



ISSUE 48

WINTER 2020

£1



Noticeboard

Some of the items below may depend on Covid-19 restrictions in force at the time.
Please check that the event is going ahead.

- 18 Nov **Killearn Community Council** meeting over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 19 Nov **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Zoom lecture by Susan-Kay Williams, 'With just a Needle and Thread from the Royal School of Needlework'. 10.50am for 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 5 Dec **Colourful Killearn** putting up the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Helpers welcome.
- 16 Dec **Killearn Community Council** meeting over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 17 Dec **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Zoom lecture by Caroline Holmes, 'Messenger or Missile? Angels dark tidings doom gloom or perdition'. 10.50am for 11am.
- 25–26 Dec **Killearn Health Centre** closed.
- 1–4 Jan **Killearn Health Centre** closed.
- 9 Jan **Colourful Killearn** dismantling the Christmas tree. Killearn Kirk, 10am. Helpers welcome.
- 19 Jan **Embroiderers' Guild** all-day workshop. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Visitors and new members welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day. Bring own mugs and utensils for coffee/tea or lunch.
- 20 Jan **Killearn Community Council** meeting over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 21 Jan **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Tim Allan, 'Sinan and the Glories of Ottoman Architecture'. 10.50am for 11am. This is not available online, so liable to change.
- 28 Jan **Drymen & District Local History Society** illustrated talk by Alan McBride, Country Park Ranger at Mugdock, 'The Elephant, the Marquis and the Castle'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. Check if meeting is running at www.drymen-history.org.uk.

- 16 Feb **Embroiderers' Guild** corners workshops. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 1.30pm by Rebecca Quinton, 'Embroideries in the Burrell Collection'. Visitors and new members welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day. Bring own mugs and utensils for coffee/tea or lunch.
- 17 Feb **Killearn Community Council** meeting over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 18 Feb **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Zoom lecture by John Ericson, 'The Wind in the Willows'. 10.50am for 11am.
- 5 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society Whist Drive**. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry £2 at the door including refreshments. Raffle.
- 16 Mar **Embroiderers' Guild** corners workshops. Kirk Hall, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk at 1.30pm by students of the Centre for Textile Conservation about their work. Visitors and new members welcome. £3 half day; £4 full day. Bring own mugs and utensils for coffee/tea or lunch.
- 17 Mar **Killearn Community Council** meeting over Zoom. Contact Fiona (fiona.rennie@btinternet.com; 07799 625993).
- 18 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** Zoom lecture by Bertie Pearce, 'Punch and Judy'. 10.50am for 11am.
- 23 Mar **Colourful Killearn** spring meeting to decide summer planting schemes. Village Hall committee room, 8pm. All welcome.
- 25 Mar **Killearn Golden Years' Club** Annual Dinner. Kirk Hall, 6.30pm for 7pm.

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

They regret that it is very unlikely they will stage a Christmas concert this year, and the spring concert is also uncertain.

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

Killearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

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. Plans for remainder of 2020 and 2021 TBC.

Balfron Gymnastics Club Mondays, 4pm–8pm & Saturdays, 9am–5pm, Main Hall for the short term. Contact Anna (balfrogymnastics@mail.com).

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). Restarting in 2021, details TBC.

Yoga class Tuesdays, 10.30am and Thursdays, 7pm, Garden Room. Contact Craig Buchanan (craig@insideryoga.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. Potentially restarting in 2021, details TBC (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). Potentially restarting later in 2020, details TBC.

Yoga class Wednesdays, 9.30am–10.30am. Suitable for all. Contact Sarah Fleming (sarahfleming99@yahoo.com).

Killearn Brownies Wednesdays, 6.15pm–7.15pm. Main Hall in the short term. Contact Natalie Johnstone (1stkillearnbrownies@gmail.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).

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). Potentially restarting later in 2020, details TBC.

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). Potentially restarting later in 2020, details TBC.

Editorial

Who would have thought that after all this time we would still be living with Covid-19? It has been with us now for some nine months, and we have all been affected by it one way or another.

In the last issue, we ran an article showing how the community responded – residents setting up shopping services, keeping an eye on elderly neighbours, businesses establishing food delivery services – generally rising to the occasion. These reactions are still ongoing and, indeed, being expanded. For example, keep an eye out for Killearn's Advent Windows Trail which starts on 1 December (page 4) which will make the village a wee bit brighter.

In this issue, we have a couple of pages of brief personal comments from residents, local businesses and organisations expressing what living with the virus and all its rules, restrictions and social distancing has meant to them.

Lots of time was spent catching up on tasks left on back burners, rooms got decorated, houses got painted and gardens tackled vigorously. Some people discovered the joy of reading, sitting outside, or walking while enjoying the wonders of nature and appreciating our beautiful surroundings. We became thankful for social media, which allowed us to stay in touch with family and friends.

We have also had reports on how difficult it can be to keep track of the days, since they are so similar. To this end, we are giving you something to keep your mind active by expanding our puzzle section, which can be found on pages 40 to 42 – enjoy.

Once again, the *Courier* team have been busy putting this issue together while abiding by the recommendations and restrictive practices they have been obliged to follow, so well done them. Our deliverers went about their 'duties' as they always do, and our advertisers are still with us, so many thanks to them all.

Christmas, at the time of writing, is a mere nine weeks away. Here's hoping that the virus has been dampened down by then, with a vaccine on the horizon, so we can get into the spirit of the season and enjoy our usual Christmas festivities. From all at the *Courier*, we sincerely hope this happens for you, and we wish you and yours a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy (virus free) 2021.

Ian

Cover Image

The cover photo of Ben Lomond, looking over a field from Balfron Road, was taken by Kay Roxby and remains her copyright. Our thanks to Kay for permission to use her image.

Glad Tidings of Great Joy!

Killearn's Advent Windows Trail is going ahead! Prepare for a feast of colour and light for the whole of December.

Just like an advent calendar, a beautifully decorated window will 'open' every evening and stay illuminated for the whole Christmas period.

The first window will be opening at Our Little Outdoor Classroom at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 1 December and the last on 24 December at the Village Hall. Some days – for a special treat – there may even be two windows for you to visit!

Look out for our map on social media and on local noticeboards which will show the locations of subsequent windows and allow you to share the excitement as each dazzling display is revealed.



Porteous – Andrews



Image © Ross Lennox

Lisa Porteous and James Andrews were married on Friday, 16 October at the Lake Hotel, Lake of Menteith. James, who grew up in Killearn, has qualified as an electrical and electronic engineer. Lisa, also a Balfron High School graduate, is an additional needs support worker.

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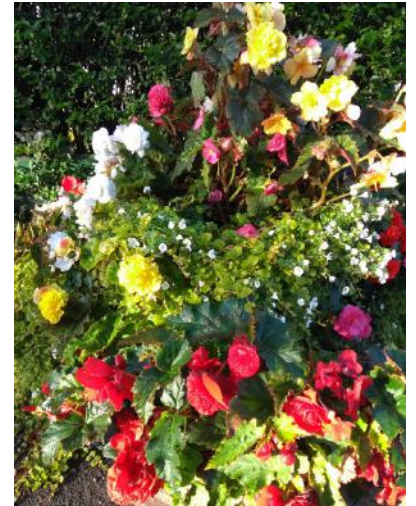
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Blooming Killearn!

Since unleashing her virus, it's almost as if Mother Nature has been offering some small compensation for the medical, social and economic ravages she has wrought. Our village has been treated to the most spectacular floral displays this summer – begonias have taken star billing, but the supporting cast of bacopas, creeping jenny and lobelia have ably boosted the entire performance!

Sadly, as we head towards the end of September, the flowers have started to fade and the first frosts will soon blacken the foliage. The tender plants will be lifted, stored where possible for re-use next year, and the barrels and troughs prepared to receive the replacement daffodil bulbs, carrying the promise of a bright and cheerful spring (horticulturally, at least). We may not yet have a cure or a vaccine for Covid-19, but hopefully Colourful Killearn can provide an emotional and sensory antidote!

Elsewhere, our physical meetings and work parties have predictably been cancelled, with discussion and decisions taking place remotely and electronically. Actual ground work has been carried out by our volunteers



in solitude, though some of the bigger jobs have had to go by the board for now. However we will, as usual, be raising the village Christmas tree early in December at the Kirk. This may well prove to be a ticklish exercise in social distancing...

Our gratitude is extended to everyone, individuals and organisations, who have donated in one way or another towards the work that Colourful Killearn carries out around the village. Being entirely funded by such contributions, we couldn't do it without you – so thank you all!

MIKE GRAY
(mike@kfc.co.uk; 550962)



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News in brief

Alas, there will be no FADS panto this year (boooo), but there is the journey of a lifetime (hurrah!) on Roaches Coaches (see advert opposite). Find the podcast by visiting www.fintrydrama.org.uk or search for it on Spotify (www.anchor.fm/roaches-coaches). After all, what would the holidays be without FADS?

Planning for 89 homes and some commercial premises at the Killearn Hospital site has been approved by Stirling Council. Planning in principle has also been granted for CALA to develop a care home and business units, which could follow at a later stage. Permission has also been given by the Council for development at the Devil's Pulpit, despite planning officers recommending refusal. A recording of the Special Meeting of the Council is available to view on the Stirling Council YouTube page. The £2.7 million project will include a car park, visitor centre and café, toilets and a shop, and bridges will be built to aid access. No start date has been given.

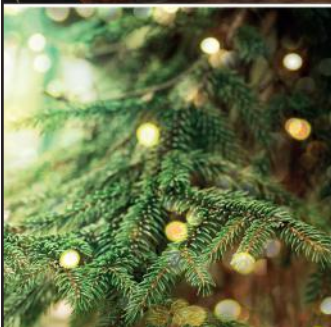
A very happy birthday and many happy returns to Bert Atkinson, who is celebrating his 90th birthday in November.

Mairi Macdonald met her £1,000 target for the sale of her book *Child of the Croft*. Money raised will go to The Brain Tumour Charity.

Balfron Active Places project has successfully secured funding of £300,000 to improve the 'cycling, walking and wheeling' network in five areas around the village including the Clachan, Printers Row, Buchanan Street North, Buchanan Street South and Station Road. Stirling Council secured funding from the Scottish Government, through Sustrans Scotland's Places for Everyone programme to part-fund the initiative.

Congratulations to Balfron Primary School Nursery which received a rating of Excellent from the Care Inspectorate following an unannounced inspection in March.

Construction work has begun to transform Stirling Council's Castleview Park and Ride site into a sustainable transport and renewable energy hub. The plan for the site has begun with the introduction of solar panels covering a 1,375m² area, which are expected to generate roughly 250,000kWh annually. It is anticipated that the 'solar canopies' will produce enough renewable electricity for onsite needs including the 32 new electric vehicle chargers: 20 dual slow chargers, 9 dual fast chargers and 3 dual rapid chargers.



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With a gift for all those on the nice list Santa will send you off through the Christmas Trees to receive your drive thru Edenmill Cafe Merry Meal from Santa's Little Helpers. Priced at Only £15 per child (meal, beverage and gift) book your slot online now to secure your 2020 Edenmill Santa Experience. www.edenmill.co.uk

Cut your own Christmas Tree and save 50%!

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Christmas Turkeys

Order your Christmas turkey from our Farm Shop this year. Locally sourced, free range Bronze turkeys from Gartmorn Farm. Complete the order with the festive trimmings from Jim, the Edenmill Butcher. Contact 01360 771707 (ext 2 for the Farm Shop), or reserve online at www.edenmill.co.uk

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Former Killearn Resident Ordained Deacon

In 2007, the Bouffler family left Killearn when Jonathan took up a post in Atlanta, Georgia. They returned to the UK in 2010 and settled in Essex.

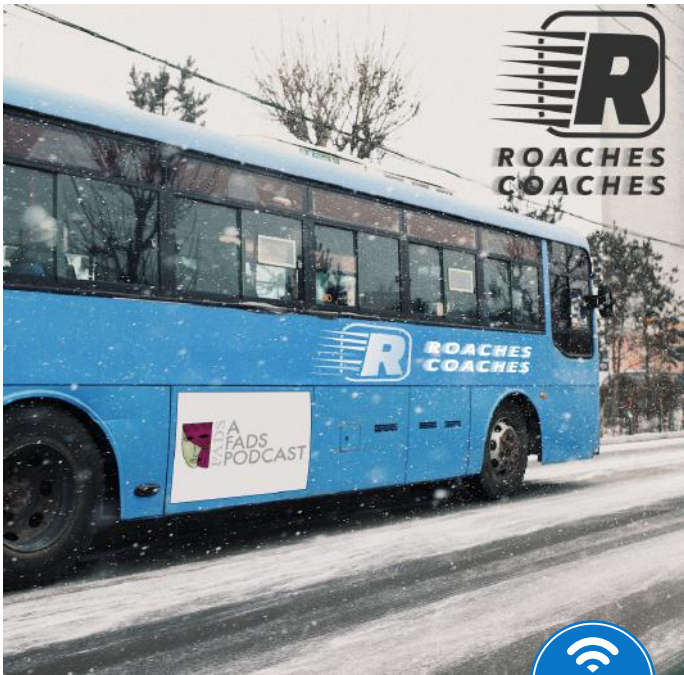
When in Killearn, mum Elsie, was an active Elder in the Kirk, but she returned to the Anglican Church, and in 2017 she began her studies to become an Anglican priest.

On 13 September, she was ordained as a deacon in Chelmsford Cathedral, a step to becoming a priest in one year's time.

The threat of the Covid-19 virus prevented me from accepting her kind invitation to be at the



cathedral, but fortunately this very moving service was streamed live for all to see. The photograph shows the Rev Elsie after her ordination. JOHN SMITH



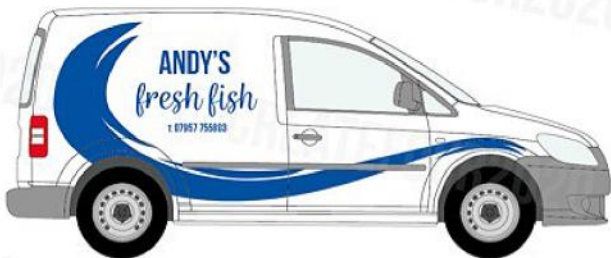
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Christmas Post in Aid of CHAS



Once again, our village Christmas Post service will be supporting Children's Hospices Across Scotland, and we very much hope that everyone will give generously.

The familiar post boxes and collection tins will be in place in the Co-op, Pharmacy and the Kirk from Saturday, 28 November. The final uplift will take place on Saturday, 19 December at 5pm from the Co-op and Pharmacy, and on Sunday, 20 December from the Kirk. Post will be delivered by our merry band of volunteers during the following week.

Deliveries will be made within the village's 30mph signs, including all of Lampson Road and Drumbeg Loan.

Please remember to put the full name and address on the envelope (but no postcodes are required). Some of you set our merry delivery elves some puzzlers last year!

All proceeds will be donated to Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS).

Should anyone require further information, please contact Glenda (07788 373142). Thank you.

Bridge by Zorro

For information, at the time of writing in late September, the Killearn Bridge Club does not plan to resume face-to-face bridge for the immediate future. However, we are continuing to keep members informed and hope that plans for resuming will be under consideration by the time you read this.

Meanwhile, this illustration of the ineffectiveness of high-card points in certain situations (and in this case when you perhaps shouldn't double) will hopefully keep you entertained during these dark weeks. It is the classic Duke of Cumberland hand. What might you have done holding East's cards?

	♠ 9 8 5 2 ♥ 10 4 3 2 ♦ — ♣ 6 5 4 3 2 North	
♠ 10 7 6 4 3 ♥ J 9 8 7 6 5 ♦ J 10 ♣ — West		♠ AKQJ ♥ AKQ ♦ AKQ ♣ KJ9 East
	South ♠ — ♥ — ♦ 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ AQ 10 8 7	

Some of you may not have heard the story attached to the famous deal shown above. This is described for your amusement on page 39.

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Fireworks 2020 and beyond

The 2019 event took place as normal after agreement was reached with the Police and Licensing Authority regarding traffic management, parking and the issue of antisocial behaviour. It was accepted that the control of behaviour off site was a police responsibility, and extra officers were made available on the evening of the display. By providing signing to suitable parking off the main road, the problems of traffic management were largely eliminated. The Council agreed to a temporary closure of Station Road, but the police did not need to use this power.

The weather was particularly inclement at the time of the display which understandably reduced the numbers attending. As a consequence, the donations received were approximately £1,000 less than the previous year.

We were, however, able to make charitable payments to Balfron Scouts, Blanefield Cubs and Strathendrick Football Club who distributed our promotional brochure. Thanks are due to the advertisers who support this publication which generates a significant surplus, and this helps to make the event possible. We were also able to support Auchengillan Adventure Centre and Trossachs Search and Rescue, and have made payments towards the permanent Christmas lights display at the Village Hall as well as the recently launched electric bike loan facility in the village.



As always, thanks are due to all the volunteers without whose help the display would not be possible.

It is with regret that we have decided that it will not be possible to hold the Fireworks Display this year. The forward planning and licensing requirements dictated that this decision was required some time ahead of November.

However, we look forward to normal life returning by the end of 2021, and have provisionally booked the fireworks contractor in anticipation of this happening.

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The Weather Channel

I concluded in the previous edition of the *Courier* that ‘I keep reporting on records being broken across the UK.’ This year saw national records being broken once again and also, more seriously, in many other parts of the world.

Readers will remember fondly that the early months of the coronavirus pandemic saw the sunniest spring in living memory. It had record hours of sunshine – only three previous summers have exceeded the sunshine hours recorded in spring 2020 since records began in 1929. The fine spring weather in Killearn was followed by a rather wet June, with over 100mm of rain recorded.

Wildfires in Australia, not an unusual event, were particularly intense. Nearly 4,000 homes were destroyed and 10,000 buildings very badly damaged. Roughly 25.5 million acres burned (another record) before rains contained them.

Dozens of wildfires burned their way through large areas of the United States west coast, killing over 30 people and forcing tens of thousands to flee their homes. The smoke from these wildfires spread across the US, the Atlantic Ocean and was seen in Northern Europe.

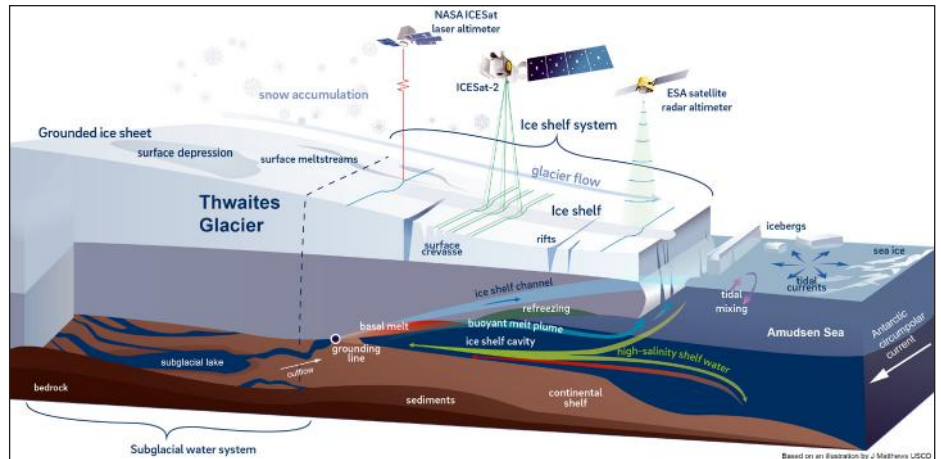
Scientists claim that an increase in the frequency and intensity of these fires is linked to climate change.

Climate scientists have perhaps

been most alarmed by a report from Russia’s state weather authority that the remote town of Verkhoyansk in north-eastern Siberia registered an early summer temperature of 38°C (100.4°F).

At the opposite end of the planet in Antarctica, vast areas of ice appear to be unstable and are threatening to

The diagram shows the complex interplay of these currents and how satellites are used to monitor the changes. However, to really understand what’s happening with Thwaites, scientists also need to send instruments into the water below it, and that means drilling a hole through 2,000 feet of ice.



break away from the continent. The Thwaites Glacier in west Antarctica, about the size of the UK, is melting at an alarming rate. Ice draining from the glacier into the Amundsen Sea already accounts for about 4 per cent of global sea-level rise. This rapid ice melt is caused by changing winds and currents which carry warm water beneath Thwaites Glacier, accelerating ice melt on its underside. As the glacier loses its grip on the sea floor, the grounding line shifts back, hastening retreat.

Scientists are working hard to determine what climate change in this area of the planet and the resulting Thwaites Glacier melt could mean for rising sea levels in coastal cities around the world.

Reference: Emma Reynolds: *Antarctica’s Colossal Thwaites Glacier is melting fast – and scientists may have discovered why* (<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/09/09/weather/thwaites-glacier-antarctica-scli-intl/index.html>).

TOM RENFREW

Summary January to September 2020 for Killearn									
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Highest Temp	12	10.1	12.2	21.3	27.5	27.0	26.2	27.5	20.4
Lowest Temp	-2.3	-2.6	-2.5	-0.2	-0.2	5.3	7.5	4.6	-0.6
Mean Temp	5.5	3.8	5.1	8.4	11.2	14.0	13.1	14.6	11.5
Days Below Freezing	4	5	5	1	1	0	0	0	1
Highest Wind Gust	37	48	39	40	43	30	24	26	25
Monthly Rain	150.8	270	98.8	13.8	29.9	100.6	114.4	115.8	88
Most Rain in 24 hrs	33.4	40	12.4	4.8	7.0	16.0	23.8	43	21.2
Days without Rain	5	2	13	21	15	12	9	11	11
Cumulative Rainfall	150.8	420.8	519.6	533.4	563.3	663.9	778.3	894.1	982.1

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

Killlearn Cottagers' Horticultural Show 2020

Despite all the disruption of 2020, the Show carried on, made possible by the enormous effort of Paul Searle, who developed the new website and managed all the entries and social media, supported by the committee.

Although the categories had to be pared down, there was a great selection of skills across horticulture, crafts, photography, art and home crafts, and the photographs of the hidden gardens and vegetable gardens, in particular, were very inspiring.

Two-thirds of the entrants live in Killlearn, but there were entries from as far afield as Aberdeen, Inverness and England. Nine out of ten entries were from adults, with 31 entries from 6–18-year-olds. Only one person aged under 18 won an adult category, namely Becca Searle from Killlearn, who won Class E2 with a rainbow cake (see photo above right).

As always, the quality of entries was very high and several of the judges commented on this. We hope that this new format has inspired some new participants and that we will welcome them again next year for our 155th Show – hopefully back in the halls.

The winning entries are all featured on the KCHS website (www.killlearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk) along with each of the 354 entry photos. If you have not had a chance to visit the site yet, do take the opportunity to feast your eyes on the hard work of all our talented entrants.

HEATHER WRIGHT

Images from top:

Art: A Painting, Winner: Glenda Asquith, Killlearn. "Corpach and Ben Nevis"

Craftwork: Any Embroidered Article or Picture, Winner: Heather Wright, Killlearn. "After the walk, cross-stitch"

Baking: A Rainbow Cake, Winner: Becca Searle, 15, Killlearn. Cake for CHAS' 15th birthday (Children's Hospices Across Scotland)

Cut Flowers: One Vase Roses, Winner: GW Farquharson, Balfron

Cut Flowers: One Vase Herbaceous Flowers, Winner: Pat Monaghan and Neil Metcalfe, Killlearn



Maja's Book Club

During lockdown, along with many other people I spent a lot of my time reading. Therefore, I have decided to share with you some of my favourite books that I have read in 2020.

Born A Crime Trevor Noah

This book was amazing; I cannot compliment it enough. This was not only my favourite book of 2020, but perhaps even my favourite book of all time. *Born A Crime* is an autobiography, meaning that the author is reflecting on real events of his life. Trevor Noah shares his stories from growing up in South Africa, which are a mix of both laughter and terror. At some moments I was completely shocked and others I was laughing out loud. I would recommend it to anyone. I give this book a 10 out of 10.

Big Little Lies Lianne Moriarty

This was another great book; in fact, it was so good that there is now a *Big Little Lies* TV series (which I would also recommend). This book is about the parents at a primary school and their hidden lives. The story starts off with a bang as we discover there was a murder at a fundraiser for the school. Throughout the book you learn more and more about the characters' lives and your suspicions grow about who could have been murdered and who was the murderer. I would give this book a 9 out of 10.

This Is Going to Hurt Adam Kay

This is an inside story about what it is really like to work in the NHS. Adam Kay has published the diary entries that he wrote during his time as a junior doctor. He

reflects on his unbearable hours and low pay with humour and gratitude that he got the opportunity to help people. This book is relevant at the moment as the NHS has to work harder than ever to contain Covid-19 and protect the vulnerable. I would read it again. I also give this book a 9 out of 10.

Why I am No Longer Talking to White People About Race Reni Eddo-Lodge

This book is extremely relevant right now as police brutality and murder of innocent black people is coming to light. This is one of the only books about race that specifically talks about racism in the UK, which is really important because a lot of people are in denial that there is a problem with racism in this country. This book was very educational and taught me a lot. I strongly recommend this to everyone; we have a responsibility to know about racism in this country and do something to stop it. Although this is not at the top of the list, I would give this book a 10 out of 10 because it taught me a lot and I am sure it will teach you a lot as well.

My Brilliant Friend Elena Ferrante

You may not be going on a plane this year, but this book will take you on a journey to Naples where Lenu and Lila, her best friend, live. There are three other books in this series, but this first one takes you through the friends' childhood and teenage years. Lila has disappeared and taken everything in order to try and make herself be forgotten. Lenu, however, refuses to let that happen and she tells the stories of her friend's life in these books. MG

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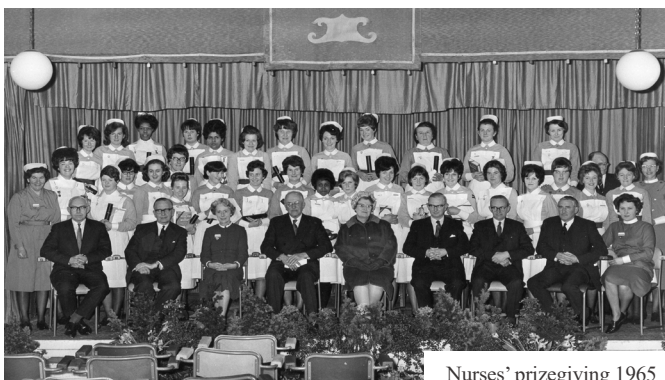
Memories of Killearn Hospital



We have all passed that slightly eerie series of dilapidated buildings on the A81 opposite Oakwood - the site of the once renowned Killearn Hospital, that closed nearly 50 years ago and which now lies empty and derelict. But why was the hospital there? What did it do? What was it like to work there? And why did it close?

As a youth member of the Killearn Heritage Trail group I was delighted to be asked to interview a number of local residents who had once worked there. This article is based on some of the memories they shared with me, together with other sources.

Killearn Hospital was built in 1940 as an Emergency Medical Service Hospital, after war broke out in 1939, in preparation for casualties from the Luftwaffe bombing raids during WW2. Killearn was in the perfect location: not too close to Glasgow or Clydebank, which were bombed multiple times, but close enough to provide the best care possible to victims of the raids. The hospital had 16 wards and provided 640 beds, four operating theatres, two x-ray units and a mortuary. After the war it became part of the NHS. Its capacity was reduced to 404 beds and it established top neurosurgical and orthopaedic departments, which many former staff take pride in to this day.



Nurses' prizegiving 1965

Fiona Smith (née McGregor) recalls the extraordinary time she spent there. She began working at the hospital aged 16 as a ward maid, where her duties ranged from cleaning to making toast for the patients. In 1967, aged 17, she went to work in the supplies department where she was responsible for ensuring that the staff had all the right items in the right place at the right time. She later even covered secretarial



Top: nurses in training
Above: Killearn Hospital Orthopaedic Training School badge
Right: Sister-tutors Riddle, Nicol and Alexander
Top left: derlict ward
Lower left: the pianola



duties in the famous neurosurgery department.

In the mid-60s, Nancy Sloan (née Davidson) worked as Medical Secretary in General Medicine and the Peripheral Nerve Injuries Unit. Her sister, Catherine Davidson-Carr also worked as short-hand typist/secretary, in the Geriatric Medicine and Orthopaedic Departments. She remembers that all doctors' notes and patients' records were carefully typed up and meticulously filed for safekeeping. There were no computers then!

Led by the legendary Sister-Tutor Jenny Riddle, Killearn was one of only four Orthopaedic Nurse Training Hospitals in Scotland. Wilma Graham (née Melville) and Karen Brown (née Johansson) were among nurses to complete their training there. Wilma has fond memories of Killearn – 'we were a close-knit unit' – and devoted her entire career to orthopaedics. The nurses all 'lived in' (under the strict eye of Matron!) either in the accommodation block on site or, if they were on night shift, in Dalnair House at Croftamie.

The doctors split duties with the Western or Gartnavel for orthopaedics, and the Southern for neurosurgery. The orthopaedics department was headed by Professor Roland Barnes and later by Professor David Hamblen. Notable members of staff in the neurosurgical unit included J. Sloan Robertson, Professor Bryan Jennett, Joseph Schorstein and R.D. Laing.



Surgeons of the Scottish Orthopaedic Club meeting at Killearn in 1959

As a young doctor, Jimmy Graham started at Killearn as a Senior House Officer in orthopaedics, before progressing to Registrar, then Senior Registrar and finally Consultant shortly before the Hospital closed in 1972. Jimmy recalls dealing with a whole range of elective operations and conditions such as arthritis (in the days before and after the development of artificial joints) and spinal injuries.

Children's conditions included spinal tuberculosis, septic arthritis and late effects of polio. Some children were in the hospital for some time, so teachers came to take classes in order that children didn't fall too far behind with their education.

The clean air of Killearn was good for long-term patients with spinal tuberculosis and many spent hours outside on the veranda – even in the depth of winter – wheeled out in their beds and wrapped up warmly against the cold! Hygiene and cleanliness were vital: 'Killearn Hospital was always cleaned to the nth degree!' says Fiona with pride



Many of the staff in non-clinical roles were from the local area: auxiliary nurses, orderlies, porters, cooks, secretaries, facility managers, drivers and so on.



Auxiliary staff

Fiona, Wilma, Catherine and others all recall the homely atmosphere of Killearn Hospital – the staff became 'like a family' and people loved working there. Fiona remembers the discos in the nurses' Recreation Room which were good fun. (The doctors' parties were legendary apparently – but the nurses were not allowed in!).

There were church services on a Sunday and at

Christmas, the workers at the hospital would put on a pantomime for the local community which was very popular amongst local children. Perhaps unsurprisingly, several people met their future life partners whilst



Hospital staff panto in Ward 6

working at the Hospital including Wilma (nurse) and Jimmy (surgeon) Graham; John (porter and dispensary) and Sadie (auxiliary nurse) McConnell; and Jean (canteen) and Tom (chef) Bendall.

Another local resident, who worked in the biochemistry laboratory from 1967, reminisced about the various hospital social events held around Killearn and across the country: from weekend trips to Blackpool to local tennis tournaments. He remembers, as a 17-year-old, he had never answered a telephone as he had never needed one. This all changed when he moved to Killearn. The village had three telephone boxes and a phone was also put into his house to ensure he could be contacted by the hospital in an emergency.



The dispensary

By 1972, the buildings at Killearn Hospital were increasingly difficult to maintain, the units were too small to be viable and the village was too far out of the city (the railway had ceased operating long before then). When the hospital closed it was a difficult time for the people who had worked there, the local economy and especially the patients that the hospital community had served so well. Many of the clinical staff were transferred to larger hospitals in Glasgow such as the Southern, the Western and Gartnavel, but they all took with them fond memories of their time at Killearn.

ROSIE WHYTE



My thanks to contributors including Fiona Smith, Jane Early, Jimmy and Wilma Graham, Catherine Davidson-Carr, Elizabeth Barron; additional interviews by All Killearn Archive and Nick Hawkins. Archive pictures are courtesy of All Killearn Archive and Rosemary Montgomerie; current photographs are by Kay Roxby, with permission of Graeme Sword.

If you have any interesting memories or good photos of Killearn Hospital, please contact the Killearn Heritage Trail on heritage@kfc.co.uk or Nick on 07860 700928.



A Reel Problem

Back in the '70s, some friends had invited us to a Highland Ball which was to take place in a Glasgow hotel a few days before Christmas. The guests of honour were the Duke and Duchess of Argyll. We had never been to such an event and we were looking forward to it.

I had managed to find a babysitter – not easy at Christmas when so many things were happening. So when, at very short notice, we were informed that there would be a 'dance practice' in Glasgow on the evening before the Ball, I was not very enthusiastic. I was working full-time. Another babysitter would be necessary. In any case I flattered myself that I was quite good at dancing! I could do a mean quickstep and waltz and I was quite familiar with the Eightsome Reel and the Gay Gordons. We decided to politely decline the practice invitation.

On the evening of the Ball we were shown to a table adjoining the dance floor. The room was ablaze with light and colour. All but two seats were occupied, but soon afterwards the Duke and Duchess arrived and sat at the head of the table. A delicious festive dinner was served. As we finished the coffee and liqueurs, I looked at the dance programme on the reverse of the dinner menu. I was rather taken aback to see the number of reels whose names I did not recognise. Luckily there were also some dances that I knew, but not too many.

The first dance was announced and the Duke danced with the Duchess and I danced with my Dearly Beloved. So far so good. However, it was beginning to dawn on

me that there was a problem. The Duke had just invited the lady on his left to dance the second dance, which was called 'The Duke of Atholl's Reel'.

I decided that I should find a peaceful spot where I could devise a plan for what remained of the evening. The Ladies in this hotel bore the sign 'Powder Room'. It was very posh. At the entrance sat a middle-aged lady. Beside her was a small table bearing a silver dish full of (mostly) silver coins. The lady nodded at me in greeting. She was knitting, like Madame Defarge.

'Enjoying the dancing?' she asked. I nodded weakly. 'That Duke is quite dishy,' she pronounced. I nodded again. She further confided that she thought such occasions were a scandalous waste of good money 'just to let rich folk bob about'.

On my return to the table I discovered that both the Duke and my Dearly Beloved were on their feet, reeling away as if their lives depended on it. I checked the programme and discovered that the next dance was a Gay Gordons. I could relax. In this way the evening progressed. The plan was that I should dance all the dances I knew with gay abandon and when one of the complicated reels was announced, I would withdraw to the Powder Room.

I was on perhaps my third visit to Madame Defarge and her knitting when she leaned forward and said conspiratorially, 'My older sister has the same complaint as you. She's been taking pills for years. It's a real problem.'

CB

Killlearn Health Centre News

Covid-19

As we are all aware it has been a trying time. We have adapted 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 time.

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.killlearnhealthcentre.com.

Vaccinations

We are running the flu clinics in the surgery. If you are aged over 65 or you are under 65 and in an at-risk group, appointments are available. For the first time, those aged 55–65 with other clinical risk factors are also eligible for the vaccination. Please check our website for details.

Shingles

If you are aged 70 to 79 as at 1 September 2020, you are eligible for a one-off shingles vaccination. Please check our website or contact reception.

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E-Bike Loan Project & Bike Trial

It hits your legs like a sugar rush. A touch on the '+' button shifts the assistance up to 'Turbo' and you are flying... Station Road, Drumtian Road, Branziert – no problem. Not even Drumbeg Loan (but beware the potholes) is an obstacle if you are on an E-bike, whatever your ability level!

Not quite convinced by words alone? Killearn E-bike Loan Project (KELP) has four bikes available for residents to borrow for a month at a time to try out before making the, admittedly significant, investment of buying one of your own. And you will want to, believe me!

But don't take my word for it – read Andrew's account below. Then contact me (mike@kcfc.co.uk; 550962) to get your name on the waiting list.

The Trial

As a keen cyclist living in Killearn, I regularly cycle for leisure and also to work at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital two or three times a week between March and the end of October. It was therefore with interest that I read about the Killearn E-bike loan project (KELP) in the *Courier* and the possibility of an extended trial. Having tried an E-bike for only a few minutes previously, the possibility of using the bike on my commute or other excursions was very appealing.

Thanks to Mike Gray and KELP, I was offered the chance to use a hybrid E-bike during September (able to be used on roads, cycle paths and forest tracks) which luckily coincided with a decent spell of weather.

My E-bike looked great, with a modern feel and some good design features. The geometry of the frame means it feels very relaxed and comfortable when riding. The main difference between this and a standard cycle is weight – it's a good 7–8kg heavier than my standard hybrid bike due to the motor and battery– but the cycling is noticeably easier. Like most E-bikes, there are different assistance level modes (four on the bike I used) and also a built-in cycle computer providing speed and distance information as well as the power (range) left in the battery. Assistance from the battery is provided up to approximately 16mph.

My cycle to work is a little hilly, with a general trend for climbing on the way back to Killearn. It was noticeable on the E-bike that the flat sections of the route (if pedalling above 16mph) were slightly harder than the hills (hardly needing any effort to climb), although the whole route was significantly less strenuous when compared to using a standard bike. The E-bike probably reduced the journey time by 15–20 minutes on the way back. Being much less demanding physically, the journey could be done more often: in the month I had the bike, I only used the car to get to work on four occasions.

I used the bike for a few excursions further afield. The longest ride involved a round trip from Killearn to Killin all on National Cycle Route 7, quiet roads, forest tracks and cycle paths. I used the most economical battery setting and stopped to top-up the battery for 45 minutes at



Above: Cycle Route 7, Queen Elizabeth Forest Park
Below: E-bike and human re-charging point, Strathyre

The Broch Café in Strathyre, one of the new fast E-bike charging points set up in the National Park, while also refuelling myself. I cycled 94 miles that day, the battery (with one top-up) lasted the whole way.

Although I felt I had been cycling, I didn't feel like I had cycled 94 sometimes hilly miles. Other rides included cycling to Balloch and also to Rowardennan for a walk up Ben Lomond (but not with the bike).

The KELP E-bike project is a fantastic initiative. During the time I had the bike, it saved multiple car journeys and also permitted longer cycles than I would usually do, in line with the aims of the project to promote cycling for both leisure and work (where possible) with the associated health and environmental benefits. I would encourage anyone, whether seasoned cyclist or not, within the local area interested in trying an E-bike to apply for a loan of one of the bikes. If you do try one, it's highly likely that you will be impressed and may even, like me, think about purchasing one.

Finally, I'd like to thank Mike and all involved with the KELP project for the opportunity to use one of the bikes during the month.

ANDREW PURVIS



Embroiderers' Guild Stitches

Like so many other organisations, the Strathendrick branch of the Embroiderers' Guild hasn't been able to meet at all since March. The weather was kind – mostly – and lockdown did ease – eventually. But how to fill the gap when we couldn't actually meet?

Newsletters were sent out each month, full of ideas and links to online resources, supplemented by interesting snippets sent in from the membership and collated by Susan Gray, our redoubtable chairwoman.

Many of our members participated in the Killearn Horticultural Show. Congratulations to Heather Wright and Elizabeth Hay who won top prizes in their categories.

Just to prove that fingers and brains have been busy with needle, thread and fabric, here is a selection of images created by members during lockdown.

We have all also been challenged to create a 13cm² (5in) smaller piece with the idea that these will be sewn into a panel to show at our annual exhibition at Drymen Library. The Lockdown Panel Project should prove an interesting snapshot of these months in 2020.

There is also a mysterious – so far, anyway – second project to keep us busy into the New Year.

We have our fingers crossed that 2021 will be our lucky year, and we'll all be able to meet again. We also hope that the new fashion for working at home might entice stitchers who previously were unable to join us, to come along on a Tuesday and see what the Embroiderers' Guild is all about.



We can offer both in-house and professional workshops, lectures on a wide range of textile subjects and a rather eccentric sales table plus new friends. Oh, and Fabric Fun for the youngsters.

If you love to stitch, do join us – you would be most welcome.

NB

Images (clockwise from top): Snowdrops, Susan Gray; Knitted Teddy, Dania Anderson; Lockdown Egret, Lyn Dunachie; Dragonfly, Dania Anderson

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Torrance – Thursday and Friday, 9.30am – 2.00pm

No Going Back Now

I must admit I was getting nervous. I knew Covid-19 had put a spanner in almost every sort of works, but the law is, as they say, the law. I should have been sworn in as a citizen no later than the end of August or risk having to start the process all over again. A reassuring email exchange between myself and the Registrar made it clear that the usual rules wouldn't apply, and they were unable to proceed until the Home Office sent through the certificate. Since no one knew when that might be, there was nothing for it but to wait.

September came and had nearly gone when one morning a buff envelope landed on the mat. The Home Office had finally sent the all-important confirmations and instructions. Taking no chances, I phoned the number supplied by the Home Office for those responsible in Stirling Council for naturalisation ceremonies. Then it all went a bit quiet.

Out of the blue, I received a phone call from a very cheerful lady in Stirling Council to say that the Home Office had finally sent my certificate, and might she check that the numbers supplied by the Home Office on my confirmation letter did indeed marry up with those on said certificate? Oh, and could I possibly attend in four days' time at 10am, as that was the soonest appointment she could give me for my naturalisation ceremony? She apologised that it would be a different sort of ceremony – only myself and one other person allowed on the day

and no photographs with be-chained dignitaries, and no, I didn't need to learn all the verses to the national anthem. (This was a relief, as the tune to *America*, an alternate US national anthem, is the very same as *God Save the Queen*, and the potential for nervous embarrassment very real.)

The morning came, the rain held off and a place to park was miraculously found off St John's Street. The ceremony in The Attic (literally: floor 8) of the Tolbooth was conducted most professionally and engagingly by the Registrar – there's something to be said for this one-on-one. The short ceremony consisted of an affirmation to support the Queen (and her heirs and successors, lawfully constituted) and a general pledge to obey the law, closed with the playing of my new national anthem. Short and sweet. Not only did I receive my certificate, but I was also given a token of my new status from the Council.

All in all, a good morning, rounded off – of course – with tea and cake. How much more British can you get?

NB



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Killearn Community Futures Company in the Time of Covid



KILLEARN
COMMUNITY FUTURES COMPANY

In common with the rest of the world, Killearn Community Futures Company (KCFC) has experienced a sharp division of the year into pre and post-Covid-19

The routine workings of the first seven months descended into the necessary restrictions and curtailed activity imposed due to coronavirus pandemic. The ramifications of this will doubtless still be manifest in years to come.

Despite the impossibility of face-to-face working, all the groups have managed to adapt in their own particular ways. Indeed, the list below has gained an extra entry with the launch of Killearn E-bike Loan Project (KELP), a timely addition given the very noticeable resurgence of cycling during the lockdown period.

Of particular concern has been the continuing operation of the Village Hall, with all income suddenly cut off in March and many weddings postponed or cancelled, but incurring

ongoing expenses for the safety and upkeep of the building. Fortunately, due to the prudence of previous management committees, there were sufficient reserves held in the bank against emergencies (though nobody foresaw this particular one) to ride out the crisis. A lesson for the future.

Meanwhile, it has unfortunately proved necessary to cancel a proposed eco-fayre, the firework display and the Hoolie Dhu. Hopefully they will return in 2021.

Work has continued in the background on both the Heritage Trail and the Killearn/Boqhuan/Balfron path, while members of the Sustainability Group have been active in supporting residents with food orders and errands. Long may the general outpouring of neighbourliness continue!

Another casualty of social distancing rules has been the annual members' meeting, held this year on Zoom, rather than our customary gathering in the Village Hall. (See meeting report below.)

My sincere thanks go to my fellow directors and all working group colleagues. Their commitment exhibits a high standard of community volunteering, and plays a major role in the active and successful position of the

Company, despite current difficulties and restrictions.

Our active groups are:

- All Killearn Archive
- Colourful Killearn
- Colourful Killearn Wildflower Group
- Fireworks
- The Hoolie
- *Killearn Courier*
- Killearn E-bike Loan Project (KELP)
- Killearn Heritage Trail
- Killearn Sustainability Group
- Killearn Village Hall Operating Committee & Development Group
- Paths Group
- Woodlands Group

If you have a pet project, or a great idea for a social enterprise, come and talk to us. KCFC can provide advice and support in raising funds under the umbrella of an incorporated charity with a substantial and successful track record of delivering results.

If you aren't already, become a member for the princely sum of £1 a year – the membership form is available on our website at www.kcfc.co.uk.

Mike Gray
convenor@kcfc.co.uk

Killearn Community Futures AGM Report

Killearn Community Futures held its Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 15 October. To comply with extant Covid-19 restrictions, the meeting had to be held online through the increasingly familiar medium of Zoom – judging by the lack of drama in getting up and running, the 34 participants have had plenty of practice.

The required business was transacted, with adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts (which will be published on the website in due course) and re-election of

Kenneth Alexander, Graeme Fraser and Peter Smith as directors

Mike Gray stepped down as both convenor and director. With no other nominations, this leaves one vacancy on the Board available to be filled during the year.

Each of the 11 active working groups tabled a brief summary of their activities, albeit somewhat curtailed in the second half of the year.

Despite the current difficulties, KCFC ended the year in a relatively healthy condition, both financially

and organisationally.

The meeting ended, uncharacteristically, without the customary sociable tea, biscuits and chatter, each household having to go away and boil their own kettle.

Thanks go to those members able to attend for their encouragement and support of this worthwhile social enterprise.

Killearn's Coronavirus Chronicles

We asked Killearn residents and businesses for some thoughts on coping with lockdown and adapting to a different sort of life in the subsequent months. Here is a selection of their 'word bites' and comments.



Image © Kay Roxby

Life and routine working has been very different in the Health Centre since Covid-19 became the focus of our attention. We've moved into a world of PPE, perspex screens, socially-distancing signage and

working in hospital scrubs. We have

gradually been able to see more people face to face, having only a small number of people in the building at any one time. The move to initial telephone contact has taken everyone a bit of getting used to and while useful, doesn't replace the need to see some people after the initial contact. We have also have used video consultations and patients can email photos. Our patients have been incredibly supportive, our clinical and office staff have risen to the challenge and demand, and the support from our local pharmacy has been excellent.

STUART CUMMING
KILLEARN HEALTH CENTRE

**supporting
isolated people
in the community**

**greater interest
in bird life**

**hugs from much- missed
grandchildren**

Throughout the months of lockdown and beyond, our team of friendly posties have worked steadily on, ensuring our mail is delivered. What we, on the other side of the letter box, may not realise, is that their work has massively increased as the population has turned to

online shopping and mail order. For the posties these past months has been like a continuing form of the Christmas mail rush. We thank them for their cheery and constant service to our community. **rainbows and teddy bears in windows**

IN PRAISE OF THE POSTIES

Thank you to my staff for their continuing commitment and dedication which has kept the pharmacy running in these unprecedented times. Killearn community spirit has been amazing and I urge everyone to continue supporting all our local businesses.

GILLIAN RUSSELL
KILLEARN PHARMACY

**Zoom/WhatsApp
Facetime chats
with friends
and family**

Thank you to all in the local community who have supported us through lockdown and since we reopened in July. Following a successful September edition, Banksy's (socially distanced) pub quiz will continue and will be also be streamed online. We will be offering Christmas cook-at-home boxes, covering every aspect of your Christmas day including, breakfast, lunch, evening buffet, cocktails, and wine. We have a Christmas craft fayre in our car park organised for the last weekend in November. Entry is free and it's free to set up a stall. We look forward to seeing familiar (and new) faces over the next few months. **no markers to the days**

THE OLD MILL INN

Due to Covid many people have chosen to shop locally and we've seen an increase in footfall at Killearn Co-op. We've made some changes to your in-store experience to keep our community safe. Please remember to wear a mask (for those who are able), respect social distancing and follow the one-way system when visiting. We look forward to welcoming faces old and new.

KATIE HALL, KILLEARN CO-OP

Zoom meetings

We were meticulous in our planning in order to ensure a safe reopening for all our staff and

online shopping

children. Although the children are aware of the virus and the new measures that are in place, we have tried really hard to maintain as much normality as possible for them. There may be more bumps along the way as we continue to navigate through these strange times, but it's important we all work together to keep each other safe.

OUR LITTLE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

reflecting on how lucky we are to live in Killearn

Our reopening in August was an exciting, heart-warming time to reunite with our children and welcome many new ones to our nursery. Currently, parents and non-essential visitors are not permitted in the nursery so our children are dropped off and picked up outside. We are spending even more time out of doors in the garden and in our wild, outdoor off-site forest setting, keeping in small groups spread throughout the setting. We'd like to thank our families, Killearn and wider communities for your ongoing support and the many warm emails we have received.

marvelling at the number of people on bikes

MULBERRY BUSH MONTESSORI

Thankfully, we have had no infections in any of our Abbeyfield houses across Scotland. During lockdown, all services in the house were cancelled – no hairdresser being the hardest! Staff worked tirelessly to keep the infection at bay by wearing PPE and sanitising the house within an inch of its life. Families came to visit residents, speaking through windows, adhering to the two-metre distancing and wearing PPE, they also got in touch via Facetime, or sent letters and photographs.

strange times with an invisible enemy and no end in sight

The local nursery sent the residents individual pictures. One resident said, 'it was nice to know someone cared and we weren't forgotten about.' Flowers were delivered by neighbours and an anonymous lady made PPE for staff, which was a lovely gesture. The residents had a garden project, potting plants and watching them grow. The weather was good and we enjoyed sitting in the garden with afternoon tea, home baking, and participating in crossword puzzles and quizzes.

JUNE CRAM, ABBEYFIELD HOUSE MANAGER

As a new business, we were quite concerned at the unfolding situation earlier this year. Our opening went ahead in early April. As a cycle shop, we are key retailers and therefore were legally allowed to remain open for the full duration of the lockdown period. We've had a fantastic uptake from the local community and the business is flourishing. I would like to pass on my thanks to the people of Killearn for the warm welcome we have received in the last few months.

**FRASERGLASS, SHOP MANAGER
COUNTRY CYCLES KILLEARN**

reading during the day

Lockdown, own homes. Social distance, long distance, family at a distance. No commute, morning walks, morning talks. Remembering why you love one another.

REV. STUART SHARP

Since week one of lockdown we have been offering the delivery of a two-course meal to local villages every Saturday. We are delighted to say that our 'Supper Club' has become the highlight of our clients' weeks. Email ordering, and doorstep drop-offs have enabled us to reach out to shielding customers who have enjoyed our delicious dishes in the safety of their own home. **TRISTAN CAMPBELL, TRUFFLE EVENTS**

need to support local business



We continued to deliver flowers safely to people's doorsteps from the start of Covid. We expanded our online ordering facility to accommodate safe purchasing and used social media to keep everyone up to date with local delivery offers and new designs to brighten up the darkest of days. Sending flowers to loved ones has, in a very small way, kept people connected in these uncertain times.

HEATHER & APRIL MAXWELL, ENDRICK BLOOMS

not using the car

enjoying other people's gardens



finding new routes through the woods

in this for the long term



watching the succession of wild flowers

church services on web

bird song no longer drowned out by aircraft or traffic noise

Only emergency cases were seen during lockdown. Telephone and video consultations enabled us to provide advice and reassurance. Medications were dispensed through the practice window. Social distancing requirements and our small room sizes mean we have to examine pets without their owners being present. Our findings are reported by telephone or outdoor discussion with the owner. We thank our clients for their patience during these challenging times.

JACKSON VETS



snacking

spotting the warden of the woodland

The middle of March saw the temporary closure of Glengoyne to visitors, but thankfully our whisky production team were able to

continue creating our award-winning spirit. Although we couldn't allow visitors to come to the distillery, thanks to the wonders of technology, we could bring Glengoyne to them with the introduction of our new Online Whisky Tasting experience. Guests

received a tasting kit in advance and our distillery ambassadors hosted the entertaining tasting session over Zoom. Due to its

popularity these tasting sessions are continuing twice a month on a Thursday evening at 7pm. The shop team also worked tirelessly throughout lockdown to ensure the safe dispatch of hundreds of bottles of whisky to customers all over the world. Welcoming the entire team and visitors back to Glengoyne in August, our new health and safety measures received our Good To Go accreditation from VisitScotland.

SARAH BOTTOMLEY
GLENGOYNE DISTILLERY

clearing out my wardrobe

neighbour doing your Tesco shopping

walking much longer distances

unlimited time with nothing to do but whatever I fancied

'Killearn school and nursery staff and pupils have made a welcome return to school with everyone coping well with changes in place.' – MRS CRAIGIE

'It was warming to hear how well the children adapted to remote learning and how much they enjoyed this precious time with their families. I can see a significant improvement in their independence and their ICT skills since returning to school.' – MRS KELLY

Primary 6: Eve – 'Things might be a little bit different, but it's still lots of fun.' Alastair/Jonathan/Murdie – 'I get to see my friends again.' Primary 2/3: Orla – 'It felt really good going back to school and it has been

really fun!' Gregor – 'I was really excited to get back to school. I love playing with my friends.'

KILLEARN PRIMARY SCHOOL

'We had to face lots of different obstacles, both good and bad. Holidays, school trips and friends were missed, along with concerts and social events. But we did have some positives that were more family time and it makes us appreciate what we had and what we could do before the pandemic.'

4TH YEAR PUPILS, BALFRON HIGH SCHOOL

We started The Inn Shop groceries to help the local community, now it is also helping the business survive. This winter will be difficult, but hopefully we will come out the other side and the picture will be brighter. Keeping the staff and our customers safe is our number one priority. Please support all your small local businesses or they may not be there in the future.

LYNNE ALLDRITT, THE BEECH TREE

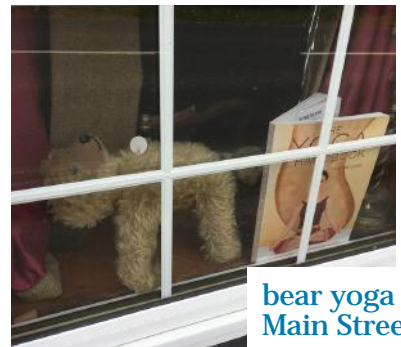
socially-distanced conversations



Meeting lots of new people; delivering to people in isolation; customers queuing outside the shop (a first!); introducing the fruit and vegetables and learning about a new product; visiting the fruit and veg market in the early morning.

PAUL WOODS, HEWITT & AKER

Sudoku



bear yoga in Main Street

seeing the village busier all day
let's be positive

Playing it by Ear

I have often found that people who have been taught to read music and play an instrument in a classical fashion are unable to do it in any other way. To sit at a piano and entertain the company by playing requests by ear would be utterly beyond them. Likewise, those who can vamp often wouldn't know what to do with a musical score. It has always been a source of amazement to me that someone like Paul McCartney, who surely knows a melody when he hears it and can tickle the ivories with the best of them, apparently does it all without being able to read music. It seems perverse that after 60 years in the business he hasn't somehow picked it up. But I do admire his skill at playing by ear.

Piano lessons, like all the others, have been conducted online for some time now, for which I'm sure my grandson, George, is duly grateful. And over the last months, where would we, the schools and the general public have been without the internet? I speak as a recovering Luddite, who has very basic computing skills, but is fazed by the least deviation from the norm. Do not throw an unexplained 'window' at me and expect a sensible response. I still have a long way to go before I can perform ordinary transactions without help, especially from Doug, who is a candidate for sainthood in our household. I cannot pretend that I warm instinctively to the internet. But hasn't it been a godsend?

It's a bit of a balancing act, isn't it, between mastering the art of online supermarket shopping and supporting the local shops. Supporting the city shops, however, is another thing entirely. Who knows when we will be able to do our bit to rescue poor old Sauchiehall Street. Ever since the fires at either end of it, and the closure of major stores in the middle, it has been a sorry sight.

Long gone are the days of the fabled department stores, where you could start

at the top storey and emerge at street level with all your Christmas shopping. The decline over the years of such a classic shopping area was so sad to witness, long before the pandemic made things worse. There's still Buchanan Galleries, of course, and Buchanan Street and Argyle Street, and here's hoping they weather the Covid storm. Christmas might possibly help.

The internet has also been useful in keeping up to date with the regulations. The telly is all very well, but confusing, especially when we're being told verbally what we should all be doing. At least online the rules are written down, and you can take your time working out whether you can have five or seven people in your sitting room, or two families for a barbecue in your garden, in the snow, or limitless children and a dog in the garage. The thing is, the authorities are as much at sea as the rest of us.

No one stands for election expecting to have to deal with a pandemic. I like to think they're trying their best, but at the end of the day, they too are playing it by ear. We just have to trust they'll hit the right notes most of the time, and in the right order.

It's going to be a different Christmas this year, but surely the old spirit will prevail and it will be a lovely season. In the meantime, I'm practising the carols on the piano. I've got to *Hark the Herald*, with the music.

JOYCE BEGG



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Wines for Christmas

When writing this piece, I glanced back at our pre-Christmas wine article last year. It started: 'Writing this article in September, and thinking about what to drink with Christmas dinner, seems slightly more precarious than in previous years'. What has happened in the interim? Are we still able to stock our shelves with the wines of Europe, or are we all sitting staring at empty spaces...?' Looking back, those concerns around Brexit seem somewhat overly dramatic given what 2020 has brought!

Our supermarket wine shelves continue to be well stocked. However, getting hold of that wine is proving a little more tricky than last year, when staying in is very much the new going out, and delivery slots are more valuable than gold.

As so many of us move our purchasing online, here is a round-up of some of the best places to buy something to enjoy this Christmas:

The BIB Wine Company (bibwibe.co.uk) is top of the list for innovation this year, supplying a selection of high-quality, organic and sustainably packed wines, all in bag-in-box. This company is a small family business that

works directly with suppliers and provides a small range of wines. For years this packaging option has been seen as a poor alternative, but this company very much shows that it is time for a new approach.

The Wine Society (thewinesociety.com) is a co-operative that has been selling wine in the UK for 145 years. It is owned by its members and is revered for offering wines at good prices that deliver exceptional quality. The wine buyers are genuinely given free rein to go out and discover the most interesting wines they can find. They have exactly the sort of attitude that we all wish companies would adopt, and it is visible in their wines and their service.

Finally, if you want to wrap up your wine buying with looking after your health, then Vintage Roots (vintageroots.co.uk) is the place for you. This is the original organic wine company, trading since 1986 (well before organic became so trendy), and they simply have the best selection of organic, biodynamic and low-sulphur wines online in the UK. If you often wonder why one bottle of wine gives you a hangover while (the same volume) of another doesn't – and also how to avoid a hangover in the first place – then this is a good place to start.

ELAINE TAYLOR

Fond Farewells

Farewell to the Duncans

Two familiar faces will shortly be leaving Killearn. Donald and Janet Duncan are pulling up their Killearn roots and replanting them close to their daughter and family in the south of England.

Donald was the face of MacDonald's Butchers in Killearn, and Janet the postmistress of the Post Office in the Main Street, which later moved to the Spar. Both gave service to the community for most of their working lives of over 40 years. Janet also served on the Community Council from the 1990s until very recently.

The village will naturally want to wish them every happiness in their new home.



Jackson Vets Retirement

In midsummer, Jimmy and Maggie Jackson retired from their veterinary practice after 40 years of caring for the health of animals large and small in our area.

Very many people have reason to be grateful for the care and concern they and their staff gave to our pets.

One could always be sure of a welcoming and calm atmosphere at the vets, and animal owners past and present would undoubtedly like to take this opportunity through these pages to thank them and all their staff, and wish the Jacksons a long and happy retirement.

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Rubies for Strathcarron Hospice

Strathcarron Hospice in Stirlingshire has witnessed every single fundraising event being cancelled, shops closing, corporate partners with employees either furloughed or working from home, funerals not taking place in the traditional ways and, of course, supporters who are feeling nervous about their own situation.



All of this has had a massive impact on the vital funds needed. Following the end of Hospice Care week, it's clear that this year has been the most challenging time in our history.

Every day of the year, Strathcarron relies on public voluntary income of £12,900 to keep caring for patients and families. All of this while the services are as much in demand, if not more so, than ever before. Death has come to the forefront of everybody's minds this year, but for those living with,

and dying from, a terminal illness, it doesn't alter the fact that high-quality care remains an essential.

It has been necessary for everyone involved to adapt to new ways of doing things. Right from the start of the pandemic, the Hospice's education team have been there to support and train colleagues in the wider setting – care homes, hospitals, GPs and the ambulance service. We have also supported communities to bring them together as a support network.

Hospice care is so much more than specialist palliative care. In fact, 40 per cent of inpatients return home, like Moira (pictured below).



She has been receiving specialist treatment for symptom control of the MS with which she has been living for 24 years. She has been working hard with the Rehabilitation Team so she can get back to the home she loves and live as independently

as she possibly can. Despite the many challenges Moira faces, her goal is to become a volunteer telephone befriender so that she is able to support someone in similar circumstances. We will be delighted to have her on the team.

Next year is Strathcarron Hospice's 40th anniversary, and at the moment it is difficult to plan ahead. We are actively running a 'Stand with Strathcarron' appeal and have launched a series of well-supported virtual fundraising events.

We have been here for four decades, caring for grandparents, parents and loved ones, and we will do everything in our power to be here for future generations. Visit www.strathcarronhospice.net.

JACKIE JOHNSTON
FUNDRAISING MANAGER

SANTA & ELF DASH
5TH & 6TH DEC
RUN 2.5K OR 5K

SCAN ME TO SIGN UP

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Welcome to Kitchen Window

Just a little message to all the lovely people of Killearn and the surrounding villages.

We know there have been a lot of questions and speculation on what is to become of your spectacular space that is the village hall café and if its usage will be restricted for the locals. The simple answer to the latter is, absolutely not.

Hi, may I introduce myself to you all? My name is Sarah Weir and together with my husband, David Weir, we have taken over the café area in the Village Hall. I assure you we only endeavour to add positive value to it and bring the villagers together at this difficult time.

I am not going to lie – we have a full-on journey ahead of us and one that we must complete in a few weeks, but it is a challenge that we have taken to our hearts, and we hope we will do the village proud.

Being local ourselves, we hope to bring something new to the area that will complement and work well with



all the other fantastic cafés, restaurants and delis that are operating already.

We are extremely excited that after our competition we now have a name. May I present to you all your new local eatery: Kitchen Window.

As I sit here (while the painters start this journey off for us) and write this piece, I am looking through the glass onto the beautiful hills and feel there has never been a more apt name.

In the next couple of weeks, we hope to transform the space as much as we can. Our plan is to open our doors to the public towards the end of November.

We have a few ideas in the pipeline, but due to the current restrictions, we will introduce and implement these in phases, always following the government and local guidelines.

This brings me to the end of our very short introduction to you all, but fear not! Hopefully by the time the *Courier* is out, we will have our website, social media, logo and menu for all of you to check out. So for now I leave you with one message:

‘Watch this Space’.

SARAH WEIR



Killearn Village Hall

As I write, it's the end of September. It won't be long before we'll be putting the lights on the Village Hall tree!

The Village Hall opened to classes and activities on 1 September after a five-month shutdown. As others in the village will know, opening up sounds easy – two small words – but behind those words is a lot of time and thought and worry. I'm really proud and lucky to be part of a team at the Village Hall that has come together and worked behind the scenes to make opening happen smoothly and to put in place the protocols to keep it open. It is so lovely to see the response from the users and class organisers. Things don't feel the same, but they feel good, and people are getting out and smiling. They have somewhere else to go.

As the weather starts to change, we're looking forward to welcoming more classes and activities back to the Hall and are excited to be talking to people about new ideas. We're excited about the new café and wish Sarah and David Weir all the best – here's to a hot chocolate and cake on a chilly day – or a socially-distant brunch outing.

We're excited about the Advent Windows and being part of that community adventure. We're pleased to see wedding bookings being pencilled in for 2021/22 and hope that wedding couples can get to have their dream weddings.

We're also thinking about what else we can be doing to help support the community during the darker winter months. While it's great to see people out and about, the current conditions make it very hard for some of our community to get out at all, and without activities in the calendar, there is a danger that more people will become more isolated. We'll try to work with other community groups to look differently at things and see how we can encourage more joined up thinking and ideas. Maybe there is a place for better use of technology or perhaps a buddy scheme or writing letters – who knows, but we're happy to be part of things as best we can.

I thought I'd finish with a quote from Winnie the Pooh – always a good source of inspiration and making us appreciate the here and now:

‘Well,’ said Pooh, ‘what I like best,’ and then he had to stop and think. Because although Eating Honey was a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to eat it which was better than when you were, but he didn't know what it was called. (A.A. Milne, *The House at Pooh Corner*)

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Pre-booking required - phone or email

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Killearn Malawi Group Annual Gathering

Like many similar organisations, the Killearn Malawi Group (KMG) was unable to hold an Annual Gathering ‘in the flesh’ this year, and so on Thursday, 17 September, Zoom was called upon to allow us to talk to our friends, keep them up to date with what KMG has been doing and conduct the necessary business of an AGM.

We were fortunate that we were again visited all the way from Malawi by Kondwani Chidziwisano, our partner in the south of Malawi, and no stranger to Killearn and its bus service into Glasgow!

The principal reports concerning the year ending in April 2020 were given by the Chairperson, Ken Allen, and the Treasurer, Sue Beck. Fundraising had taken place before the pandemic shutdown: the annual Jumble Sale in February, and a Ladies’ Gin Tasting evening last November. The main project had been the completion of the Science/Library block at Nkhonde Secondary School in the far south of Malawi. Goats were given to some families badly affected by the flooding in 2019. KMG has also worked together with the Banana Box Trust, in particular



contributing a major sum to a Partnership Farming project in the north of Malawi, which appears to be meeting its targets in its first growing season.

We have now sent a substantial sum to the local school committee in Nkhonde for furniture and fittings for the school building. This is being made by local tradespeople, so contributing to the local economy. Kondwani gave us a pictorial history of KMG’s involvement with the villages in the far south of Malawi over the last few years, culminating in the building at Nkhonde School. He also talked about the situation in Malawi, where Covid-19 appears to be under control. As a lecturer in Environmental Health, he is very much involved in health and hygiene programmes relating to the virus.

A committee of Trustees for the Group was elected. Helen Mailer had decided not to stand again; we are very grateful for all her work on the committee over the years. However, Eva Mailer is now eligible to become a Trustee, and she was duly elected, along with the other eight serving Trustees.

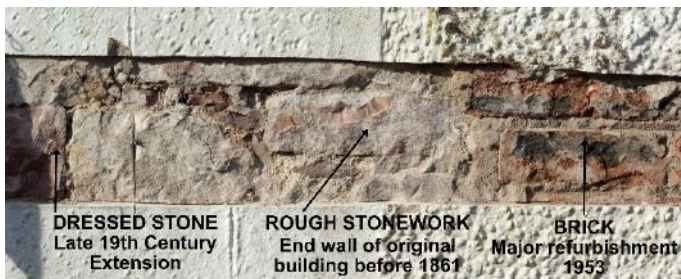
Ken Allen spoke about an important proposed change in the status of the charity. Most grant awarding bodies only deal with Incorporated Organisations (SCIO), while KMG is Unincorporated. This change would involve setting up a ‘new’ charity, then transferring the assets of KMG to this new body, which may have a slightly different name, and closing down the existing one. We are being advised in this by Stirling Voluntary Enterprise. The meeting agreed with the change.

To sum up, KMG is a small charity (SC043555), but it makes a big impact in the communities in Malawi it works with. For more information, visit www.killearnmalawigroup.org.



From the Archive – The Black Bull

The Black Bull, now sadly derelict, has been a feature of the village for many years. Recently part of the harling on the front of the building was removed, revealing the underlying construction. From south to north, the front wall comprises dressed stone, a short section of rough stonework, several feet of brickwork, more extensive rough stonework and finally more brickwork. The harling disguises the mixture of building materials. Brick is rare in Killearn, so why is it found in this old building?



The first description of the building is in the *Ordnance Survey Name Book* of around 1861. This describes the Black Bull Inn as ‘one storey high, slated, and in good repair. It affords limited stabling accommodation and no posting.’ (‘Posting’ referred to changing horses.)

The rough stonework now revealed may well date from this period and we can envisage a single-storey building with a dwelling at one end and stables at the other. The 1841 and 1851 census records show William Smith, an innkeeper, living in Killearn with his wife,

Elizabeth, and family. The 1855 Valuation Roll shows Mrs Smith as an innkeeper in a ‘house, garden and stables’ with a value of £10. In the 1865 Valuation Roll, Mrs Elizabeth Smith is the proprietor of the ‘Black Bull Inn, Gardens and Stables’, again valued at £10, which is likely to be the same property.

The first, undated, photograph we have of the Black Bull shows a quite small, two-storey block with a central door and a long single-storey north wing. The whole is uniformly harled. A sign over the door has a picture of a black bull and the wording ‘Mrs E. Smith, Wines and Spirits, Porter and Ales’.



The Valuation Roll of 1881, the next we have available, shows an increase in value to £27 10s, suggesting the second floor was added between 1865 and 1881. A 1912 photograph shows further extensive modifications with a taller, two-storey, dressed-stone



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wing added on the south. The original entrance has gained a porch with a dormer above, but the roofline is unchanged, lying at a lower level than the new extension. An architect's plan of 1915 gives the internal layout, showing accommodation in the two-storey areas with a 'private parlour' and billiard room extending into the single-storey section.



A photograph in *Strathendrick and Its Inhabitants from Early Times* by J. Guthrie Smith shows the extension. This dates the work before 1896, the book's publication date.

Old Killearn, Balfron and Fintry by John Hood, includes a photograph of the Black Bull which dates after 1924 and shows the single-storey wing had been extended to two storeys with the roofline higher than the original centre section. The only change to the rest of the building was a larger porch.

Claudia McGarry (née Mitchell), who lived in the hotel from 1949, recently informed AKA that the architect, Douglas Anderson, carried out a major refurbishment in 1953. The architect's drawing of the proposed front elevation was provided, and shows the frontage virtually identical to that of today.



The centre section of the roof has been raised to give a uniform roofline, the windows enlarged, and the entrance moved several feet to the south. It would appear that brick was used for this work, explaining the unusual presence of this material in an apparently very old building. The rough-stone south end wall of the original building and part of the original stonework on the north end are now all that remain of the original, pre-1861, frontage.

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Comments have been made about the time taken to answer the 101 service. One reason is that we are experiencing a high volume of calls about Covid-19, which reduces response times for policing matters. Before phoning 101 or 999, please ask yourself whether this a genuine policing matter.

Also note that we publish useful information on social media, including appeals for information, updates about road closures and crime prevention advice. Our Facebook and Twitter pages can be found at:

www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision

www.facebook.com/policescotland

[www.twitter.com/stirlingpol](https://twitter.com/stirlingpol)

[www.twitter.com/policescotland](https://twitter.com/policescotland)

Bogus Workmen

Police were contacted while roof work was being carried out on a house in Station Road. Bogus workmen were arrested, and after consultation with the Trading Standards reported to the Procurator Fiscal for fraud. There is no specific look to a bogus caller or rogue trader. If you have concerns, do not allow an individual entry to your home or provide them with any form of payment. Always ask for ID and only let callers in if they have an appointment and you know they are genuine.

Road Safety

There are still numerous visitors to the Devil's Pulpit. The double yellow lines have made some difference to the number of vehicles, and Stirling Council wardens have attended. Fixed penalty tickets have been issued by them and by the police. One driver refused to accept a fixed penalty and was reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

Vehicle Safety

Prepare for the winter by keeping your vehicle well maintained. Take care that brakes, tyres, lights, batteries, windscreens and wiper blades are in good condition. Washer bottles need an additive to stop the water from freezing.

Tyres should be checked weekly to ensure they are legal, with the correct tread depth and the correct pressure for your vehicle. They should also be checked for bulges, cuts or tears which weaken the tyre.

Please ensure that the vehicle's windscreens are fully defrosted and you have a clear view of the road prior to driving off. Do not defrost by leaving your engine running unattended on the road or driveway.

Theft

On 1-2 September, Oakwood Garden Centre, art4you and the post office were broken into overnight. An attempted bike theft occurred in the middle of the day at Mugdock Cycles. With earlier darkness, we have the potential for housebreakings, an unfortunate seasonal trend in the past. We remind residents to be vigilant and contact the police on 101 should they see anything suspicious. Please remember to follow basic home security rules:

- Use timer switches on lights and radios to make your home appear occupied
- Ensure doors and windows are secure when you leave or go to bed
- If possible, use secure lighting at the front and back of your property
- Lock away garden tools and ladders when not being used
- Use a good quality lock on garden sheds and outbuildings
- Keep a record of makes, models and serial numbers of expensive items in your home
- If your house is fitted with an alarm, please use it

Create a FREE and secure inventory of your personal property at www.immobilise.com


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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Dean Lockhart MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament
For Mid-Scotland and Fife

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

Parliamentary Office
Room M2.12,
The Scottish Parliament,
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
Tel: 0131 348 5995

Email: Dean.Lockhart.msp@parliament.scot
Website: deanlockhart.com
Facebook: facebook.com/DeanLockhartMSP
Twitter: [@DeanLockhartMSP](https://twitter.com/DeanLockhartMSP)

Broadband Update

Much of what might have been done in regard to broadband has not happened due to Covid-19. The Digital Scotland site (www.scotlandsuperfast.com) has now been updated to reflect the new R100 contract. Unfortunately, premises I have checked so far seem only to fall on one side or the other of a line at the end of 2021, and in a few cases, the premises show up as 'not currently planned'. There are some anomalies, such as adjacent properties showing as being on different sides of the 2021 line, and I have queried these with Digital Scotland. The website is now operating at the level of individual premises, and provides a clear statement of intent. However, it is still disappointing that the granularity of the timeframe is only one side of a line at the end of next year.

Work requested to achieve individual connections has been done, however, more major work has stalled. Some additional work was carried out in the Square and close to the mini roundabout at Drumbeg Loan and Branziert Road.

Latest Scams

You might get a genuine sounding, but very worrying phone call – allegedly from HMRC – with a recorded message saying that an arrest warrant has been issued in your name due to tax fraud. A quick glance at the number would suggest it was an 0191 number, which is Newcastle, so it might be the tax office. However, using 1471, you'll quickly find it coming up with 001 904 854-1356 – an American number. It's a scam. The tax office confirms that they would initially contact you by conventional mail if there was indeed an issue.

A similar kind of scam is a message, allegedly from your bank (without naming it), to say that a suspicious amount of money (a sum will be named) has been withdrawn from your account. Press 9 (for example) to speak to an advisor. Alternatively, you may be given a 'fraud number' to call to discuss the issue. Again, it's a scam. Your bank will not contact you in this manner and certainly not ask you for details of your account. If you do want to follow up a call like this, wait a little time as advised in the last issue. Then call the number you'll find on genuine bank paperwork. If possible, use a different phone to make the call.

A new voucher scheme has also been launched that can be used to improve your service in the interim before the full R100 service reaches you. The amount varies and details are available from the above website. 4G mobile connections, used in a fixed location, may still be the quickest and easiest solution, and the voucher scheme should be able to assist with the cost of that.

Meanwhile, Euan Shaw of iLomond has offered the possibility of improving the internet service specifically for the Branziert and the top end of Drumbeg Loan. This will involve using a wireless link from the Stockiemuir Internet Service. There have been several positive enquiries through KCC, but Euan still needs another few supporters from this part of the village to make the project viable. If you live in either of these areas and wish to learn more, please contact me through the KCFC or KCC contact forms. The same applies for any other broadband-related issue.

DOUG ASHWORTH, CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP

If you don't have Amazon Prime you might be tempted to respond to the following scam. A phone call with a recorded message states: 'Amazon prime services have been renewed for £79. If you want to speak to our Service Manager, press 1 now'. It's another scam – they want you to 'cancel' the (non-existent) payment by giving them details of the payment mechanism supposedly used (such as your bank or credit card details). Those of you with Amazon Prime accounts will be well aware of when and how the annual payment is normally taken.

Finally, Covid-19 has given scammers an ideal opportunity. They pose as contact tracers for the Test and Protect service, say that you have been in contact with an infected person, and require you to pay for a test. This is a scam to get details of your bank account. There have also been fake emails, informing you that you have been caught breaking the lockdown and request that you click a link to pay a fine. Always be cautious of any link within an email, and try to check that where it is going to lead you is genuine or go via a website you are sure is genuine. For more details visit <https://tinyurl.com/covscam>.

Keep those scammers at bay and stay safe.

DA



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If this is something you would like to know more of, please contact **Fiona James, our Nursery Manager** on 01360 550162 or email us at heronhousekillearn@gmail.com to arrange a safe after hours viewing.



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e: heronhousekillearn@gmail.com

959 Crookston Road, Glasgow G53 7DT
t: 0141 810 5777
e: heronhousecrookston@gmail.com

Normally this article would be about Strathendrick Curling Club's summer activities, the results of the opening bonspiels and looking forward to the 2020/21 season. Instead, due to a nasty thing called Covid-19, we are looking at a lot of uncertainty.

At the time of writing, ice rinks are permitted to open and The Peak is vaguely mentioning curling starting in late October. However, we have no ice allocations yet and the increasing cases could mean that this is put on hold again.

The rules that Scottish Curling are proposing for curling matches are such that the game will be very different from normal. The good news is that you do not have to wear a mask while playing!

The Main Club AGM was held by email, but the Ladies have postponed their AGM indefinitely, although they have delivered trophies to the winners. Gail Pain is continuing as Ladies President at present. Curlers of the Year were John Phillips (Main Club) and Penny Evans (Ladies Section).

The only news of note is that Fiona Glass's team of Sheila Sturrock, Keith Hyam and Richard Kingslake were awarded the Spring League title by virtue of their 2-point lead over four of the six teams at the point of lockdown.

The contacts for the Club are Diana Jackson (550314) or Gill Smith (550726) or look at our website at www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk. However, we cannot guarantee any curling this season.

Keeping going is very much the order of the day in 2020, and Killearn Tennis Club has been able to do just that in these trying times.

We managed to run a full block of children's coaching, starting on 28 August and running through to 2 October. Plans were being made at time of writing for another block after the October school holidays.

The club was also delighted to welcome a number of new members, and the Thursday evening session for gents was reinstated.

If you would like to join us, you can find details at killearntennisclub.org.uk or search for us on Facebook.



**STRATHENDRICK
CLASSIC CAR CLUB**



Unfortunately, our plans for summer events have mainly fallen by the wayside due to Covid-19. Nevertheless, we did manage to have two runs once lockdown eased.

The first followed a circular route along the A811 and A81 to Aberfoyle and along the A873 below the Menteith Hills towards Doune and back.

A second run was more adventurous, taking us beside Loch Lomond and north to Arrochar before turning south again beside Loch Long and down the Kilcreggan peninsula to Cove and back through Glen Fruin.

The committee has prepared a full winter

programme of talks and activities, but whether we will be able to present it remains uncertain and less likely as the weeks go by. We will at least have a programme 'oven ready' for when we are able to serve it up!

Meanwhile we have tried to keep members informed and entertained with our *Overdrive* newsletters, which will be delivered in electronic form until we are able to meet up in person again.

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

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Rugby Round-up

In common with other close contact sports, rugby union has faced major disruption in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the professional game has restarted with frequent testing and rigorous protocols, club and school games have not yet been able to recommence.

At the time of going to press, competitive matches are due to begin again soon, but absolutely nobody will be surprised if this is further delayed.

However, at Fintry, Strathendrick RFC players of all ages have enjoyed getting back to training – albeit without an immediate prospect of fixtures against other clubs.

Fifty midi, youth and senior players can be seen undertaking vigorous strength and conditioning training outdoors on a Saturday morning – building up their fitness and enjoying modified games of touch rugby (within SRU guidelines).



The Minis turn out in large numbers on a Sunday morning, enjoying running around and developing their ball skills. For the latest news, please visit www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc/.

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Over the past ten years we have built up an extensive portfolio of work and pride ourselves in being able to turn our client's vision into a reality. With a wealth of knowledge in garden design and construction we know we can create the perfect environment for you.

In 2017, we incorporated P. D. Stokes - a landscaping company based at Dobbies Garden World Milngavie, established in 1982. P. D. Stokes has built up an exceptional reputation for high quality garden design and construction. We now, as one company, will build on our combined reputations and cement MacColl and Stokes Landscaping as one of the best private garden design and construction firms in central Scotland.



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Ronnie Forrest 27 October 1931 – 29 August 2020

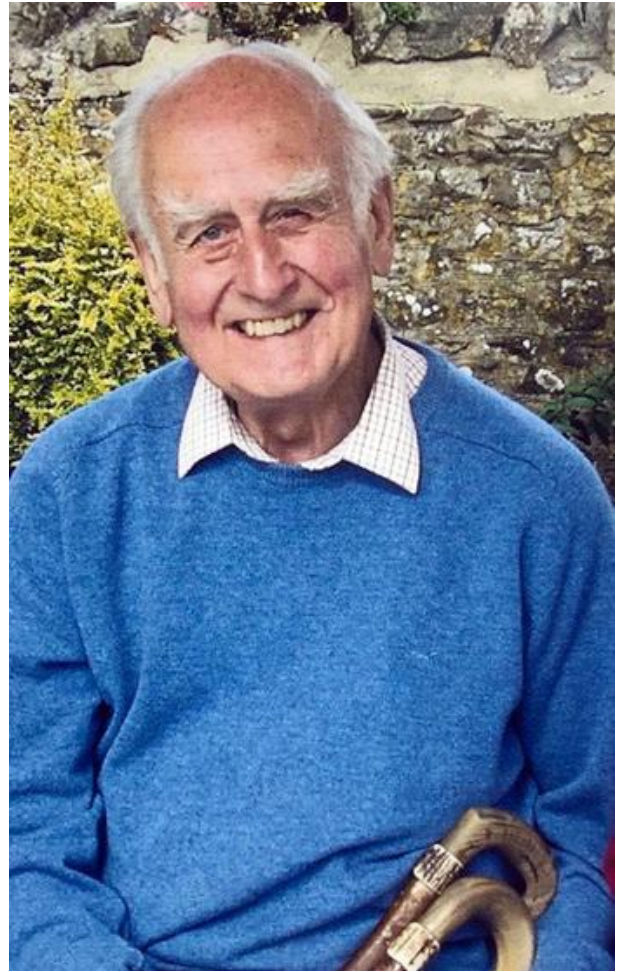
Ronnie Forrest, the second son of John and Grace Forrest, was born and brought up in a cottage on the Argaty estate near Doune. He was educated first at Doune school and then at MacLaren High School where he became head boy. His happy childhood, which he recorded in his writing, *Memories of Childhood on a Country Estate*, nurtured in him values which were to be the guiding principles of his life.

His intention had been to go to Glasgow School of Art, but events were to prove otherwise. He worked for a time as a trainee with Wm. Collins & Sons Co. Ltd and then did his National Service, serving with the Royal Scots Greys in Germany for a year before being posted to North Africa where, as a member of the regimental athletics team, he was able to travel in the area to various sports events with other military units.

Shortly after being demobbed he was stricken by anterior poliomyelitis which seriously affected the use of his legs. Many months of hospitalisation followed until he was transferred to Killearn Hospital. When finally discharged, he realised hours of standing at an easel or in front of a class would not be feasible so he returned to Collins, who readily ensured his working environment met his physical requirements. His mobility improved sufficiently to enable him to travel around the country on business. He became Production and Purchasing Manager for Collins Diaries and remained with the company for 43 years.

He met Norma at a wedding where he was best man and she the chief bridesmaid. They married in 1962 and moved into a newly built house in Branziert Road North, and it was here that their two children, Stuart and Shirley, were born. They then stayed 15 years in Balfron before returning to Killearn in 1983 to a bungalow in Lampson Loan, where they created a beautiful and welcoming home and garden.

He and Norma were life-long members of the church. Ronnie was an elder for 27 years and it was he, who in 1969, at



the request of the late Rev. Skelly, produced the first Killearn Kirk newsletter, which he then edited for many years.

Despite his mobility difficulties, Ronnie was a man of many talents and with an unflinching positivity of spirit – always a ‘glass half full’ man. He had a special ability to engage with people, making them feel they truly mattered. He was a gifted communicator; to mark special occasions he often wrote letters and poems containing an appealing mix of his warmth, humour and wisdom.

Above all things, he valued and cherished his family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, and always had time for those around him. Those he leaves behind are the richer for having known him. His family treasure the memories of him as one who passed his values to them and whose life was well lived.

BP

Bridge by Zorro

Solution to the problem on page 8

There is a story behind the Duke of Cumberland’s hand. Legend has it that the East hand was originally held by the Duke of Cumberland, the notorious son of George III. A crooked opponent who had dealt himself the South hand offered to bet that he could take all the tricks with Clubs as trumps. The Duke, who was looking proudly at his 32-point hand, quite understandably doubted this could be done. He backed his opinion to the tune of £20,000 and some kibitzers to whom he showed the hand got in substantial side-bets of their own. Of course, the Duke and his supporters were robbed. On any opening lead, even a trump from the East hand with North playing the hand, South’s Diamonds can be established with three ruffs and East’s trumps can be picked up by leading twice from North.

(*The Rixi Marcus Book of Bridge*, (Willow Books, 1985), p. 81.

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Prize Christmas Crossword *Set by PeeWit*

Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Codeword is a £10 voucher 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

- 3 Allow notice with German word (5)
- 4 Finish repair without beginning (3)
- 7 Drink when we and I put it together (5,4)
- 8 Doth eat real food in this venue (7)
- 11, 25 Rick scratches arm awkwardly before pulling this (9,7)
- 14 Hurry back to London region for medical job (5)
- 15 A low dance in an uncertain situation (5)
- 16 You hear this scotch at 11ac (5)
- 18 Third wise Christmas gift (5)
- 24 Weapons on the body (4)
- 25 See 11ac
- 26 First wise Christmas gift (4)
- 27 Dish in the shop later (5)
- 28, 12d Second wise Christmas gift (12)

DOWN

- 1, 2 Look around the village to find each of these lit up (6,6)
- 5 Ex-prime minister on the roof! (8)
- 6 Bowling, this is not cricket! (8)
- 9 Corrected when deed is mixed up around it (6)
- 10 Adds up short of everything when babies around (6)
- 12 See 28ac
- 13 Bravery when our word is in prison (7)
- 17 Long, Oich, Chon and Hourn start as this (4)
- 19 A spun story (4)
- 20, 21 Moma hosts great rally (3,7)
- 21 See 20d
- 22 King sat around on the ice (7)
- 23 Santa's helper fled back inside (3)

Solution to the last crossword:

ACROSS

- 1 Coronavirus 8 rural
- 9 sunbeam 10 arcs
- 11 pandemic 12 hybrid
- 14 supper 17 lockdown
- 19 menu 21 sustain
- 22 arena 23 disembarked

DOWN

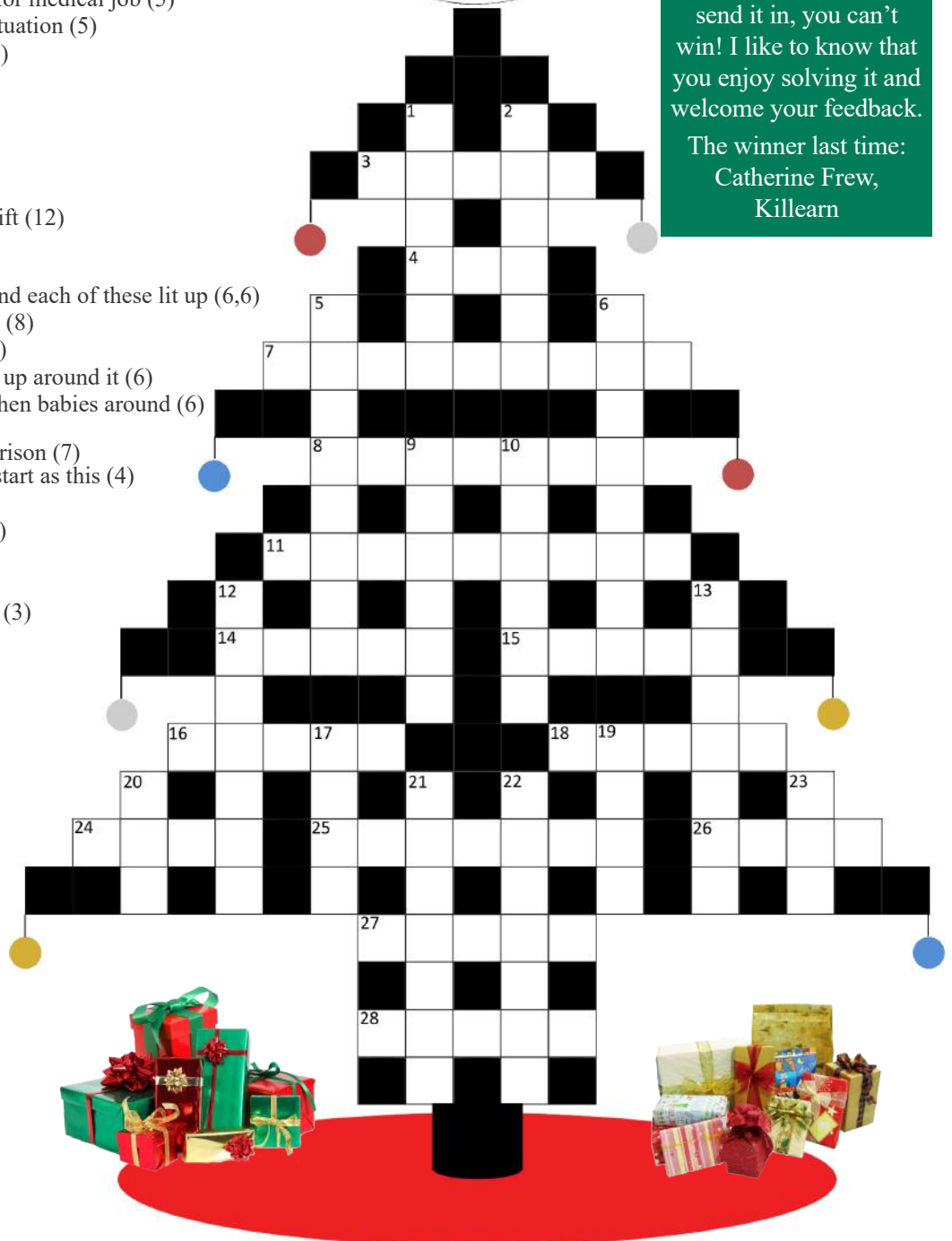
- 1 corncob 2 rule
- 3 Nissan 4 vanadium
- 5 rheum 6 semicircular
- 7 breathalysed 12 windfarm
- 15 pretend 16 Rwanda
- 18 casts 20 mask

The phrase was:
wash your hands



Christmas greetings from PeeWit to all my regular solvers. My commiserations if you haven't won the prize – keep trying! If you don't send it in, you can't win! I like to know that you enjoy solving it and welcome your feedback.

The winner last time:
Catherine Frew,
Killearn



How to Enter

Solve the crossword and place your solution in the postbox outside the Village Hall or in the box in the Co-op together with your name, address and a contact phone number. Alternatively, if you don't want to cut it out of your *Courier*, count the number of times the letter 's' appears in the grid and email to competition@kfc.co.uk with your name, address and a contact phone number. Entries should arrive by 1 December.

All-Family Wordsearch

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

Do you know the names of the seven cities of Scotland and the name of each of the major cities of England, Wales and Northern Island? They are hidden in the grid above. See if you can find all 10 of them.

The usual rules apply, words can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal and be forward or reverse.

Sudoku and Children's Sudoku

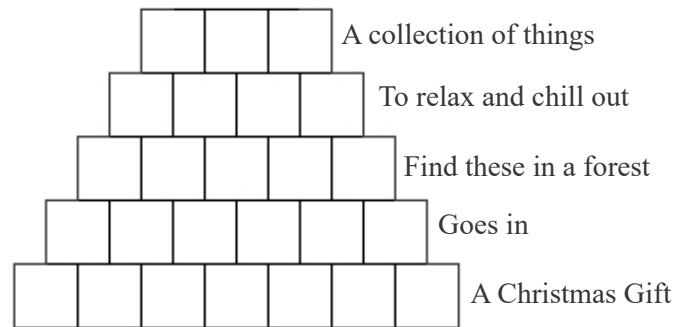
				2	1	4	8	
					7			6
8			6		3	9		
2							7	
	4	7	1		9	3	2	
	1							9
		5	3		6			1
7			2					
	2	1	8	9				

	2		
	1	4	
		3	

The Sudoku above is medium difficulty. Each of the nine blocks has to contain all the numbers 1-9 within its squares. Each number can only appear once in a row, column or box. The Children's Sudoku follows the same rules, with the numbers 1-4.

Children's Word Pyramid

Answer the crossword clue to the right of each row to complete the puzzle. Add an extra letter to each word as you solve it and find the word below it from those letters. It is called an anagram.



Word Ladder

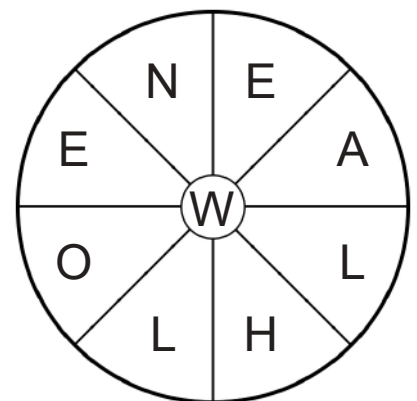
The word ladder puzzle starts with two words on the ladder. You have to transform the word on the top of the ladder into the word at the bottom of the ladder.

On each step of the ladder you must replace one letter of the word.



Word Wheel

This is an open-ended puzzle. How many words of three or more letters, each including the letter at the centre of the wheel, can you make from this diagram. We have found 35, including one nine-letter word. Can you do better?



1						2
3						
4						

Across

- Cans the French sent back to decorate the tree
- Average notice with drug went on display
- Expired around two thousand, the lights went down

Down

- Three-legged journey was different when cut off
- Sock goes on this famous person

Solutions on page 42

Children's Prize Spot the Difference sponsored by the Co-op

Our prize for the Children's Spot the Difference is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under.

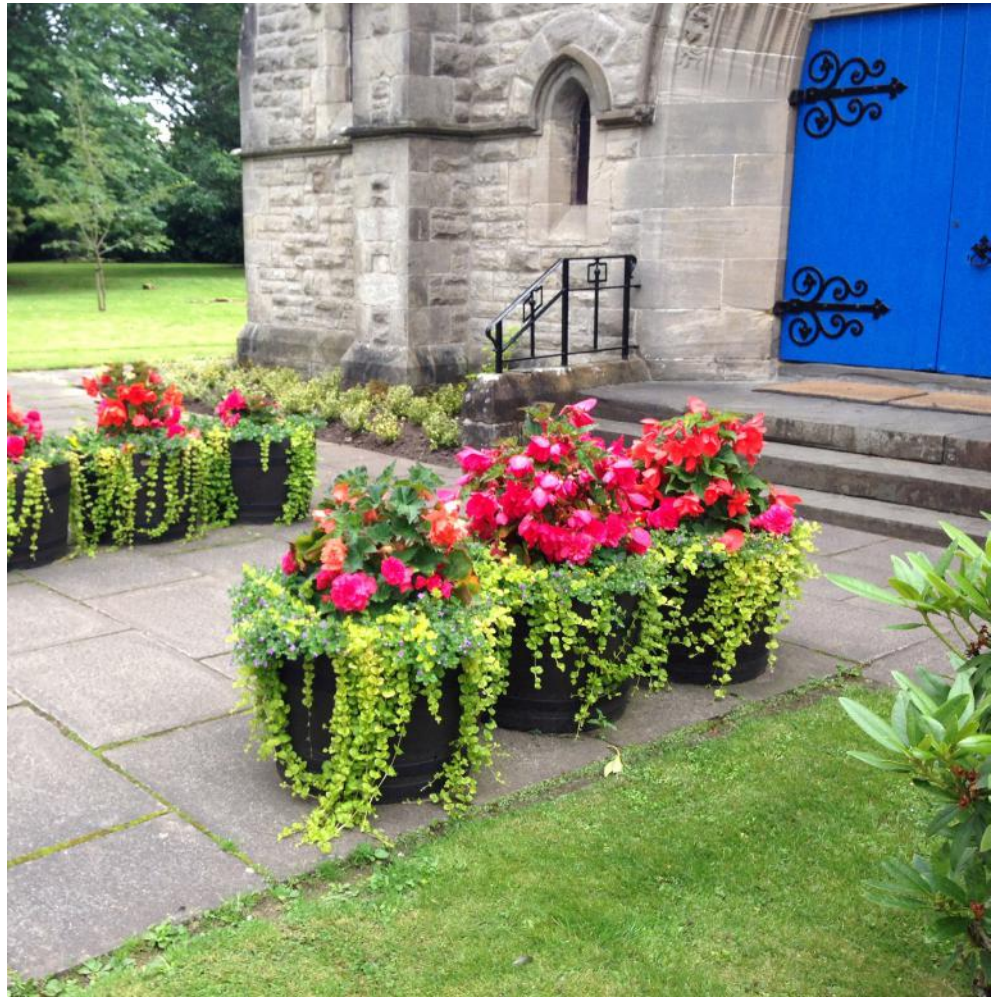
The *Courier* would like to thank Co-operative Food for generously providing the prize for our children's competition.

Congratulations to the winner of the £10 prize in our last edition: Matthew Cox, age 9.

Find 10 differences in the lower picture and ring them to win the £10 voucher. You have three ways to enter. **In each case give your name and age, together with an address or phone number:**

- 1 Take a photo with your phone and email it to competition@kfcf.co.uk.
- 2 Cut out the picture and place it in the postbox outside the Village Hall.
- 3 If you don't want to cut the pictures out then you can write down the differences and email them to competition@kfcf.co.uk or on a piece of paper in the postbox outside the Village Hall.

Please enter, we love to hear from you and if you like our puzzles.



Solutions to page 41

All Family Wordsearch

London, Perth, Glasgow, Stirling
Edinburgh, Dundee, Inverness,
Aberdeen, Belfast, Cardiff,

Sudoku and Children's Sudoku

4	2	1	8	9	5	7	6	3
9	8	5	3	7	6	2	4	1
7	3	6	2	1	4	8	9	5
3	1	8	7	4	2	6	5	9
5	4	7	1	6	9	3	2	8
2	6	9	5	3	8	1	7	4
8	7	4	6	5	3	9	1	2
1	9	2	4	8	7	5	3	6
6	5	3	9	2	1	4	8	7

1	3	2	4
2	4	3	1
3	1	4	2
4	2	1	3

Children's Word Pyramid

Set, Rest, Trees, Enters, Present

Word Ladder

Town, Torn, Tarn, Tare, Take, Lake

Five-Clue Crossword

Down: 1 Tripod 2 Legend

4 Dimmed

Across: 1 Tinsel 3 Parade,

Word Wheel

Halloween, allow, anew, awe, awl,
ew, hallow, hew, hewn, how,
howl, law, lawn, low, new, newel,
now, owe, owl, own, wall, wan,
wane, weal, wean, well, whale,
wheal, wheel, when, who, whoa,
whole, woe, won

Craw Canny

Winter is the time of year when feeding our garden birds has greatest impact. For small songbirds in harsh and freezing conditions, it can be the difference between life and death. In supplying our feathered friends with nuts, seeds, fat balls and the like, we are rewarded with close up views of various little gems, temporarily tamer while stocking up on supplies. But while blue tits, chaffinches and robins are always a delight and actively encouraged, not every visitor to the bird table is so welcome. Some larger birds, if present in numbers or hogging the feeders, are often clapped and shooed away.

Crows have long had an uneasy relationship with humans and are probably the least welcome in our gardens. Often seen as crop pests, predators and general nuisances, they can be at the receiving end of some pretty harsh treatment in the countryside. And whether it's in a rural or urban garden, the commoner crow species have a tendency to arrive en masse, chase away the smaller (prettier) birds and, unchecked, clean out the feeders within minutes.

Famed for being intelligent with a gift for problem solving, there are, in fact, eight species of crow breeding in Scotland. We have just about all of them here, most often encountering the jackdaw, rook, carrion crow and magpie in and around the village.

Omnivorous and opportunistic, the magpie is perhaps the most familiar corvid. Indeed it is one of the nation's most recognisable birds. Superstition and a general

wariness of this alleged thief of silver, as well as its habit of taking eggs and young birds from the nest, do nothing to increase its popularity. But a closer look reveals a most beautiful and exotic creature. Its feathers are not only canvas for bold blocks of black and white; they are also glazed with subtle blue and green iridescence, while its slender body is accentuated by that outrageous tail. It surely deserves as much of a welcome as anything else to our gardens in winter.

Soaring over Dumgoyne you will also see the raven, the largest member of the crow family – indeed the largest songbird of all, being bigger than a buzzard! In woods around Killearn you may hear the screeching call of the jay, a beautiful but often wary bird, usually only coming into gardens as a last resort. Species number seven is the hooded crow – the north-western counterpart of the carrion crow. I have only seen a hybrid 'hoodie' x carrion crow here – you need to travel a wee bit further north to see the pure ones. The last species is the chough – an extremely rare and local coastal species. If one of those turned up here, I would, of course, be... well 'choughed'!

MARTIN CULSHAW



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

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Rural Stirling Housing Association
Stirling Road, Doone FK16 6AA

01786 841101
enquiries@rsha.org.uk
www.rsha.org.uk

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the *Courier* spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 15 March 2021.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 22 January 2021. Contact Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 22 January. Please send them to:

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