our local fish delivery van. Telephone 01241 876254 or visit arbroathsmokiesdirect.co.uk to order.

23. An orchid from the specialist Orchid House at Ben View nursery, Ward Toll on the Aberfoyle Road. Or sign up for the regular orchid workshops with Keith and Graham. Email: info@theorchidhouse.co.uk for details.

25. Local Gift Aid – make a donation on behalf of a friend or relative to Strathcarron Hospice. The Hospice which serves Forth Valley, including Killearn, does a wonderful job. Only part of its running costs are met by the NHS and the Hospice has to raise £50,000 each week. You can choose virtual gifts from their Gift Catalogue, eg. £7 buys afternoon tea for one day for all day care and in-patients. Call the Fundraising Dept on 01324 826222 for a Strathcarron Wishes Catalogue; gifts from £5 to £900.

24. Don't forget the Co-op for crackers, selection boxes and just about all the food you'll need. A visit to Anne & Co in the Co-op is a lot easier and more sociable than doing battle in the big supermarkets.

Support our local businesses – shop locally this Christmas

No China Crisis

2008 – or the Year of the Rat in the Chinese lunar calendar – has without doubt been China's year. The rising economic powerhouse of the east has seen earthquakes in Sichuan, human rights protests in Tibet, launched men into space and it has hosted the Olympic Games and the Paralympics in Beijing. This seemed the apposite time to visit this extraordinary, fast-changing country. Our Courier correspondent sends this snapshot:

July 2008. Arrive at Terminal 3, Beijing Airport – but this is nothing like its



calamitous sibling London Heathrow's Terminal 5. Facilities are spacious and spotlessly clean. Operations are faultless and, with a month to go until the Olympics, full rehearsals are

underway: the gateway to China is flooded with hosts, guides and officials.

One thing China is not short of is people – it has an astonishing population of 1.3 billion! Beijing is a sprawling, bustling city; the roads are busy and exhaust fumes cloying – but no worse than in any other capital city. The beautiful Temple of Heaven is thronging with tourists; but nearly all of them are Chinese.

In such a vast country, with its huge population enjoying a steadily rising standard of living, it is not surprising that there is an insatiable thirst for Chinese culture, tradition, and history – from its own people.

Overnight train to Xi'an. Where? In the minibus to the hotel the guide is asked the population of Xi'an, the answer, 8 million! The city has more people than Scotland and and why have we heard of it? Because it is home of the awe-inspiring Terracotta Warriors. Six thousand life-sized figures, every one of them different. Two thousand restored; row-upon-row, implacably



guarding the Emperor's tomb in eerie silence. Xi'an's 13 kilometre, 14th-century city walls are still complete; unlike Beijing's magnificent battlements that were almost entirely demolished only 50 years ago – in the interest of efficient town planning!

Out of Beijing, through the suburbs, lush with verdant vegetation, north-west heading for the Great Wall. Streams of freight traffic as we approach the industrial heartland. huge trucks spewing out exhaust fumes, buses jammed with workers, motorbikes carrying ludicrous loads. The infrastructure is increasingly unable to cope; roads are rutted, water sources poisoned, bridges collapsing; central state control and capitalism are uneasy bedfellows. What an environment!

But the Great Wall ... snaking out over the hilltops for as far the eye can see. It is everything that you imagined – and more. Some stretches are fully restored, to a standard Historic Scotland would be proud of. Approximately seven metres high and five metres wide, made of rammed earth, lime with glutinous



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rice, stone blocks and millions upon millions of bricks – this most remarkable of structures is topped by watchtowers every 400 metres or so of its astounding 6,400 kilometre length. During the Ming Dynasty in the 16th century one million soldiers manned the Great Wall to keep out the Mongol hordes. Today there is barely a soul in sight, Chinese, Mongolian or otherwise. Much of the Wall is a ruined rampart, crawling over the most precipitous peaks, slopes and ridges of rural China. Remote, unspoiled and largely unchanged for a hundred years, this is another side of this absorbing country.



Rural villages without running water, sewage systems or even mains electricity are scattered across a rugged but intensively cultivated landscape. Social structures and community bonds are strong. The old man in the village square will have enjoyed a similar lifestyle to that of his grandfather. But what lifestyle can the children expect – western-style prosperity as the economy booms or climatic catastrophe as energy use soars? Education, healthcare and democracy or over-population, pollution and social strife?

What a fascinating but unfathomable country – a country of factories and farmers, of extremes and contradictions. China brought us the most spectacular Olympic Games Opening Ceremony ever – but the star singer was miming. China launches astronauts into space – but pre-records the exchange with mission control. This country knows – and will accept – no bounds. As the Olympics move on to London – 2012 for the most populous, proud nation on Earth means the Year of The Dragon.

NH

Another Award for the *Courier*



The Annual Awards Ceremony for Community Newspapers took place in the Albert Halls, Stirling at the end of September and was very well attended by representatives of community newspapers from all areas of Stirling district.

Once again, your *Courier* was nominated in every category and this year received the award for Best Article (*Teenage Kicks Right Through the Night – Issue 9, November 2007*).

In addition, our very own *Peter Wilks* was the recipient of one of the awards made to senior volunteers for their commitment to their community newspapers (not because of their age!). In February 1996, Peter started production of the Killearn Community Courier (forerunner of the current Killearn *Courier*) and he has been involved ever since.

Dr Ken Thomson, Deputy Principal of Forth Valley College which sponsored of the best article award, said: “It takes a special commitment to produce quality newspapers at the standards expected time after time.” A big thank you is once again due to the *Courier* team for their efforts – keep up the good work!

FETCH AND FRAME

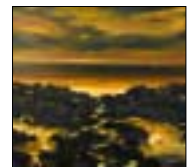
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Crunchy Gingerbread Men

The smell of gingerbread men baking in the oven is redolent of all things Christmas, and this quick and easy recipe makes about two dozen of the little chaps. For buttons and eyes, try using roughly crushed peppermint candies or snip bits of jelly diamonds. Sugar-coated chocolate chips make colourful decoration, too, and won't melt in the oven. Santa will love to find these on a plate next to the mince pie.

Ingredients:

12 oz plain flour
2 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
4 oz butter or margarine
6 oz Demerara sugar (plus added for dredging)
4T (2 oz) golden syrup
1 egg, beaten
Peppermint candies, crushed, or other edible Christmasy decorations for eyes and buttons.



Method:

Preheat oven to 190°C (fan ovens 180°C).
Sift the dry ingredients into a large bowl, and then rub in the butter.
Stir in the sugar, then beat in the syrup and the egg until it forms a dough.
Turn out onto a lightly floured board and knead gently until smooth.
Divide dough into two pieces. One at a time, roll out and cut out figures.
Place on greased baking sheet.
Decorate and then sprinkle thickly with Demerara sugar.
Bake for about 12-15 minutes, depending on cookie thickness. Cool on racks.

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Seasons Greetings to everyone in Killearn From the Loudons



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Killearn Glen Fungi Foray



Dead Moll's Fingers

Stirling Council Ranger Service led 20 brave souls through the very heavy showers to find out all about the weird and wonderful world of fungi to be found in Killearn Glen. The Glen was planted up into 'parks' in 1735 to improve the landscape. It is dominated by mature oak with occasional sycamore, birch, ash and some old beech, as well as stands of larch and

alder. Isolated Scots pine, Norway spruce and Douglas fir also occur along with Wych elm, yew and aspen, all of which provide a nice mix of woodland for a variety of fungi to grow in.

Mycologist Liz Holden identified approximately 40 species of fungi including Honey fungus, Angel's wings, Russulas, Dead Moll's fingers, Milk caps and a variety of Bonnets, including the Bleeding bonnet which exudes a red fluid when damaged.

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DISCOUNTED CLASSES	No	£2.00	FREE*	FREE*	FREE*

*FREE Classes are boxercise, circuits, spinning and legs, bums & tums.

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opening times

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Please note that we will be closed over the festive period — details will be posted on the notice board.

Class timetable

Sunday	<i>Kids (7-15yr) Gracie Jiu-Jitsu 10:00am - 11:00am</i> <i>Adults Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Rolling Class 11:00am -1:00pm</i> <i>Private lessons from 1:00pm - 4:00pm</i>
Monday	<i>Keiser pulse (30min spin + 15mm Abs) 9:15am - 10:00am</i> <i>Adult Gracie Jiu-Jitsu 6:30pm - 7:45pm</i> <i>Spinning (indoor cycling) 7:00pm-7:45pm</i> <i>Boxercise 8:00pm - 9:00pm</i>
Tuesday	<i>Boxercise [during term time] 9:30am - 10:30am</i> <i>Circuit 6:30pm-7:30pm</i> <i>Legs bums & tums 7:30pm-8:00pm</i>
Wednesday	<i>Sculptercise 9:15am - 10:15am</i> <i>Boxercise 8:00pm - 9:00pm</i>
Thursday	<i>Jiu-Jitsercise (ladies self-defence programme) 9:30am - 10:30am</i> <i>Private lessons In Street self defence or Gracie Jiu-Jitsu 10:30am - 6:00pm</i> <i>Kids (7-15 yr) Gracie JiuJitsu 6:00pm -7:00pm</i> <i>Spinning (indoor cycling) 7:00pm-7:45pm</i> <i>Ladies, Gracie Jiu-Jitsu 7:00pm-8:00pm</i> <i>Gracie Jiu-Jitsu 8:00pm • 9:30pm</i>
Friday	<i>Boxercise (during term time) 1:00pm • 2.00pm</i>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION A joining fee of £100.00 will be applicable to all membership types - this fee will include 4 introductory personal training sessions and a training diary. Classes for non members will be charged at £4.00, members discount for classes at £2.00 will be offered on production of membership card. Booking of the classes is advised as places are allocated on a first come first served basis - please pay before your class starts. We welcome block bookings which must be paid in advance, pay for 5 classes and get 1 free. Minimum membership for all grades, apart from PAY-AS-YOU-GO, is 6 months.

To arrange a free consultation or book classes/personal training please phone Kerr on 01360 440900 or 07766 355 378

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THE QUINTESSENTIAL VILLAGE by Joyce Begg

For those of us who enjoy village life, questions do occasionally arise as to what constitutes the perfect village, and how close ours is to the ideal. A quick look round the neighbouring villages shows that we all have the basics. We all have a school, a church and at least one pub, so that's education, spiritual nourishment and liquid refreshment catered for. We are also well served with health centres, for physical wellbeing. A village should have at least one general store, and although it might not be absolutely necessary to have a shoe shop and ladies' clothes emporium such as Drymen has, it's handy not to have to trail to town for a smart new blouse. On the other hand, they could probably do with a chemist. We can't buy blouses in Killearn, but we can get evening primrose oil. It's all swings and roundabouts.

Talking of swings, we have a handsome little park, and though we don't have a bowling green, we are hanging on to our tennis courts. Our football players can be seen disporting themselves, even if they do have to carry their goalposts about with them. The jury is still out



Upper Killearn from the Air

To obtain a copy of this photograph, please see page 12

on the success of the multi-court, but at least it's there. Folk can play on it if they want .

You do need transport to get to any of the surrounding libraries, but things are better than they used to be, at least on Thursdays, with the advent of the library van. Nelson has a fine selection

of books, considering the size of the container, and keeps changing them about so that you don't get dissatisfied. Like Blanefield and Drymen, we have our own art gallery – not an essential perhaps, but certainly a pleasure. More spiritual refreshment, and a chance to buy your very own art work.

Of all the villages, it's probably Balfron that has the most amenities. Where else can you get your eyes, feet and teeth fixed, all within a hundred yards? They've got a butcher, a baker, and a good selection of mixed housing. But there's always a drawback, isn't there. The trouble with Balfron is that if you happen to live near the bowling green, you need a funicular railway to get to the bank.

So do we live in the ideal village? We're probably as near as we can get. We don't have a petrol station and the bank has shrunk to Thursdays, but we can get our car fixed at the garage, and there are two 'holes in the wall', so we're not totally stuck. We have two general stores, with spaces where you can chat. We have two hairdressers, a selection of specialist shops, and good places to eat and drink. If you're desperate to get away from this rural paradise, there's one bus an hour. But most of us like staying around. It's a lovely place just to be. All the villages are attractive, of course, but naturally we think ours is the prettiest. We might even be right.

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Killearn Guild

The new session of the Killearn Guild started with our Harvest Supper evening which was well attended and enjoyed by all. We meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in Killearn Church Hall through to March 2009. Our programme covers a wide range of topics such as The History of the King's Theatre, The Story of Quarriers, a Talk on School Days and a musical evening with The Gargunock Songsters.

We hope that the topics will encourage local villagers to join us for a pleasant sociable evening.

The Guild Sale of Work which takes place on the last Saturday in November is the ideal place to stock up with Christmas gifts for friends and family. From unwanted treasures to articles newly-made by Guild members, you are sure to find plenty to tempt you. You will find home baking, jams and other preserves, indoor plants, Christmas decorations and cards, hand-knits, books, the list just goes on and on.



So get down to Killearn Church Hall at 2.00 pm on 29 November, enjoy a cream tea after your shopping spree, and don't forget to bring the children to raid Old Mother Hubbard's cupboard and Pirate Pete's treasure chest.

For more information please contact Moyra Bogie on 550566.



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Rotary Golf Competition

195 participants took part in Strathendrick Rotary Club's 12th Golf Am-Am held at the Balfron Golf Society's Shian Course on Saturday 9 August and despite the weather their enthusiasm wasn't dampened.

The competition, played in teams of three, was won by Adam Urquhart, Crawford Logan and John Penman with a Stableford score of 49 points which was a remarkable performance given the weather conditions. The picture shows the prizewinners receiving their medals from Jean Anderson, wife of Rotary President, John Anderson.



In excess of £10,000 was raised on the day, the main recipients being Macmillan Cancer Care, Strathcarron Hospice and Crossroads West Stirlingshire, with the remainder going to Rotary-supported charities. Over the years that the Am-Am has been running over £65,000 has been raised for charity.

Next year's AM AM will take place on the Saturday 8 August 2009 and if you wish to take part, please contact any member of the Rotary Club.

Roger Short, AM AM Convenor

Rugby Roundup

Despite high hopes going into the new season Strathendrick 1st XV have suffered an extraordinary series of injuries to key players with the result that their West Division 1 campaign has got off to a difficult start – battling to salvage consolation points. However the Club is confident that when the squad is fit – and the harvest is in – they will climb to mid-table safety.

The Under 17s, with a marginal shortage of eligible players at that age group, have entered into an innovative and enterprising collaboration with Cambuslang Rugby Club – joining up for match days to play as StrathCambus. This experiment is proving successful for both clubs and gives the young players the opportunity to enjoy a good standard of games at the right level.

Balfron High School has made an excellent start to its season beating Lenzie Academy in the Bell Lawrie Scottish Schools Cup.

The Midis (S1/2) have the makings of a really useful squad and the Minis (P3 – P7) are enjoying a busy programme of activities – training, playing tournaments and visiting Murrayfield for the Autumn Internationals. It was a proud moment for the Club when a young Killearn player, Ross Stevenson represented Strathendrick as a Scotland mascot in the game against the mighty All Blacks.

For more information on Strathendrick Rugby Club visit: www.clubwebsite.co.uk/strathendrickrfc

The action photograph shows James McLaughlan, from Balfron who plays for Strathendrick 1st XV and Balfron High 1st XV and is also part of the Glasgow District U18 squad



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Strathendrick Riding Club

Strathendrick Riding Club, one of over 400 British Riding Clubs (BRC), is our local club for riders with a diverse range of abilities and equestrian interests, from hacking to eventing and dressage. Jittery jumpers and dressage divas all have the opportunity to improve and have fun. Non-riders can also get involved by helping out at shows as stewards, etc.

Membership is available to any rider from 16-100 years and provides an opportunity to attend a variety of subsidised training and 'schooling' days, talks and shows, culminating with the end-of-season show at Drymen Showfield.

For the more competitive rider BRC offers a wide range of Area Qualifiers and Championships, and members are covered by Third Party Insurance cover

while competing at affiliated BRC events.

Strathendrick RC welcomes new members, so please get in touch and become involved with the growing local equestrian scene.

For further information, contact details and membership applications visit our website at www.strathendrickrc.co.uk

The Village Hall Committee are most grateful to Glenda Asquith and Heather Wright for repainting the Committee Room of the Village Hall – in their own time and at their own expense. The result: a brighter and fresher room, ready in time for the Flower Show, and appreciated by all those using the hall. *Mike Pell*



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Killearn Football Club Season 2008 Report

After three very successful seasons, the village team ended the 2008 season with no silverware to show for their efforts, despite featuring in the final stages of most of the Forth & Endrick competitions.

Early in the season Blanefield Thistle put an end to the team's undefeated run of 63 league games and this was followed shortly after with the first cup final defeat for a long time when Gartocharn recorded a 3-1 victory in the Margaret White trophy.

During the second half of the season, due to work and family commitments and some extended holidays, team managers Hugh Russell and Ian Cameron at times found it difficult to field a team, which led to them both having to look out their boots to make up the numbers for some games. Despite the absence of key players, the team finished runner-up in the Leslie league, reached the semi-final of the Telfer Cup and narrowly lost the Cameron Cup final after extra time, again to Blanefield Thistle.

The committee, who are searching for alternative changing facilities, would like to thank everyone who supported the club during the past season.

Local Curling Hope

Lauren Gray (16) from Balfron, a member of Stirling's Young Curlers, has been selected to represent Great Britain in international competitions. She fought off tough competition for the honour to represent Great Britain and challenge for curling medals.

Lauren, who had a very successful year last season winning the Under 17s Scottish tour and finishing runner-up in the Scottish Juniors Championships, will be part of the five-strong squad who will take part in the European Youth Olympic Festival in Poland from 14-21 February 2009. 2002 Olympic gold medallist curler Debbie Knox has been selected as coach for the girl's team.

Chris Hildrey, Chairman of British Curling said: "The European Youth Olympic Festival provides a fantastic opportunity for our best young curling athletes in Britain to gain invaluable experience at a multi-sport event. The support and training the squad will have in advance of the competition will be world class and I hope they all get the most out of the programme while having an enjoyable time."

Four years ago, Stirling Young Curlers' Lauren Johnston helped Great Britain to come home with a bronze medal in the competition while Gordon MacDougall won gold in Chamonix, France.

Get Reel Family Sessions and Mixed Instrument Group

Get Reel would like to invite anyone who plays a musical instrument to come along and join us in our Family Sessions and Mixed Instrument Group which take place once a month on a Sunday afternoon in Killearn Village Hall. The Family sessions are from 3.15-4.15pm and take the form of a circle session where everyone gets the chance to start a tune at their own pace and everyone else can join in, keep the same time and learn the tune by repetition. There will then be a break for refreshments – for

a small donation. The Mixed Instrument group meets from 4.45-5.45pm and is for more able players. We hope people will bring along tunes or set ideas to build up a repertoire. Get Reel adult classes already have a repertoire that will be passed on and practised. For both of these the emphasis will be on learning by ear, however music will be available! No unaccompanied children please. For more information call 01360 550770 or look up our blog site getreel-uk.blogspot.com

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What is Forth Valley Advocacy?

We provide an independent advocacy service for people living the Forth Valley Area. We provide advocacy for older people and people with mental health issues.

Who needs me?

Older people in NHS continuing care and other Community settings, i.e. Care Homes. They may not have regular contact with family or friends or may need extra support. By volunteering, you can help them to improve their quality of life.

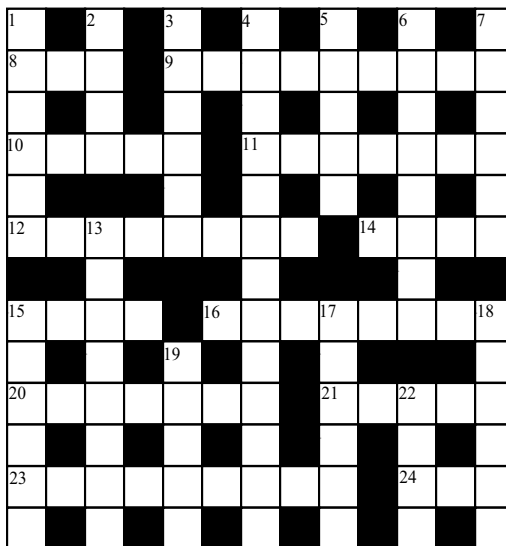
What would I need to do?

Spend an hour a week with your older person on a regular basis, ensuring that their views and opinions are listened to. We provide training, support and advice. Travel expenses will be paid and it doesn't affect your benefits.

To find out more, please contact:

Lynn Gibson, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Forth Valley Advocacy,
1 The Bungalows, Larbert, FK5 4SZ.
Telephone: (01324) 557070
Email: lynnqibson@nhs.net

Solve the crossword, fill in your name and address, and place it in the box in Spar. The first correct entry to the crossword drawn out of the box after the closing date will win a **Family Ticket to Theatre Royal or The King's Theatre, Glasgow**, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days.



ACROSS

- 8, 3d. Time an hour after midnight. (3,1'5)
- 9. Season starts with chicken then stir up mash. (9)
- 9,12. Santa fills this. (9,5)
- 9,14. A seasonal wag delivered by Pat. (9,4)
- 9,20. Gift seen by Scrooge. (9,7)
- 9,23. A wish from the Courier Team. (9,9)
- 9,7d. This place came to attention with a bang (9,6)
- 9,22d Spruce up the room (9,4)
- 10. Take a big look in this dwelling. (5)
- 11. Raced the French around the volcano. (7)
- 15. Strong brew. (4)
- 16. Excel verbally if you take soup. (8)
- 21. Profanity I loath so much. (4)
- 24. This organ is unknown between the same two points (3)

DOWN

- 7. See 9ac.
- 13. Doom tree to be a distance measurer. (8)
- 15. Attack argument by a demon waving gun (6)
- 17. Partner has odds on flower. (6)
- 18. Result of standing under mistletoe? (6)
- 19. Disheartened toy follows plane to the pier (5)
- 22. See 9ac
- 1. Birds often found on 9,14. (5)
- 2. Jar that rings. (4)
- 3. See 8ac.
- 4. Painting swindle by eastern ruler has time to get advice about it from this person (3,10)
- 5. Tree contains article of religion. (5)
- 6. Current game - rape. (9)

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Cabaret 30 Mar - 4 Apr

Kings Theatre

Boogie Nights 18 - 22 Nov
Cinderella 28 Nov - 12 Dec
Fame 19 - 24 Jan
Buddy 2 - 7 Feb
Sunshine on Leith 10 - 21 Feb
Coppelia 23 - 24 Feb
Swan Lake 25 - 26 Feb
The Nutcracker 27 - 28 Feb
The Witches of Eastwick 20 Apr - 9 May

For information: <http://www.theambassadors.com>

Solution to the last Crossword Across 5 Carrochan; 8 Loch; 9 National; 10 and the; 11 Hassle; 13 esprit; 15 Lomond; 16 bagpiper; 18 apex; 19 Trossachs. Down 1 catheter; 2 fringe; 3 scotch; 4 sago; 6 roundsman; 7 tailender; 12 sympathy; 14 typist; 15 lariat; 17 park.

Name Phone No. *Congratulations to the winner of our last Crossword : Gordon Cooper, Killearn*
 Address

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Name Age.....
 Address Phone No.

Congratulations to the winner of the £10 Spar voucher in our last competition: Kim Denton, aged 6

Closing Date for both competitions – 20 December 2008. Please place your entries in the box in Spar.

Nature Notes – Migration

There is something timeless about the rhythm of the seasons and even if it is sometimes tempting to envy those who live somewhere that is warm, sunny and temperate all year round, I think I would miss our variety. But while humans can live in one place throughout the year, many birds, animals and insects undertake some amazing journeys in order to survive. This fact came to mind in September as I watched the swallows getting ready to fly to Africa, and again in October with the very evocative sound of geese coming in from the north. Viking invaders from Scandinavia in the guise of fieldfares and redwings will also arrive to take advantage of our berries. Another sign of autumn, apart from leaf fall, is the robin in the vegetable patch with its distinctive little rattle. Come February, St Valentine's Day is the



Geese over Killlearn

mythical start, our jackdaw families start collecting twigs for their nests. Rooks also become active in their rookeries, with much noise. Bulbs appear, a welcome sign of spring, days lengthen, frog spawn appears in the pond and tortoiseshell butterflies can be seen on sunny days. But the real season change for me comes when the skeins of geese fly north again sometime in March, followed by the reappearance of summer migrants, culminating in swallows swooping round the garden and the unmistakable sound of the cuckoo in the woods close by, which according to my records has been in early May for the last few years. Summer – some with better weather than others – brings lushness, colour and warmth. Then we come full circle with harvest, the departure of the swallows

and the geese inward bound. One does wonder, however, how much this natural pattern will change as a result of global warming. Incidentally for anyone interested in recording the first sightings of birds, flowers and insects, as well as their departure, there is a UK Phenology network organised by the *Woodland Trust*, which is building a comprehensive database of these happenings.

You can join in on their website (www.naturescalendar.org.uk), or take part in surveys organised by radio or television programmes such as the *Big Garden Bird Watch* done in co-operation with the RSPB. You can also follow the migration of radio-tagged ospreys on the website of the *Highland Foundation for Wildlife* (www.roydennis.org). *JRW*



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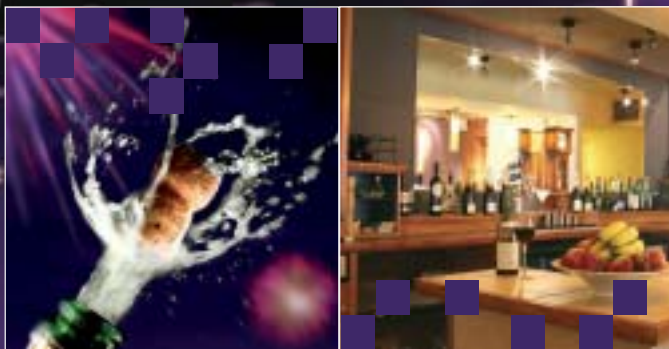
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