



Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 19

SPRING 2011

£1



Winter Blues?

Starting in November 2010 right through to January this year, we experienced one of the worst winters we've had for a quite a while.

The village was all-but cut off. Householders had to dig themselves out, streets became impassable, cars were abandoned and supplies, particularly bread and milk, flew off the shelves in the Co-op and Spar, as Killearn dug in for a long hard winter. Ye gods, the situation was so bad that people had to walk!

Part of the culture in this land of ours is that when things get a bit tough, we all seem to pull together and thus it was in Killearn. Residents got

their shovels out and cleared their streets, the mail got through and neighbour kept an eye on neighbour.

Because we had to walk, we met friends and neighbours we had not seen or spoken to in a long time. A trip to the shops took forever because folks were



standing blethering to people they had not seen for ages; there was, undoubtedly, a coming together of a community spirit; we were all in the same boat and sharing the same experiences. That side of our winter blues was in fact very enjoyable and rewarding.

However, better weather kicked in and things in the village got back to normal, which is fine, but wouldn't it be nice for us all if we could retain some of the community spirit we experienced over the winter; Killearn would be a better place because of it. *TID*

Electoral Register

The new Register of Electors published on 1 December 2010 shows an increase in the number of voters eligible to vote in future elections. However this increase may only be temporary as notices of deletion have still to be posted to households who had not responded to the annual voter registration forms sent this year and last year. When no return is made and the Electoral Registration Officer cannot verify who is eligible to remain registered to vote he requires to remove the names from his Register of Electors. An early estimate is that over 4,000 electors in the Forth Valley Area may have to be removed for not returning their forms in 2010.

Anyone who is still eligible and is not registered or receives a deletion notice needs to apply to register as soon as possible, as not being registered can cause credit difficulties in the future as well as preventing you from voting.

Forms are available in all local libraries and can be downloaded from:

www.saa.gov.uk/central



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COME AWAY IN AND SIT YERSEL DOON THE KETTLES SINGIN' IT'S TIME FUR A BLETHER.

*Killearn Courier
published by:*



Anyone wishing to contribute to the Summer edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 13 August 2011.

Advertisements and artwork should be handed to one of our Advertising Executives by Friday, 8 July. Contact Gwen Stewart on 550856 or Sara Hudson on 550806.

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by Friday, 8 July. Send them to:

36 New Endrick Road, G63 9QT or email to: courier@kcfc.co.uk

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Editorial

Here we are with the first issue of 2011 which sees the *Courier* starting on its 6th year of publication. This issue has 36 pages instead of the normal 32, a far cry from Issue 1 in March 2005 which had only 16 pages. Many thanks are due to our readers, contributors and advertisers for all their support over the years. A very hearty thanks goes to the *Courier* Team for lasting the course!

Since our last issue, which was delivered at the start of what proved to be one of the hardest winters the Village has experienced, we have all 'weathered some interesting storms' with snow lying for weeks and surfaces more akin to skating ponds rather than pedestrian footways. However, we endured the worst nature threw at us and we can now look at the colourful displays of snowdrops, daffodils and crocuses and wonder what all the fuss was about.

We mentioned in the last issue that we were exploring some ways in which we could perhaps sponsor something which would involve the Community and our initial thoughts were along the lines of holding some sort of competition, with the possibility of prizes and winning articles appearing in the *Courier*. Needless to say all of this involved a lot of head-scratching!

However, fortune smiled upon us when one of our number, Nick Hawkins, suggested that perhaps we could do something in relation to the Village Hall project and off he went to meet the Village Hall Group.

The outcome is an exciting new community project being launched to document the conversion, capture village recollections and provide a lasting account of the life of the Village Hall.

The Centre Pages tell you all about it and give you the chance of becoming involved; some villagers already have so there's nothing to stop you!

Finally, sadly, the village has lost a number of residents and former residents recently and the *Courier* extends our sympathies to the families of those remembered here.

Ian

Ian Dickie, Editor



- 17 March Rotary Community Concert by Central Scotland Police Band, Village Hall, 7 pm
- 18 March PTA Killearn's Got Talent, Village Hall, 7 pm
Golden Years Club Dinner at Black Bull, 7 pm
- 20 March Strathendrick Singers Spring Concert, Killearn Kirk, 7 pm
- 24 March Drymen History Society, "Quakers in Scotland since 1635", talk by Paul Burton, Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm
- 25 March Strathendrick Film Society, "The Ghost Writer", Balfron Campus, 7.30 pm

- 2 April Country Market, Killearn Village Hall
- 6 April Strathendrick Rotary Charity Bridge, Village Hall, 7 for 7.30 pm
- 15 April Strathendrick Film Society, "The Illusionist", Balfron Campus, 7.30 pm
- 17 April Rotary Classic Car Tour. Entry forms on Rotary Website, contact Joe Norman 01877 382075
- 28 April Drymen History Society, "The History of Sheep Farming around Luss", talk by Ian MacEachern followed by AGM, Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm

- 6 May PTA, Bag to School Primary School, 8.45-9.15 am
- 7 May Country Market, Killearn Village Hall
- 21 May KCHS & Friends of Guiding Gardeners Market & Coffee Morning. Plants etc for sale, Village Hall, 10 am-12 noon

- 4 June Country Market, Village Hall
- 4 June Golden Years Club, Summer Outing, phone Bob Ballantyne, 550310
- 9 June PTA, BBQ, Primary School, 5-8 pm

- 13 Aug Rotary AMAM Golf, Balfron Golf Course, entry forms on Rotary website from mid-June, contact Bob Glass 550646
- 20 Aug Horticultural Society Show, Village Hall. Entries can be staged on Friday evening 7.30-9 pm or Saturday morning 7.30-10 am. Doors open 2-4.30 pm, prizes will be announced at 2.30 pm. For Schedule, contact Glenda, 550142. PLEASE NOTE DATE IS ONE WEEK EARLIER THAN USUAL

If you have any notices for the Summer issue of the Diary (mid-August to mid-November) please contact Pat Ryall (550713).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Please, BoS, may I have some (more)?

Dear Sir

It was not only Oliver Twist who asked for more and got nothing in return. In our village, you can forget the 'more'; it would be nice just to get 'some' in the first place! The good citizens of Killearn who are Bank of Scotland customers or who use the Bank's 'hole in the wall' in the village often struggle to get 'some', never mind 'more'!

The *Courier* regrets that, due to other commitments, that Anne (Lennie) Lindsay has had to resign as our copy editor. The Editorial Team thanks Lennie for her invaluable contribution to the success of the *Courier*.

Anyone who would like to join the team in this role please contact us.

It seems to me to be incredible that, in this day and age of technology, this particular item is frequently out of order, leaving villagers with little option but to head off to Balfron; an option only for those who have a car or who have time to get a bus there and back! There are other cash points in the village but they do not provide a 24-hour service.

Surely it is not beyond the wit of BoS to provide a much-needed service to our rural community without the constant breakdowns? After all, we pay handsomely for the 'privilege' of using the Bank facilities and have a right to expect a professional return.

Yours
Fair Scunnered
Station Road

Walk more– feel the difference

Would you like to start walking more for pleasure or exercise?

Would you like company to walk with?

Would you like to discover walks in your local area?

Active Stirling organises short weekly volunteer-led walks locally in *Killearn & Blanefield*. Anyone can join our walks and they are free. The aim of the led walk programme is to encourage people to start walking regularly in their local area. A more active lifestyle can improve physical health and promote good mental health and well-being.

17 Mar Pipe Track. Meet at Blanefield Church car park by War Memorial (*please consider parking on main street as car park is small*)

24 Mar Gartness Road. Meet at Wishing Well

31 Mar Park Walk. Meet at Mugdock Country Park (*Visitor Centre not the Garden Centre*)

7 Apr Village Walk. Meet at Killearn Health Centre

14 Apr Cameron Moor. Meet at Finnoch Toll

21 & 28 Apr No walks

All walks start at 2 pm – please arrive promptly at the meeting point. For further information or for directions to the meeting point contact:

Shelagh (550836) or Ann (07746 45384).

For more information about the Stirling Walking Network contact Tricia Cumming: T: 01786 432323

email: cummingp@activestirling.org.uk



While scot-carting, paint-balling and sausage sizzles are necessary ingredients to make up a healthy Scout timetable for the forthcoming months, the true spirit of scouting remains *doing our best*. That is why we have chosen a community-service focus for our badge-work this year. We want to help you with any odd jobs such as painting fences, gardening, moving furniture or debris, etc. Watch out for our leaflet popping through your letterbox and for our Scout post-boxes at vantage points throughout the village.

Being prepared for a new venue while the hall is refurbished proves challenging. At present Scouts meet in the Village Hall fortnightly, finishing at the end of June. A possible solution is to bring forward winter sessions and meet fortnightly over the summer holidays for outdoor challenges. During the winter we would continue to meet monthly, but undertake activities such as the climbing wall.

If you have any queries about the above, please contact any member of the scout team:

Martin Gibb (441030), Liz Clark, Barry Moore or Kate O'Neill



Alzheimer Scotland
Action on Dementia

On Sunday 27 March at the Xscape Centre in Braehead, Glasgow, Alzheimer Scotland will be launching its first ever charity Adrenaline Drop. This first event of its kind in the UK is also being supported by Epilepsy Scotland and Sense Scotland. The Adrenalin Drop is the latest extreme experience in the charity events world and offers the participant the free-fall adventure of their life. To register costs only £10, with participants being asked to raise a minimum of £120 in sponsorship. For full details and an entry form:

telephone: 0131 243 1474, or email: events@alzscot.org



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Heron House Early Years,
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t: 0141 810 5777
e: crookston@heronhousenurseries.co.uk

The Golden Years Club

The *Golden Years Club* was formerly known as *Killearn Old Folks' Treat* which was started in 1949. Hugh McArthur joined the committee in 1962 and after 45 years service he and his fellow committee members handed over the reins to current Chairman Peter Rea, Teresa Prescott (Secretary) and Bob Ballantyne (Treasurer). After consulting our members we recently changed the name to *Killearn Golden Years Club*.

In March 2010 46 people attended our free dinner in the Black Bull where entertainment after the meal was provided by Sara Melville and Katherine Muldownie of Get Reel fame. This was followed in June by a coach trip to Aberfeldy, with lunch at the Kenmore Inn, returning via the Sma' Glen. We passed round the hat on the bus and people generously donated towards the cost.

In September we had a fund-raising Musical Evening in the Church Hall with tea and home baking and a raffle for prizes donated by our supporters. The music was provided by Sara Melville (fiddle), Fergus Evans (saxophone), Beth Taylor (piano/songs), Robin Versteeg and Alison Williams (piano/oboe). Yvonne Bauwens played two of her own arrangements on piano.

After the interval Craigallion – a group from Milngave featuring Sandy Hay, George McIlwham and Norman Currie – entertained us with accordion, flute and Scots songs with which everyone joined in.

We have been funded recently by grants from Stirling Council and the Graham Trust and also some of the Killearn Kirk's watchnight service collection for which we have been very grateful. This year, and for the next three years, Killearn Trust have agreed to give us a grant – again very much appreciated.

This year's events include the Black Bull dinner on Friday 18 March with entertainment by Joyce Begg (recitations) and Billy McIsaac (accordion), a bus outing (venue to be selected by popular vote) on Saturday 4 June and a Variety Evening on Saturday 10 September in the Church Hall.

Other than living in the parish there is no criteria for membership and, subject to us having sufficient funds, anyone who feels they are enjoying the 'golden years' of their life is more than welcome.

If anyone with fresh ideas on events and fundraising would like to join the committee please contact :

Peter (550432), Teresa (550050)
or Bob (550310).

Bob Ballantyne

Feel Like a Wee Night Out?



After last winter when the weather made us housebound, huddling round our fires wishing for better, warmer days don't you just wish for something you could enjoy in the company of your friends; something different, something to lift your spirits and banish the memories of a long hard winter? Well, never fear, the answer is here!

If you want a great night, guaranteed to get your feet tapping and head nodding, come to Killearn Village Hall on Thursday 17 March, where the Rotary Club of Strathendrick are holding their Annual Community Concert. The doors open at 7pm and entry is free. You get a cup of tea and a biscuit at the interval and a chance of winning some great raffle prizes.

Entertainment will once again be provided by the Central Scotland Police Ceilidh Band and if they don't get you moving, no one will! You can sing along with the band if you like. Some folk even got up and had a wee impromptu dance last year. So come along and enjoy the music – you'll leave feeling a lot better!

TID

Stirling Council Library Service

Stirling Council Library Service is now offering a new and free service. Families living in an area served by the Mobile Library Service can now order up to 20 books at a time online from our extensive catalogues. We will advise you when your requested items are available for collection from the mobile library. The well-stocked library vehicle comes to the village each Thursday. The timetable is on a two-weekly cycle as shown by the timetable on the right.

The library service has a varied selection of books from old favourites through to the most up-to-date best sellers in all formats. Access is also available to adult and junior encyclopaedias on our website. A selection of audio books can also be downloaded from our website and this is also free. The books are available to download to your computer, MP3 player or iPod.

Access Your Library Online

You now can renew your books, requests books and find out which books you have out all from the comfort of your own home simply by visiting Stirling Council Libraries webpages at: <http://lib.stirling.gov.uk>

The local stops are:

<i>Week 1:</i>		Beech Drive	3.15 - 3.35
		New Endrick Road	3.45 - 4.05
		Allan Road	4.10 - 4.30
<i>Week 2:</i>		Branziert Road North	3.40 - 4.15
		Graham Road	5.30 - 6.50
Week 1		Week 2	
Mar	3, 17, 31	Mar	10, 24
Apr	14, 28	Apr	7, 21,
May	12, 26	May	5, 19
Jun	9, 23	Jun	2, 16, 30
Jul	7, 21	Jul	14, 28
Aug	4, 18	Aug	11, 25
Sep	1, 15, 29	Sep	8, 22
Oct	13, 27	Oct	6, 20
Nov	10, 24	Nov	3, 17
Dec	8, 22	Dec	1, 15, 29

An interview with Reverend Lee Messeder

Rev Lee Messeder was successfully elected as Minister at Killearn Kirk and started his new post in November 2010. Lee is an active 53-year-old who is married to Evelyn, a speech therapist at the new Forth Valley Royal Hospital at Larbert. They have four children, with the youngest just starting as a student at St Andrews University. Lee has been in the position now for three months and I caught up with him at the Manse on a wet Tuesday evening in February.

What are your initial thoughts now that you've been in Killearn a few months?

So far it's been a very warm and welcoming experience. The enthusiasm and sincerity of the people who have been behind us as a family to help us settle in has been fantastic. Killearn as a place is amazingly beautiful. You wake up and look at the hills and the countryside and it is breathtaking. The initial attraction was the profile of the role advertised by the Church and I hadn't fully realised how beautiful Killearn was until I got further on in the process of applying. It was a pleasant surprise.

What plans do you have for the coming year?

I've already started a Book Group, which will run for 10 weeks and I hope there will be future classes. We have started holding Family services every five to six weeks where all ages are welcome to come and worship. A future addition to Kirk events will be a regular evening service where the format is less rigid. I plan to develop a stronger link with the Primary School and I'd also like to see how we can develop a relationship with Ballikinrain School as part of the Church supporting and encouraging their work.

What do you do in your spare time?

I really like cycling and walking. We're pleased that the West Highland Way is just a mile away. Three years ago



I walked the West Highland Way with Evelyn and our two youngest children carrying our own tents and really enjoyed it, beautiful scenery. When we lived in Glasgow, we cycled from Glasgow to Pitlochry, again carrying our tents. That was a beautiful cycle ride. I am also an avid reader.

What book(s) are you reading just now?

I like to have several books on the go at any one time and currently I'm reading *Christianity: A Global History* by David Chidester which presents a condensed history of Christianity. I'm also reading *A view from the Foothills* by Chris Mullin, an ex Labour MP who has published his diaries covering the period of New Labour from 1999 to 2007, including the Iraq war.

Tell me a bit about the Book Group you've just started?

The aim is to get people together to discuss Christian themes, understand God and challenge preconceived ideas. The book we are reading is *The Good and Beautiful God* by James Bryan Smith. At the first session, we had 26 people and are now running three different sessions every week to accommodate everybody. I'm keen to emphasise that this is not a Bible Study group and everybody is welcome to join.

If you could be a character in a novel you've read, who would you be and why?

Probably Frodo from Lord of the Rings, closely followed by Sam. Frodo is a wonderful character in a classic story of good versus evil who finds the power of the ring really hard to give up. Sam is the faithful companion – dependable, reliable and not swayed by the temptations of the ring.

What are you most proud of?

That would be my children. We have four children. Two of them are married, living in Leicester and two are studying at University. I'm proud of all of them.

Do you have a message for the Community?

My hope and wish would be for the Community to feel very much welcome in the Church and that's really what I'm working hard to do. To feel that anyone can come and I'd love to make it a place where we can all worship God together.

Keep up with all Killearn Kirk services and events, including the Book Group, at:

www.killearnkirk.org.uk

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Killearn Church is *THE KIRK IN ACTION*

It was a year of giving – and one that Killearn Church can be proud to recall as the reaching out to help others took on massive proportions. At the time of the Pakistan flood disaster, a soup and bread lunch raised contributions of cash, bottled water and food packs which were delivered free by Pakistan International Airline while members worked in Afghanistan with International Assistance Mission. Other members visited our sister church in Malawi and delivered pencils/pens/notebooks/jotters for children, baby clothes, knitted blankets for babies, spectacles, mobile phones, laptops and software, all of which were greeted with great enthusiasm and gratitude. Things we take for granted mean so much more to the people and children in Malawi.



At home the Kirk continued to provide clothes for asylum seekers through St Rollox Church together with Christmas gifts for their children. Harvest gifts were distributed to Glasgow City Mission and to local folk while three members of the youth group raised £800 for charities with a coffee morning.

Other members helped locally in voluntary work including Meals on Wheels, Ballikinrain School, Crossroads, and the Strathendrick Welfare Fund. They were also involved in the projects of Killearn Community Futures Company, Guiding, Killearn Community Council, Killearn Golden Years Club, Thursday Club, Christian Aid and Cancer Research, while The Friday Night Thing was established in the church hall for young people.

It is better to give than to receive – that's the motto of THE KIRK IN ACTION.

Bob Ballantyne

Furniture Recycling Project Bringing Benefits



A furniture recycling project launched in June last year is selling unwanted furniture and other household goods to the public, helping people who may be setting up home for the first time or are in need of a one-off item or rebuilding their lives after becoming homeless, and in the process diverting thousands of reusable household items away from landfill.

The Salvation Army manages 'The Valley' with support from Stirling Council's Housing Service, Community Services and the Criminal Justice Service from a showroom at the Imex Business Centre, Craigleith Road, Springkerse, Stirling.

The Valley accepts and sells tables, chairs, suites, beds and white goods as well as soft furnishings such as curtains, linen, cutlery, crockery, pots and pans, lamps and bric-a-brac. If needed, items can be restored and cleaned by Community Service Offenders who are learning valuable new skills while paying back to the community.

The Council's Housing Services and Waste Services are extending the project further by putting in place arrangements to collect all recyclable furniture at the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Lower Polmaise near Fallin and from households requiring a special uplift and transporting it to The Valley for sale. For further information phone 01786 479262, or call in, Monday to Saturday 9am-5pm.

The Drymen Pottery



At The Drymen Pottery we are a café and gift shop by day and bar and restaurant by night. We offer various locally produced meals such as local highland beef and lamb and an extensive use of local suppliers. The traditionally-made fish and chips are one of our most popular dishes. We also offer a wonderful selection of homemade cakes and desserts.

One Saturday a month, in the bar, we have live performances from a variety of bands and singers. The Pottery is the perfect place to host a private function so come and enjoy a special event in our bar, coffee shop or restaurant.

REGISTERED CHILDMINDER

Susan Yuill

8 Birch Road
Killearn G63 9SQ
Tel: 01360 550819
Mobile: 07720 713455
susanyuill@aol.com



Housing

The proposal to build six old people's bungalows on the 'turnip field' is currently being considered in depth. A small Housing sub-group, comprising five members of KCC (one being a Youth member) and Donald Beaton, representing the Football Club, has been set up and has met with officers of Stirling Council. A site has been identified as being the most suitable location and draft plans for the style and layout of the houses have been seen and discussed. The preferred site will allow the largest possible area of the field to remain available for games. A full public consultation, when plans will be displayed, is planned for March. If agreement is reached and planning consent obtained, the project will go ahead and should be completed in 2012.

Winter weather

A report has been submitted to Stirling Council regarding the effect the severe winter weather had on the village. One major problem was caused by the very late clearance of snow and ice in the residential side roads. This led to a great many residents parking their cars on the Main Street and Station Road, leading to a narrowing of the roadway to the extent that, on occasions, the bus service had to be suspended as large vehicles could not get through. A request has been made to Stirling Council that in future more supplies of grit and salt be made available, the positioning of grit bins be reconsidered and that local farmers and contractors be hired sooner to clear snow.

Roads & Traffic Management

In accordance with the Traffic Management Plan, some minor modifications will be undertaken this year. It has been acknowledged that the positioning of the mini-roundabout at the top of Drumbeg Loan is not correct although there has been a welcome reduction in the average speed of traffic exiting the village. Efforts continue to overcome some of the problems caused by the narrow entry to the Spar car park. People who park by the fence cause problems by narrowing the access even further. Advice is to drive right through to the rear of the shop where, on most occasions, there is ample space to park and to allow others to manoeuvre. The one disabled space should be left for those who are entitled to use it. The police advise that parking in the double yellow-lined lay-by (the bus stop) in front of Spar is an offence.

Requests

KCC pursues with Stirling Council requests raised by residents. These include: seats in the bus shelter, a pedestrian crossing at the top of the Well Green lane, more dog litter bins and a thorough cleansing of streets and pavements throughout the village.

As consumers, we are often quick to voice our complaints when things don't run smoothly and it is the job of your Community Council to pass on those complaints. We are grateful to our three elected Councillors for pursuing our concerns with energy and for representing our interests so effectively. We understand that, along with the rest of the country, Stirling Council is faced with the need to make economies and we may need to exercise patience before everything we would like can be delivered.

Brenda Pell

Spring has arrived at.....

<p>16 Main Street Milngavie G62 6BL (Opp M & S)</p>	<h1>driftwood</h1>	<p>Mon—Sat 9am—5.30pm Tel 0141 956 4062</p>
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ANNA SCOTT

Killearn Community Futures

Killearn Community Futures Company (KCFC) began 2011 on a note of confidence. Success breeds success and the achievement of the Village Hall Development Group in securing Scottish Government funding of £1.4 million at a time when funding streams are running out, seems to have generated a community confidence and enthusiasm for more project activity. So the impact from this Group's achievements is already providing benefits.

Although the KCFC groups are all valuable to our community, some have the potential to impact more widely than others. It is encouraging that in a community like ours which has such breadth of talents and generosity of spirit that new projects and ideas continue to surface, each creating its own sphere of energy and excitement. One of the most rewarding aspects of being a KCFC board member is recognising, encouraging and facilitating new projects.

The Sustainable Killearn Group, begun by Killearn Community Council (KCC), is now headed by Heather Wright and getting ready to reach out to everyone for your ideas. So do get involved.

Norman McNab's Paths Group has created partnerships with neighbouring Paths Groups and the Council to formalise a Joint Paths Forum with a combined, powerful voice. My understanding is, that this is a first in Scotland from a community and a potential model for others to follow. This is great news for Access Takers and Landowners and a notable success for our Paths Group.

KCFC continues to work in partnership with KCC, linking the elements which make for a vibrant sustainable community.

*Daye Tucker
Convenor KCFC*

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STEP - Stirling Enterprise Drymen Roadshow for Enterprising Locals

**The Stirling Enterprise (STEP)
Business Gateway advisory team
will be at:**

**The Winnock Hotel, Drymen
on Thursday 17 March 2011,
from 10 am to 4 pm**

offering assistance to local businesses and local people from Drymen and the surrounding villages. Along with STEP's confidential one-to-one business start-up, growth and IT & web appointments, also present on the day will be a selection of partner agencies including a local accountancy firm.

In the morning there will be a short seminar entitled:

'Facebook & Twitter – How to Build Business Through Social Media'
presented by local business woman Jane Lindsey.

To register. or find out more contact:
James Buchanan at Stirling Enterprise
telephone: 01786 463416
jbuchanan@stirling-enterprise.co.uk

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Strathendrick Car Club Chairman's Report

Most cars have been locked away in their garages because of the weather and the winter month's club activities tend to centre round evening meetings. However, the weather even managed to interfere with this and our annual ladies night had to be postponed, eventually taking place at Buchanan Castle Golf Club in January. Our February meeting was a talk by Willie Bennie, a former traffic policeman, who on retirement turned his interest into a job supplying old cars to television and film companies to match the date of the production. He was full of fascinating anecdotes. In one instance, when cars were wanted for The Thirty-nine Steps set just before the outbreak of war in 1914, the producers insisted on cars from the twenties, as the cars from 1914 were not fast enough for the chase scenes! Car buffs complained that the wrong cars had been used, not realising that it was deliberate. Our next meeting on 16 March will also be a speaker night at the golf club.

Meanwhile we are busy carrying out any necessary fettling on our cars, while the committee has been busy

planning events for when the good weather returns.

April is the month for our first big event on 17 April, the Rotary Run, which is heading in the Argyll direction. Our AGM is also in April at the golf club, with a short run in company beforehand, weather permitting.

Last May we tried a fairly long event, with a run to Boat of Garten where we stayed overnight. This went so well that a similar event has been arranged for May this year. The route is a closely guarded secret, but the overnight stop is at Cairnbaan, on the Crinan canal. Although the hotel there has more rooms than we occupied last year, all rooms are already booked and we are desperately seeking accommodation nearby.

R J Livingstone

The club's annual competition run takes place on 19 June. This is a relatively easy test of driving and navigation. Details of the route, and, most importantly, the meal stop, are announced at the start. Last year we went through amazing minor roads to Portavadie, where there is an excellent restaurant at the marina. The route planners have their work cut out to keep the standards up this year.

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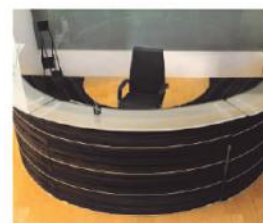
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Strathendrick Classic Car Club

1929 MGM

In 1985 an advertisement appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* for a 1929 MGM. As I was about to retire and having competed in rallies, sprints and hill climbs, the idea of restoring a 1929 car seemed like a good retirement project. I visited the seller who had arranged for all the loose components to be set up to look like a complete car. However on examination it was obvious that the wooden body was rotten, the hood, seats and trim either missing or rotten, but the chassis, suspension axles, wings and wheels were in restorable condition. The engine and gearbox had been dismantled but most parts seemed to be there. A price of £1,000 was agreed and the 'car' was taken on a trailer to Croftamie.

MG stands for Morris Garages, the retail outlet for Morris cars which was run by Cecil Kimber. He foresaw the potential of a sporting version of a Morris and in 1923 started modifying Bullnose Morrises and badging them as MGs. In 1928 the first Morris Minor was produced and Kimber realised that he could produce an affordable sports car by fitting a two-seater body on the Minor chassis. Also the engine had an overhead camshaft which gave the potential for more power and by fitting a larger SU carburettor the power was increased from 20 to 27hp.

The first of these MGs were built in Oxford but at £175 demand proved to be so high that a new factory was built in 1929 at Abingdon, where a total of 3,235 MGs were built. This was to be the home for all MGs and Austin Healeys until production ceased in 1979 when over half a million MGBs had been built. All subsequent MGs, MGFs and saloons were built in the Austin factory in Longbridge, Birmingham.

Restoration of my MG started in 1986. The chassis frame was shot blasted and painted and mounted on trestles when the suspension, axles, wheels etc were added. The engine was rebuilt, now incorporating a micronic oil filter and by 1996 the engine was installed in the chassis. A big day when the engine was started and the incomplete chassis driven out and back into the garage. A body based on an ash frame covered in plywood was purchased. It was treated with Cuprinol and the car was trailered to a coach trimmer who covered it in yellow fabric and made a hood, seats and carpets.

One problem with restoring a car is that it can't be tested on public roads until it has passed its MOT test, so it went for its first test largely untested. It passed but the brakes by modern standards were terrible. I have since redesigned them, using the original parts, and they are now acceptable for the performance of the car

Now that it is roadworthy the car has taken part in numerous events mostly with the MG Car Club or the local Strathendrick Car Club. It often wins a prize for the oldest car completing the event, and has even won an award for



the oldest combined age of car and driver! It spent two years as an exhibit at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford. The speedometer was irreparable but I managed to find a new/unused one from a Morris Minor. The car does about 1,000 miles a year so the odometer is approaching, 9,999 miles when it will return to 0.

The car has proved very reliable but I try not to use it after dark as the added tail lights, stop lights and indicators are too much for the dynamo. According to the catalogue the top speed is 60 mph but I am mechanically sympathetic, so it and I are happy at 40 to 50 mph.

The picture, courtesy of Hamish Gow, shows the car taking part in the Drymen Gala Day. DL

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Are *YOU* a Young Photographer?

The Rotary Club of Strathendrick, along with Keep Scotland Beautiful, has taken up the challenge issued by Rotary International to find enthusiastic young photographers within the Strathendrick area for the Rotary Young Photographer of the Year Competition 2011.

The theme for the competition is **Have some pride - keep Scotland tidy** and the judges will be looking for imagination and style as well as technical merit, content and composition.

There are three age categories: under 12 years, 12 - 15 years and 16 - 18 years. Photographs can be snapped with digital or film cameras, in colour or monochrome. Entries must be submitted to the Rotary Club of Strathendrick, c/o Black Bull Hotel,



Rotary
Young Photographer 2011



2 The Square, Killearn, G63 9NG by Friday 1 April 2011.

A winner from each category will go through to the Scottish Grand Final where experienced judges, selected by the Scottish Photographic Federation will be joined by a representative from Keep Scotland Beautiful. Winners will receive trophies and certificates donated by Keep Scotland Beautiful at an Award ceremony and Jessops gift vouchers, with the overall winner going on a professional photo shoot with Maverick Photo Agency.

Entry forms can be obtained from the Rotary Club Secretary, Steve Holden (01360 550764) or by following the Young Photographer 2011 link at www.rotary1020.org.uk

TID

Get Reel News

Get Reel had a fantastic winter warming St Andrew's night concert and ceilidh on 27 November 2010 in Killearn Village Hall. Over 100 attended, mostly families, braving the wintry weather and slippery pavements to come along to what proved to be a warm, friendly and thoroughly enjoyable night. The band was led by Ruaridh Campbell our fiddle tutor, with the accordion player of *Last Tram Tae Auchenshuggle* fame and guitarist adding to the great sound. The event was part of the Scottish Government's Scotland's Winter Festivals programme that included St Andrew's, Christmas and Hogmanay events throughout Scotland. Get Reel were able to take part in this due to their



ongoing partnership with the Tolbooth in Stirling who had made a successful bid for funding to run events.

Get Reel continues to run classes at Balfour High School during term time on a Tuesday; 4-6 pm for kids in fiddle, guitar and whistle and adults 7-9.30pm

in fiddle, guitar and mandolin. We are always keen to hear from people who want to learn and at present are looking for adult beginners to make up an adult beginners guitar class. We are also developing our group work and are always keen to hear from people who already play an instrument and just want to join in. Thanks to an award from Stirling Community grant scheme we were able to send two tutors on a tutor training course to Skye and purchase new banners for events.

Please look out for details of our forthcoming concert and family ceilidh in March and support us. For more information contact:

Sara (01360 550770) or visit our blogspot for more information:
<http://getreel-uk.blogspot.com>

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Dinner for a Jubilee



Roy Burdon & Duncan Laing

For local Probus members it's onward into the next 25 years. Founded in December 1985, the Killearn-based Probus Club of Strathendrick held its inaugural meeting in January 1986 and has never looked back, now having a full complement of 90 members. This continuing success was officially celebrated at a Jubilee Dinner held at Buchanan Castle Golf Club in November 2010.

Principal guest was Ian Dickie who, as this year's President of the Rotary Club of Strathendrick, presented his felicitations. Particularly significant was the official sponsorship of his Rotary Club in the establishment of the Probus Club in Killearn. Back in 1985, investigations into the possibilities of starting a Probus Club in the area were encouraging, and by the beginning of the next year the Club was underway with help and sponsorship from the local Rotary. Further support came from the Bank of Scotland who agreed to donate a suitable Presidential Badge of Office and subsequently Robin Taylor, the then Rotary President, presented the fledgling Probus Club with a ceremonial Gavel to mark the sponsorship.

At the Jubilee Dinner, an official 25th birthday cake was cut by present Chairman, Roy Burdon of Killearn, after which members and guests were entertained by Duncan Laing from Croftamie, the oldest past Chairman of the Strathendrick Club. In a highly entertaining address he effortlessly took the audience with him on a light-hearted, yet personal trip, highlighting some of the memorable and humorous events of the Club's last 25 years. This signal contribution was then recognised when the Club conferred upon him well-deserved Honorary Membership.

To wind up the evening, there was a short recital performed by a group of highly gifted young musicians from Douglas Academy in Milngavie. They were introduced by Mark Evans, the Academy's Head of Music, who is also better known here as the Musical Director of the Strathendrick Singers. He outlined the role of his Music Department in nurturing young musical talent drawn from the West of Scotland. The quality of this activity was soon clear from memorable performances from Cavan Campbell (violin) and Mark Taylor (flute), both superbly accompanied by Lithuanian pianist Lauryna Sablevicinte – names to look out for in the future.

For the Probus Club of Strathendrick, if the last 25 years are anything to go by, the next 25 will be something to look forward to.



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Ronnie's Story

Ronnie, 64, from Stirling, has cared for wife Ann for over 19 years. With MS and osteoarthritis in her spine she needs 24-hour care and he had to give up his job 16 years ago to look after her full time.

The main worry for Ronnie is the deterioration in Ann's health. She has a progressive form of MS, which has reached the stage where she can only move her head and left hand. Should her left hand no longer work Ronnie will have to feed her. He already sees to most of her everyday needs such as washing, dressing, toileting, lifting her in and out of her wheelchair and cooking. As she cannot move, he also gets up at intervals of four to six hours during the night to change her position and make her more comfortable.

"If Ann was in care it would take three shifts of people working around the clock to look after her."

Ronnie does not have the opportunity to go out much, which inevitably impacts on his own health. He admits "being in one place all the time can be depressing. It can be claustrophobic". Their family helps out; when he attends regular carer support and training events their daughter comes round to look after Ann. However Ronnie and Ann are concerned about the future, explaining "We do not want our family to have to do this in the future as it would deprive them of their freedom."

Despite the strains of the situation, their relationship has endured. Ronnie says: "You have to accept things as they are. In 41 years we have never had a serious argument."

However, Ann's condition makes it difficult for them to plan for the future, as they don't know how her health will change. At an age when many couples would be starting to think of retirement, Ronnie says: "We can't plan ahead."

When asked what could help he replies: "There's not enough recognition of what a carer does. When I fill in forms there's no category for full time carer; no-one understands what that is."

If you can identify any of the issues highlighted in this story then you maybe are a carer. For further information, advice or support please contact:

Stirling Carers Centre, 65-69 Barnton Street, Stirling, FK8 1HH.
Telephone: 01786 447003 or email: info@stirlingcarers.co.uk

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers are also delivering support and information sessions for carers in your area at the McIntock Hall in Balforn. If you are interested in further information please contact:

Ian McCourt telephone: 01324 611510
or email ianmccourt@centralcarers.co.uk

Care with Confidence

Do you help look after someone who could not manage without your help.

If you do then we could help you learn new skills and access support.

**Free sessions for unpaid carers will start on Wednesday afternoons
9th March in the McIntock Hall, Balforn.**

If you are interested please contact Ian McCourt (*details above*)



**The Princess Royal Trust
Carers Centre
Registered Charity number SCO 15975**

Mary Cares for Carers



Muriel Holroyd, Jan Biggart & Mary

Mary Fraser recently had one of those birthdays ending with an '0' which was celebrated with a party in Killearn Village Hall on 29 January 2011. She generously asked for donations to Crossroads West Stirlingshire in lieu of presents.

I had the privilege of saying a few words to raise the awareness of those both from Killearn and from elsewhere about the greatly needed and much valued provision of respite care for carers provided by Crossroads. Ruaridh Fraser and Calum Biggart went round with collecting buckets and the splendid sum of £538.11 was donated by Mary's friends.

Crossroads West Stirlingshire is very appreciative and would like to convey warm thanks to all Mary's friends via the *Courier*.

Muriel Holroyd
Crossroads West Stirlingshire Forum



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Colourful Killearn



After successfully joining the Killearn Community Futures fold at the AGM in October 2010, it has been business as usual for the Colourful Killearn volunteers. Summer bedding to remove from the tubs, replacing with the bulbs that carry the promise of spring through the dark, cold days. And boy, has it been cold – very seasonal while we were putting up the Christmas tree

outside the Kirk, if a bit hard on the fingers and toes. Thanks go to Eden Christmas trees for supplying the tree, and to the hardy CK stalwarts who risked severe frostbite to get the festive lights in place. To become a volunteer or find out more about Colourful Killearn please contact:

Iain Bowie (550349)



2011 Census

The 2011 Census, Scotland's biggest population count, will take place on Sunday 27 March 2011. As one of the biggest logistical undertakings by the public sector in Scotland, the census will see questionnaires delivered to around 2.5 million households. The completion of the census questionnaire is required by law and everyone needs to be included. The census asks the same questions of us all to build a reliable picture of the characteristics of people and households. Census questions ask about our circumstances, such as age, health and accommodation and the statistical information generated provides the basis for properly planned and funded services such as health, education and transport. Further details on Scotland's Census 2011 can be found at:

www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk

A thank you from the Hudson family

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us raise funds for our middle son George's gap year trip to India with Raleigh International. All those who came to his curry night, the Rotary and generous individuals have helped him raise almost £3000 needed for his three-month trip. As the *Courier* goes to print, he will be in India helping in a local community – a truly life-changing opportunity for an 18-year old.

Many thanks from us all.

Sara Hudson

old mill gift shop

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A year in the life of a novice Killearn Grower!

Killearn Growers started as an experiment in January 2010 with a small group of people who loved to grow fruit and vegetables and wished to get together to share excess crops, knowledge, experience and resources. The group was limited to 15 plots in the first year; plots being back gardens or landshare arrangements. The group has learned a lot from each other, both novice and experienced growers alike, and the new season has started with the addition of 15 more plots.

For someone who can kill houseplants at the blink of an eye, an invitation to join a group wishing to grow and share vegetables was rather daunting! Most of the group had some experience of growing their own vegetables and those who didn't, appeared to be keen gardeners...I seemed to be the odd one out, having done neither! During the dark days of January last year our meetings began when we discussed raised beds, soil, plants and seeds and my steep learning curve began! These evenings became social evenings and new friends were soon made.

By March a work party had erected raised beds for those who wanted them and soil and manure was bought in bulk. I was given some suggestions for things to grow. By April the onions were planted and I had a feeling that just maybe this was actually going to work! Disaster then struck a few days later when Charlie the sprocker spaniel, fuelled by the scent of chicken manure, decided to dig them all up and I awoke to find them scattered all over the grass! Following a severe reprimand to Charlie, the onions were replanted along with pak choi, courgettes, cabbage, leeks and potatoes.

Gradually as the warmer days of summer approached green shoots began to appear from the onions and



leeks and the raised bed became alive. Lettuces were then planted along with tomatoes in hanging baskets.

My family were amazed that I could have actually grown all this and so was I! When my lettuces ran out there were offers of lettuces from the other growers and the sharing began. At one point we all had more vegetables than we could all use so a stall was set up at the Wee Green Market.

Instead of indoor meetings, we began the popular 'veg patch safari' where we would go to different gardens armed with a bottle of wine and check on progress. It was an opportunity for us all to learn from each other about what worked and what wasn't so good. A website was set up and hints and tips along with recipe ideas began to grow! After a hard day at work it became very satisfying coming home to pick fresh

lettuce, courgettes and potatoes. At the Hoolie the growers were auctioned as a prize for a garden clear up. The lucky winners provided us with cool drinks and lunch and in turn I hope we provided a garden makeover! The season culminated in a harvest festival on a sunny afternoon where we all brought some homegrown produce to add to the barbeque and fun and laughs were had by all!

By the end of the season my onions and leeks were picked to be used over the winter and the tomatoes, which remained green, were set on a sunny windowsill where they gradually turned red and were still being eaten in October when the raised bed was once again bare.

As I write this I reflect on the camaraderie we had over the year and how easy it actually was to grow vegetables with regular watering and good advice from my fellow growers. A further satellite group has been formed since we began and we plan to help them get up and running. The bags of lettuce from Tesco have long since lost their appeal, so the planning begins again for 2011!

If you are interested in learning more about Killearn Growers, visit our website at www.killearngrowers.org or contact Sandra Burt (01360 551018).

Susan Cartwright



Killearn Growers barbecue – testing their produce

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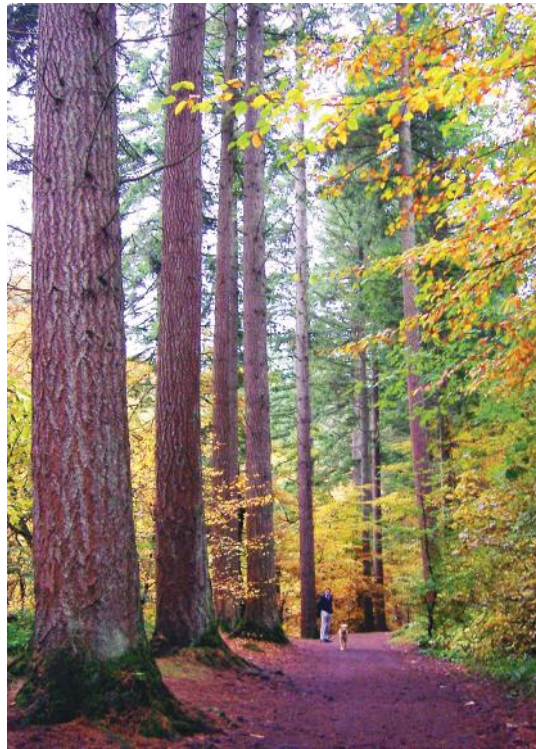
We, in what is known as ‘the free world’, generally consider ourselves to be very lucky. We don’t have to kowtow to any overlord. We can elect our own representatives, and if we don’t like what they do, we can change them. We have freedom of speech, although that can sometimes be a double-edged sword. And we can protest.

The trouble with demonstrating is that every other news bulletin shows some protest or other. Either some foreign embassy is being besieged by a chanting horde shrill with outrage, or some little school threatened with closure sports a valiant crew of mothers and children at the gate with their homemade banners. The risk is that we become immune. Just another protest.

But now and then, one of these causes will strike a genuine alarm bell. At the time of writing, mention has been made in the news of selling off the Forest of Dean into private ownership, along with other forests and public spaces in England. Whether or not this will ever come to pass, who knows, and it hopefully wouldn’t happen at speed, but what an awful thought! These places are not only a wonderful natural asset to the population they also have a huge historic resonance. How many kings of England and much less elevated mortals have gone hunting for deer and boar in these woods? Where would Shakespeare’s plays be without ‘another part of the forest’?

Of course, cutting down trees, is not a modern concept. The British navy was built with millions of the best of oak trees, and before that, the cathedrals disposed of great swathes of forest, both in the buildings themselves and in the scaffolding. So the forests have shrunk quite a bit

since mediaeval times, and it hasn’t all been the fault of 20th-century man. But surely it’s up to us to preserve what’s left. The forests are still there and they still resonate.



No matter what provisos are written into any agreement, selling off national forests is surely a BAD IDEA. New owners might well promise to preserve public access and to keep the trees standing, but who would shell out ‘squillions’ and incur the cost and trouble of managing a forest if all they’re doing is keeping things exactly as they are? What’s in it for them? We are told that trees are the lungs of the planet and even in our small country they really count, but what government would be strong enough to stop a developer from cutting them down? The authorities might well take owners to task for doing it, but once the trees are down, they’re down. An estate of luxury villas will not purify the air for you.

The news broadcast also said that, at the moment, Scotland and Wales have no plans to sell off their forests, which was good news. There was even a temptation to feel slightly smug. But the threat might well emerge. It might be worth our while to keep our eye on the Forest of Dean to see what happens to it, while monitoring our own forests. On a smaller scale, I don’t know who all the owners are of the various woods around the village, though I don’t imagine it’s a secret. What I do know is that these small forests add immeasurably to the beauty of the place and to the quality of the air. They are greatly appreciated, lovely to look at and walk through. Like the national forests, long may they remain a part of our lives and our heritage.

Joyce Begg

Free Tree Planting Packs for Schools and Communities

Woodland Trust community tree planting packs are designed to help community groups to plant more trees, hedges and copses in their local shared spaces - by a church, community centre or playground for example, or on patches of land that are currently unused. Packs can be separated and planted in small copses to best fit the public areas in your neighbourhood.

Tree packs are available in two sizes and in four different themes: year-round colour; wood fuel; jams, jellies, chutneys and cordials; wildlife. The trees are delivered as young whips, approximately 30-40 cm in size.

To be eligible for a free pack, the trees must be planted by a local community group on land that everyone in your area can enjoy and benefit from. We also ask that applicants ensure that their community planting event is an open invite so local people can attend. It is our aim to enable as many people as possible to experience and enjoy planting trees. To find out more visit the Woodland Trust website at www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

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Tell the story of OUV

Join a new, multimedia

Killearn is about to embark on its largest community investment of the decade: the Village Hall building scheme as its focal point, a new community project is being launched to document the village and information resource to complement the new facility. The multimedia project will be launched – under the guidance of three media professionals who live in the village.

Layer 1

This layer of the project will design and build a Website with 'Then' and 'Now' sections.

The Then Section will consist of four main elements:

The Oral History tab will carry interviews with older people with interesting stories, capturing golden moments of the past and their experiences of the Village Hall.



Oral History Interviewing is Simple. We've Been Doing It Now For Years



The Landscape tab will show old maps dating back to the 1850s, along with aerial views of the village today. This will allow us to see how our village landscape has developed.

The Memory Lane tab will allow people from around the world to submit and share their own memories of Killearn, in words and pictures.



The Photo Album tab will be a gallery of village photographs through the years: donated by members of our community.



The Useful History tab will carry links to related sites, including the All Killearn Archive – who are running an associated project, to be housed in the new Village Hall – and publicly available online resources.

The Now Section

This Section will be all about the present and will contain information about our Hall: listing the different groups and activities, facilities and resources, how to book an event and a diary of upcoming events.

Jaqui McAlpine, an award-winning television producer and outreach worker, will lead the Website project: mentoring a team of people from the village. If you would like to be part of this team: please get in touch – no previous experience is necessary!

Email Jaqui McAlpine at jaquimcalpine@hotmail.com or contact Nick Hawkins on 01360 550576.

NEW DATE FOR KILLEARN HORTICULTURAL SHOW SATURDAY 20 AUGUST 2011



The Show Committee is pleased to announce that the 2011 Show will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday 20 August. Our thanks to the Village Hall committee for their efforts to accommodate the Show before renovations begin.

Menzies Hall, Fintry

The Menzies Hall Committee would like to offer facilities within the Menzies Hall to groups normally using Killearn Hall, during its period of closure for improvements. The premises include the main hall, incorporating a badminton court and stage facilities, the lesser hall, committee room and modern kitchen. There is an entrance ramp and accessible toilet facilities. All enquiries, which will be most welcome, to:

Sheila Fraser, T: 860410;
email: sheiladoodles@btinternet.com

KILLEARN VILLAGE HALL

Oral history project for all ages

The £1.7 million renovation and redevelopment of the Village Hall. With this major project we will document the conversion, capture village recollections and provide an online research facility. The project will involve local people in developing skills in story-telling, video filming and editing.



FAQs

So, who is this project for?

For the people of Killearn.

Who can participate?

Anyone who lives in Killearn; young or old; skilled or inexperienced; IT literate or not!

What activities and interests will be involved?

Local history; social history; research; interviewing and storytelling; videoing; audio-recording; photography; laptop editing (using a Mac); website design and build; presentation; project management and support.

When will this be?

The main project will be in synch with the Hall reconstruction from September 2011 to September 2012.

What skills do you need to join in?

As many, or as few, as you already have. Commitment, collaboration and reliability will, of course, be essential.

Who is running this project?

The Killearn Village Hall Renovation Project (which operates under the auspices of *Killearn Community Futures Company*) is responsible for the venture: the *Killearn Courier* is supporting it organisationally and also by funding equipment and materials.

How do I get involved with this exciting scheme?

email Jaqui McAlpine at jaquimcalpine@hotmail.com or contact Nick Hawkins on 01360 550576.

Layer 2

The Oral History Project

Bill McLeod, a producer who works for BBC Scotland, will lead small groups of young people in researching, interviewing local people with precious memories of the Hall, filming and editing their stories.



Pupils from local schools will invite contributors to share their stories for this inter-generational, multidisciplinary learning project.

Older students will visit interviewees, learning journalistic skills and how to use MP3 recorders, video cams and editing software.

The best of this work will be available on the website and form the core of a large oral history digital library housed in the hall.

Layer 3

The process and progress of the renovation of the Hall – transforming it into a modern, flexible community amenity will be recorded by local people on a variety of media: video, audio and digital photographs.

Planning meetings, earthworks, stone masons at work, construction and topping-out will all be captured and edited into a short **Documentary** film illustrating the project and giving insight into how restoration is undertaken and the crafts and trades involved. John Matthews, a professional video editor, will lead this element: guiding the documentary makers, mentoring editors and shaping the storytelling of the new Village Hall.

If you would like to be part of this team: please get in touch – no previous experience necessary!



Killearn Primary School



Burns and the BBC

On 17 January the Press Gang were visited by three members of the BBC to do work on Robert Burns. They were split into three groups: P7, P6 and two of each class. The P7 group made an animation of their poem *Tam o' Shanter* and the P6s made an animation of their poem *To a Louse*, while the other group gathered facts about Robert Burns and produced a short film with hints of animation too. To start with the P6 group and P7 group thought of the storyline and the characters of the poem. The next step was to actually try and make the characters, props and scenery. This was a hard job.

Abbie Hamilton (P6 group): *"I thought it was very interesting and different."*

Kirsty McArthur (P7 group): *"I thought it was really good fun."*

Once everything was made we had to use the camera, which required a lot of patience. We took it in turns to move the characters, take the pictures and be the director but the productions were eventually finished. The other group was busy filming each other singing, acting and reciting poems but in the end they were finished too. What an exciting day!

The next day the Press Gang spent the day at the BBC studios in Glasgow.

There we were taught how to add audio to our animations that we made the day before. Although before we could add audio and special effects to our animations, we were given a tour of the building from radio stations to where BBC film the News.

Katie Biggart (11) commented 'It was amazing, because we saw BBC studios and it was massive!' Lewis Stewart (11) also commented: "it was really good because we got to see the radio station!"

Overall, the majority of the Press Gang enjoyed the trip to the BBC very much.

Andrew Main and Fiona Millar

The Christmas Concert

In December 2010, parents and some Killearn locals risked the snow and ice to see Primary 3 to 7 perform Christmas songs. Due to the recent bad weather the pupils did not have much time to practice because they were off school. Everyone thought they sang really well and enjoyed the Concert! They raised £259.15 for CHAS. It was a great success. Well done everyone!

Rachael Methven

The Nativity!

Also in December, P1 and 2 put on another amazing performance of The Nativity. This year it was very hard to find time to rehearse because of all the snow; however, as soon as we got back to school they got to work on making it the best they could.

All the classes were affected by the snow, but the P1s and P2s must have found it very hard because they are the youngest in the school but they also had a lot to learn and to practice and they still did an amazing job. It was almost like the school didn't even close. So well done Primary 1 and 2!

Helen Barrett

Parties

The school parties were a big success and because of the snow we didn't know if we were going to have them but then the snow magically went away. Altogether there were five parties. We all looked so lovely and we had loads of fun with lots of games and music. Thank you to all the mums and dads who helped with the party food and drinks; it was scrummy. It was so lovely to see all the little excited faces when our special visitor arrived on his sleigh, it was Santa giving the entire nursery, P1s and 2s little presents.

Sophie Howie



Writing Projects

Recently the pupils of Killearn Primary did their annual writing projects, where each class wrote a different sort of book. Primary 2 made lovely books called *The First Christmas* and Primary 3 made books about a *Child Who Saved Christmas*. Primary 4 completed fantastic books about *The Twelve Day Angel*. Primary 5 created excellent stories entitled *The Magic Box*. *The Victorian Diaries* by



Primary 5/6 were a huge success, and Primary 6/7 worked extremely hard to make their *Rainforest Adventures*, which paid off. Primary 7's *North Pole Newspapers* were a great achievement. Everyone is really proud of their books and is looking forward to next year!

Building up to Burns

After the annual Burns Competition Killearn pupils performed at a concert for senior citizens and then again at the Burns Coffee morning.



Primary 6 sang *Scots' Wah Hae* and recited an extract from *To a Louse*. Primary 7 sang *A Man's a Man* and recited an extract from *Tam o' Shanter*. P2 performed their St Andrew's Day songs and one of them recited the poem *Nessy*. P4 sang *Four and Twenty Hielandmen* and recited *the Wee Freenly Dug* and other classes also performed poems and songs.

Rona McDade

Balfron High School Visit EU Parliament

In early 2011, 25 teenagers from all over Scotland were chosen to represent their country on a trip to the European Parliament in Strasbourg. I am a sixth year pupil at Balfron High School studying Advanced Higher French and I was lucky enough to be funded by the Strathendrick Rotary Club to go on this trip.

It was quite daunting to meet the other 24 students, teachers and leaders for the first time at the airport. However as I started chatting with them, I realised that we had a lot in common. Arriving in Strasbourg nine hours later we had a personal tour from Mark, Gerry and Tom, who, after having led the Euroscola trips for years, knew Strasbourg very well. Although we were given help in the morning with the questions that we would ask, and the answers that we were likely to receive, it was still quite nerve-wracking, as for many of us it was our first chance to have a conversation with a French person in French. I was very surprised at the level of communication we achieved. It was such a confidence booster understanding what they were saying and having them understand us. I also found the answers to our questions, very interesting and also funny. When asked if people could name places in Scotland, in general we had good answers but there were places such as Liverpool and Dublin named! And when asked about what they thought of Scotland, most people talked about sheep and castles!

My favourite day was our last full day in Strasbourg, when we visited the European Parliament. We had coffee and croissant there for breakfast and



Scottish Group outside the European Parliament

met the other Europeans. We had been encouraged to get up and speak to everyone we could in any language we could. It was great learning about all the other cultures and getting to practice our French, even if it was a bit frustrating when everyone else wanted to practice their English! We sat in the Hemicycle of the Parliament, where the MEPs usually sit, and were introduced to the Parliament and how it works, then we got a chance to ask any questions that we wanted. Although there were only 25 Scottish people there out of 450, four questions out of 15 were asked by the Scots, all of them in French. We were split into groups to discuss a European issue. I was in the environment group and I found our discussion very interesting. It was good to know other people's views on what we should be doing to help our planet and what other countries were doing. For example I found out that Italy has banned the use of plastic bags in supermarkets, and it has been very successful. In each group a president and a 'rapporteur' were elected. I was elected as rapporteur for my group. At first I was too nervous to stand for the role as it would mean speaking out in front of the 450 other young people in the Hemicycle, but I knew if I didn't do it, I would think back all of my life that I could have spoken

in the European Parliament but didn't. I am so glad I did it. Although I was nervous, I spoke about our views on the environment, both in English and French. I had an amazing adrenaline rush after I had done it and felt so proud of myself. It was clear that we achieved a lot at the Parliament. As Gerry said, "we were punching above our weight" as half of the presidents were Scottish, two rapporteurs were Scottish and over a quarter of the questions put forward were by Scots.

Not only did we get the chance to learn about the French culture while in Strasbourg, we also had the chance to teach others about ours by holding a traditional Scottish ceilidh in the youth hostel and inviting the other students that we met at the Parliament. It was a huge success and hilarious teaching the others to ceilidh dance. I was told by people of different nationalities that they loved the ceilidh so much, it had made them want to visit Scotland and experience more ceilidhs!

I can say without a doubt that this trip has benefited me a great deal, both educationally and in my self-confidence. I had the best week of my life and wish that more people could have this amazing opportunity. I cannot thank the Strathendrick Rotary Club enough. Thanks to them I have met some amazing people, both from Scotland and other countries, who I hope to stay in contact with. I have improved my French language a great deal and I have had an experience of a lifetime that I will never forget.

Kate Ballantyne



Kate (centre) with two friends

On the Right Path



Killearn Paths Group had a very busy year in 2010 maintaining and constructing paths and planning work for 2011. The Community Action Day (CAD) in Killearn Glen last April, run by Stirling Council, was a great success. Local families came along to help, ditches were cleared and a small wooden bridge was constructed by the ever-willing Ballikinrain boys under the watchful eye of their leader Andy Mackay. There were fun trails for the children, artistic activities and a 'ladybird hunt'. We also joined in with the Stirling Council rangers when they did their annual Bracken Bash, hot work but fun! There will be another Bash on 8 June, so be sure to look out for that.



Our CAD day this year is on 16 April and we hope many of you will come along again to help with the paths in Killearn Glen. Like last year there will be lots of activities for the children. The Paths Group are hoping to find more permanent volunteers who would be willing to help with our local paths, perhaps even taking part in the training session we hope to arrange with the Ranger Service after CAD day. Soon we will have our own equipment and tools, thanks to a generous grant and this means we can (and this is where the training comes in) support the Ranger service and take on some of the paths maintenance ourselves. The more volunteers we have the more we can achieve.

We plan to map all the paths locally and would welcome your suggestions. The idea is to build a team who would adopt a section of path to check regularly and perhaps help to keep it in good order. Do look out for posters advertising events and notices telling you how you can help. We need you! If you are interested contact:

*Norman McNab (550441)
or Alice Bell (440320).*



The Killearn Hoolie

www.killearnhoolie.com

HOOLIE FUN HELPS LOCAL FUNDS

The success of last year's Killearn Hoolie means that surplus funds were generated and are being channelled into supporting community activities in the village.

So far donations have been made to the Monday Bridge Club for new card boxes; to the All Killearn Archives Group to help their Telephone Box Restoration project; and to the 2nd Killearn Brownies to assist with travel costs for their activity holiday in April.

Are you involved with a community organisation that operates in Killearn that could do more with the help of additional funding? If so, please contact Jennifer Brown, Killearn Hoolie Chairperson (01360 550681) for further details and funding criteria.

Donations of a few, up to several hundred pounds could be made available to suitable not-for-profit, group activities (rather than to individuals or to capital projects). So do get in touch if the Hoolie could help make a difference.



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The Golden Girls



For many years, local resident Rena Smith, a leukaemia sufferer, has benefited from years of research into this illness so she decided it would be a good idea if she could give something back. She and a few friends came up with the idea of holding a charity lunch with any funds raised going to the Paul O’Gorman Leukaemia Research Centre, which is based at the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre in Glasgow.

The Centre, which came into being in 2008 specifically to focus on leukaemia research, is named after Paul O’Gorman, a leukaemia patient who

died 25 years ago aged 14. Research at the Centre has already radically improved the lives of leukaemia sufferers thanks to the dedicated efforts of Professor Tessa Holyoake and her team. The Centre is funded by Glasgow University and by donations from the public and needs all the help it can get.

Rena’s plans forged ahead resulting in a charity lunch for 100 ladies at Buchanan Golf Club, with some wonderful raffle prizes being donated by friends and local businesses. The main speaker was Lindsey Donald from the research Centre.

At the end of the day, the event raised the outstanding sum of £2,450 for the Centre and Rena gives her sincere thanks to everyone who helped make it such a worthwhile event. Indeed, it was so successful, that it reached GOLD Level on the giving scale, thus allowing all the ladies involved the well deserved accolade of THE GOLDEN GIRLS.

The photographs show Rena herself and then with her committee. *TID*

Note If you want to help the Research Centre:

email lindsey.donald@glasgow.ac.uk for information.



Rena, Betty Meikle, Rita Harris, Thelma Banks, Margaret Falconer, Sheila Gingles and Pat Dickie

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Freewheelin' by Steve



Cycling around rural Stirlingshire in wintertime can be, to say the least, challenging, especially in winters such as we have experienced over the past two or three years. However if under-wheel conditions improve sufficiently and enough layers are donned then the experience can be rewarding. Heading out along the Fintry Road we turn off and travel up the forest-lined driveway toward the impressive Ballikinrain house, now a residential school, but once the stately home of the Orr Ewing family. Did you know that the house was once a victim of an arson attack by Suffragette activists? On to the village of Fintry itself, past the replica fountain

and over the bridge before turning off into the grounds of Culcreuch Castle which dates from the 14th century seat of the Clan Galbraith. Now popular for weddings it is well worth a visit; you can even dine in the castle bottleneck dungeon vaults. Pushing for home by way of the back road you pass High Honeyholme now a fine house, but once a breakaway Kirk for Killearn religious revolutionaries! You can still see an original pew in the driveway. Finally freewheelin' and frozen in the fading light, down through Balfron, or 'bail'-a-bhroin', the town of mourning... but that's another story!

Hot chocolate, anyone?



Dumgoyne Rural

We have had some interesting talks including, in January, a talk on the University of Strathclyde's Malawi Millennium Project, which builds on Malawi's historical links with Scotland and the University through explorer and missionary David Livingstone, who studied at Strathclyde in the 1830s. The project provides aid to several, mainly educational projects in Malawi. This may be by sending text books to the country's universities and schools, as well as funding health-related projects.

Our annual fundraising Burns lunch was well attended, including the Federation's chairman. We had music and poetry and a good time was had by all.

We are looking forward to other interesting talks as well as finding an alternative meeting place during the Village Hall renovations.

Sara Hudson

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For more information please contact June at Ealain Gallery.

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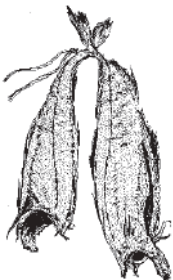
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Potato and Pea Curry

Serves 2 as a main course or 4 as a side

It's March and after a long winter we are all looking forward to the spring. This is a lovely light curry recipe that is perfect for the season.

Spices

- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp coriander
- ½ tsp chilli
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp salt

Other Ingredients

- 2 medium potatoes peeled and sliced into roughly 3cm x 1cm pieces
- 125g peas defrosted or fresh
- 1 large onion halved and sliced
- 1 medium tomato chopped
- 1 clove garlic crushed
- 2 tpsps ginger grated
- 2 tbsps oil
- 1 tbsps ghee



Method

Fry the onions garlic and ginger in the oil on a medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes, then add the tomatoes and fry for another two minutes.

Add the ghee and, once it has melted, add the spices and fry on a high heat until the fat separates.

Add the potatoes and continue to fry on a medium-high heat for a couple of minutes. Now add the peas and do the same. Stir continuously to prevent burning.

Turn the heat down and simmer the potatoes and peas for around 10 minutes, stirring after every couple of minutes to prevent burning. As we are not adding any liquid you need to be vigilant.

The dish is ready when the potatoes are soft but still retain their shape and the peas are cooked through.

Note: If you don't have ghee use extra vegetable oil.

Recipe provided by Yasmin McDonagh of Scotia Spice. Scotia Spice is a Punjabi cookery school in Yasmin's own kitchen that teaches people how to cook authentic Punjabi food. For more information visit:

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Fitness Trainer

Whether you're trying to shift those few extra pounds, getting ready for a new sporting challenge or to help push your footie team up that league table, from January 2011 Killearn has had the services of an expert on hand.

Derek Rae's background is as a professional footballer, having played with Rangers FC and the Scotland Under 18s team (capped 10 times), among others. He then went on to gain SFA coaching qualifications and is experienced in organising and coaching kids/youth football teams as well as football and fitness camps. He is happy to discuss any specific requirements with local teams, clubs or schools wanting coaching input.

A qualified and experienced personal trainer, since January Derek has been bringing a challenging new fitness programme to Killearn, with his *Outdoor Fun Bootcamp*. Come rain or shine, 10am on a Tuesday morning will bring with it a bracing challenge for those wanting to boost their fitness! Incorporating a bit of everything, and making the most of the varied terrain and natural obstacles in and around the Killearn area, Derek ensures the group enjoy the muddy experience and get results. Everyone goes at their own pace, so it is suitable for all levels of fitness.

Contact Derek on 07886 322 054, derekraept@hotmail.com or visit www.derekrae.wordpress.com

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Killearn Tennis Club

Best wishes for the new season to all our members! We had a very successful 2010 and look forward to the same in 2011.

We will be building on our successes in the Central Division Leagues. Both men's teams did very well, the first team holding their position in a tough division. Our ladies' team was promoted this year and our junior Under 12s and Under 16s also performed well.

Our ladies' and gents' nights will be starting soon – we will let members know with a notice in the clubhouse. These are informal tennis nights and all levels and abilities are welcome.

We had a return of the Club Championships last year, which was very well received. It was great to see so much enthusiasm. The winners and runners up were: Gents' Singles – David Cameron and Kerr Docherty; Under 16s – Thomas Potter and Ross MacKenzie; Cailan Hutchison won the Under 12s; Ross Michie won the Orange age group and Sarah Gibb won the mini Red.

We also ran an inter-club junior tournament with Killearn, Kippen and Strathendrick taking part. This was a great success and we plan to expand our competitive programme this year.

On to 2011! Our new junior coaching block will begin after the Easter break and our adult evenings will begin sooner – weather permitting! As always we are keen to welcome new players of all abilities to the club. Come along and enjoy some tennis in beautiful surroundings. Looking forward to a productive and sunny tennis season!

Sport your Trainers

Glasgow 2014 is asking Scotland to "Sport your Trainers" on Commonwealth Day. People across Scotland are being encouraged to wear their trainers on Commonwealth Day, 14 March, this year and for the next three years, in support of the Commonwealth Games. To find out more about the campaign visit: www.Glasgow2014.com



SPORT YOUR
TRAINERS
2011



What's your style?

Curling – Second Stones

The first half of the 2010/11 season for Strathendrick Curling Club has been unusual in two ways. Firstly, the amount of curling sessions that were postponed or cancelled due (would you believe) to snow and ice and secondly that we were again able to do some outdoor curling on Drumore Pond.

The main Autumn League was again won by the President's team of Mike Jackson, Betty Meikle, George Harris, Ron Low and Annabel Struthers. However, the result was very much closer than last year as five of the eight teams finished on eight points. The winner being decided by the number of ends won. Mike's team won 36 and Norman Robertson's team of Archie Banks, Eddie Redman and Gail Pain came second with 32 ends. The teams just losing out were skipped by Fiona Glass, Sheila Sturrock and Bob Glass.

The Ladies' Autumn League had not been completed as the *Courier* went to print, but the current leaders by two points are Rita Barth's team of Pat Montgomery, Rita Mearns and Rita Hallam. The Christmas Bonspiel was unfortunately cancelled due to the adverse weather.

In the Forth and Endrick Province leagues, Strathendrick are in the middle of the tables of both the Robert Paterson Shield at The Peak and the Forest Hills League played at Braehead. Similarly, in the Province Medal Bonspiel against 11 other clubs, Strathendrick finished in the middle of the table.

Our one success in the Province competitions so far, is in the Points competition, which was won by Donnie MacDonald on 33 points. His score combined with Mike Jackson or Steve Holden (who both scored 25 points) also made Strathendrick



© Norman McNab

Curling at Drumore Pond
Norman Robertson, John Philips, Mike Jackson, Dennis Pattenden, Walter McGowan

the winning club with the highest number of points from two players.

In the Royal Caledonian Curling Club District Medal against Falkirk Curling Club for the second year running, they took revenge on us for last year's defeat.

If you want an interest and some exercise to keep you occupied during the winter months and would like to have a go at curling contact:

Stan Moore (550800) or Mike Jackson (550314)
or visit our website at: www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk



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Rugby Roundup - Decimated!

Between the last edition of the *Courier* being published just before Christmas and the end of January there has been practically no competitive rugby played – the extreme weather conditions have resulted in the highest number of postponements for many, many years. Week after week, junior and senior players were unable to train outside; teams were organised only to be stood down as the snow, ice and frost persisted.

At the time of going to press however, Strathendrick were top of their league – although key rivals, Lenzie, had a game in hand – and were still in the Regional Bowl competition. So dreams of promotion and a day at Murrayfield are still alive. See the club website www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc/ for the latest news and results.

The Strathendrick Minis continue to train at Balforn High and

look forward to tournaments in the Spring culminating in their Charity Festival at Fintry on Easter Sunday, which raises funds for local hospices.

One lucky young member, Calum Bell, was selected as Scotland team mascot for the Scotland v South Africa match in the autumn internationals, courtesy of sponsor EMC. Calum witnessed a famous victory and had a great time “I really enjoyed the day at Murrayfield as Scotland mascot. The best bits

were beating South Africa and getting players’ autographs after the game”.

Strathendrick’s social calendar has included a hilarious Hypnotist Night at Fintry Sports Club and the Annual Dinner Dance in March, with a James Bond theme! It culminates in the Club’s Annual Dinner on 30 April, with guests speakers Doddie Weir and John McElvey.

Contact Nick Hawkins (550576) for further information. NH



Our picture shows Calum, second from right, in front of Scotland stars Greig Laidlaw and Chris Paterson.

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Killearn Football Club

After a successful season on the field, the Club brought season 2010 to a close in November with the Centenary Dinner Dance in the Village Hall. A large turnout of players joined supporters and friends to celebrate 100 years of the Club’s existence.

After an excellent meal provided by the Old Mill Inn, Honorary Presidents Hugh McArthur and Angus MacDonald presented the players with medals to mark the winning of the Leslie Leagues and Telfer Cup. Individual awards were made to Taylor Stobo – Club Player of the Year, and to Alan More for both Top Goal Scorer and Players’ Player of the Year. The Club would like to thank all who contributed to a great night.

Season 2011 is fast approaching and pre-season training is underway. Any new players will be made very welcome. Please contact Donald Beaton (550679).

Steady progress has been made during the winter with Stirling Council towards obtaining changing facilities for the Club and it is hoped, by the next issue of the *Courier*, to provide good news for all footballers within the village. DB

An Appeal on Behalf of the Humble Nettle

Are you someone who regards nettles as nothing more than a nasty, stinging weed that has to be rooted out when found? Are you also someone who complains that you don't see as many butterflies as you used to? Has it ever occurred to you that the two might be connected?

If you remember your school biology lessons, you will recall that there are four stages in the life of a butterfly:

- egg – normally small and inconspicuous
- caterpillar – wormlike with a voracious appetite for a particular plant (in the case of the Small and Large Whites for your cabbages!)
- chrysalis – a silky cocoon within which the caterpillar is completely transformed
- butterfly – the attractive, colourful and much loved form.

Butterfly caterpillars are very choosy eaters and will often eat only one type of plant. In the case of some of our best known and most attractive butterflies, such as the Small Tortoiseshell, the



Peacock (*see photograph below*) and the Red Admiral, it is that nasty nettle! The caterpillars are particularly partial to nettles that are in a sunny, sheltered spot next to a wall or hedge. The signs to look for are folded-up leaves, often covered in webbing, and black or black and yellow, spiny caterpillars.

It is possible that there may be another nettle-dependent butterfly in Killearn soon, as the Comma (*see photograph on right*) is working its way north and has been seen in Lanarkshire and the Stirling area.



So remember this spring and summer, when you are tidying the garden, that Nettles equal Butterflies and leave a patch to help keep summer colourful.
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John Alexander MacColl

1948 – 2010

John was born at Burnside Cottage, Old Ballikinrain. When he was five years of age, the family moved to Croy Cunningham, Killearn and a few years later to Meikle Drumquharn Farm near Balfroon Station. He was educated at Killearn Primary and Balfroon High and on finishing his schooling, tried his hand at farming, working on several local farms before deciding farming was not for him. He worked for a while with the Forestry Commission and at Glengoyne Distillery until 1975 when he started working at Flexible Ducting, Milngavie, remaining there until ill health forced him to retire at the age of 50.

John played for Killearn Football Club for 16 years. He loved the camaraderie and being part of a team. He was a tough tackling inside forward, good at one-tuos with the strikers and could score with both feet. He took great delight in seeing the net ripple (he called it the onion bag) when he scored. The team enjoyed success when winning the league in 1971 and 1975 with John playing a major part.



On a homemade race track, used by him and his brothers, he developed a passion for motorbikes, something he later shared with his sons and they frequently went to the racing at Knockhill and on biking holidays to the North West 200 Road Race in Ireland.

In 1972 he married Kathleen and they set up home in Killearn. John became a proud father to Gordon, Lynne, Laura and Scott and later guardian to his nephew, Patrick. As the years passed, he became the proud grandfather of Abbe and Lucy and, in 2009, to two sets of twins, Jack, Rory, Connie and Carla.

Despite suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes, John continued to be active. He loved the outdoors and his garden was a huge source of pleasure to him. He was a genuine and a kind man with a great sense of humour, and a 'well kent' face around the village, a fact which was evidenced by the large number of people who attended his service in Killearn Kirk.

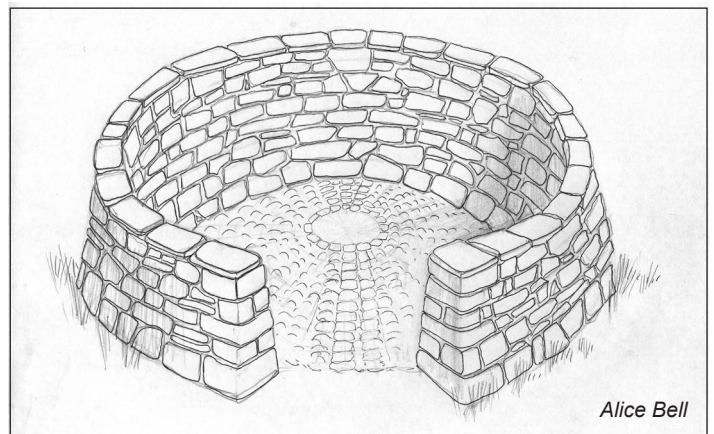
Proposed Memorial Seating Area in Killearn Woodland Cemetery

Killearn's woodland cemetery, the first in this part of Scotland, has been open since late 2007 and now has its first few occupants.

A green graveyard allows one to choose an environmentally-friendly way of leaving this world. In time, the cemetery will become a pleasant wooded area, without the environmental consequences of traditional burial or cremation. A biodegradable casket must be used and no memorials are allowed, with only a tree to mark the burial spot.

The problem with any green graveyard is that it takes a number of years before the attractiveness of this type of cemetery becomes apparent, because initially there are just a few young trees in an area of open field. The only thing to show that it is a burial place is the sign at the entrance, the track in and the turning circle. As traditional memorials, such as headstones are not allowed, and usually not even any indication by or on the tree, there is nowhere for a relative or friend to mark the passing of a loved-one.

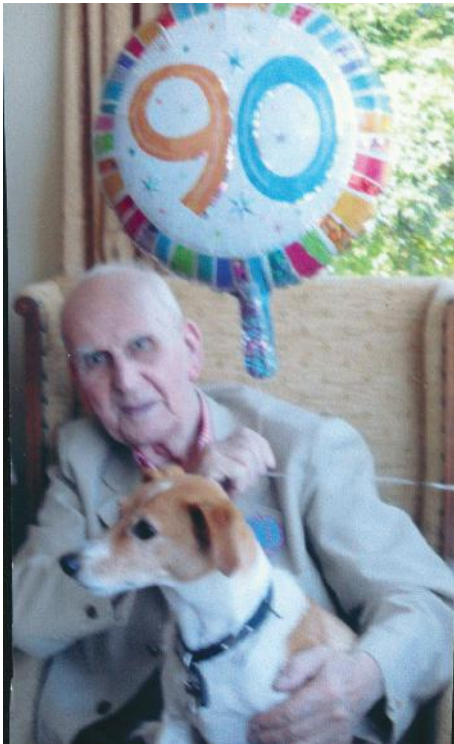
Time will overcome the barrenness, but how can the problem of the absence of a way to remember be solved. We looked at a number of sites on the internet and visited one of the first green graveyards in Carlisle. There are a number of



Artist's impression of the proposed drystone wall

ways; a building holding a memorial book, discrete markers by the trees and so on. The one we felt best suited the site at Killearn, was the memorial seating area in Carlisle, in which a circular stone wall enclosed a circular seat, with small memorial plaques attached to the wall. The photograph above gives an indication of how the wall without its seats would look here. The seating could be removable seats or seating built within the stone wall. A centre piece could be a tree or large rock with additional memorial plates. ┘

Allan H Geekie (The Hallowe'en Man) 1919 – 2010



Born and bred in the Townhead area of Glasgow, Allan was the fourth of five sons in a family that suffered greatly during the depression of the 1920s. As a result he had to leave school at a very early age in order to supplement the family income. Employed in various occupations, he nevertheless realised the importance of education and by his own efforts and determination undertook 17 years of night school study, which enabled him to progress from his early years as a rat catcher to the technical drawing office with the Bergius Company Ltd, makers of Kelvin Marine Engines, retiring in 1985 as Works Manager.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the RAF and qualified as a pilot, serving with Coastal Command, both at home and in the eastern Mediterranean. On being demobbed, Alan resumed employment with Bergius and in 1955 he married Margaret. They came to live in Killearn, where in the 1960s this quiet, unassuming and articulate man resolved to give the youth of the village something that he had missed in boyhood. Thus, for over 30 years, he and Margaret held Hallowe'en parties at their home in Drumbeg Loan, with the number of children attending latterly reaching 128!

Alan was a considerate, generous and kindly man who loved company and delighted in regaling everyone with incredible and interesting stories of his past in Glasgow. He maintained his abiding love of football, first as a fervent player and in his later years as an armchair supporter. A lifelong insomniac, Alan was always of the opinion that refreshing himself with a game of football during the war saved his life on many occasions.

Along with his late wife, Margaret, Alan was a great dog lover and they were regularly seen walking their dogs, the most well known of these being Toffy, the Jack Russell. This gentle man is greatly missed and will always be remembered by his family and many friends.

Elizabeth Brown

Audrey Blackburn died 25.11.2010



Audrey Blackburn was born in Newcastle, the first of two daughters of Gabriel and Cissie Gompertz. Having initially pursued a career as a medical secretary, she married marine engineer William Blackburn in 1951 and they had four children – Geraldine, Michael and twin sons Ian and Neil. Audrey devoted her life to raising the family while moving around Britain due to William's work. They eventually settled in the Glasgow area and after seeing all the children settled and with their own families, Audrey and William moved to Killearn. After William's death eight years ago, Audrey continued to enjoy a social life with her many friends, including those at the Thursday Club. Latterly she was also able to take pleasure in her love of dogs through the company of her rescue dog, Saffy. Audrey will be sadly missed by her children and their spouses, her eight grandchildren and her sister. Via the *Courier*, Audrey's children would like to thank her friends, neighbours and fellow club members for their friendship and help to their mother.

The project is at a very early stage. The provisional design for the enclosing wall has been based on one constructed in Buchlyvie Primary School by volunteers of the West of Scotland Dry Stone Walling Association. They tell us that if finance can be raised to purchase and transport the stone, the Association is willing to build it as a project in 2012. Approval is currently being sought from Stirling Council Cemeteries Service. The actual diameter and height of the wall, and the seating arrangements are still under discussion. It is hoped that a group to carry the project forward can be formed under the umbrella of Killearn Community Futures Company. If you have any comments or wish to join such a group:

email: feedback@kcfco.uk or telephone 550269.

Peter & Jenny Wilks



Memorial plaques in Carlisle. The wall in Killearn would be drystone.

Derek Muir 1930 – 2010

The death is announced of Derek Muir, formerly of Killearn, who emigrated to Canada in 1956. He served for many years in the Canadian Mounted Police.

Irene Pontin 1933 – 2011

Irene was born and bred in Killearn and nursed both in Killearn Hospital and in London.

She will be sadly missed.

Marion Baillie 1922 – 2010



Marion Baillie might well have been described as 'a lass o' pairts'. Born in Bridgeton she showed early in life the strength of will combined with a notable academic ability that was to lead her to a successful and varied career in education. Her mother was an invalid and Marion had to combine household chores with her school studies but her schooldays were crowned with success, culminating with her winning a coveted Glasgow University bursary place. She graduated MA in English Language and Literature and then gained her teaching certificate.

She taught at Hutcheson's Grammar School for Girls and was Headmistress of Morrison's Academy, Crieff, where she introduced a programme of new building and left a legacy of raised academic standards due to her insightful and stimulating leadership. In 1971 she brought these qualities to Jordanhill College of Education where she was appointed Dean of Women. Following her retirement in 1987 she lectured in English at the International Studies University in Shanghai and travelled extensively in China. Further lecture tours in the US followed and she was a frequent speaker at Burns suppers as well as lecturing for Strathclyde University's Department of Continuing Education, acting as a volunteer guide in the Burrell Museum and serving on numerous committees and academic boards. She established the Carer's Association in Glasgow and became Scottish National Chairman of this charity. She was made a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an honour that meant a great deal to her.

Her passions in life were books, music and teaching but a deep Christian faith (a member of Killearn church for many years), a joy in singing (Strathendrick Singers), and an abiding love of the natural world marked Marion as a more rounded person than just a 'blue stocking'. Described by one of her colleagues as 'the most gifted educator I have known', she is remembered by those whose lives she touched for the way she gave unstintingly of her time for the benefit of others. *BP*

Helen Jamieson died 16.12.2010

Helen Jamieson, who lived for many years in Branziert Road, died in December 2010. She was widely travelled, spending her early years in Kenya, where she developed a love of the outdoors. She was both a Primary and a Secondary teacher of exceptional skill and enthusiasm, able to inspire her pupils by drawing on her own experiences of life in other countries. She was Principal Teacher of Geography in Hillhead High School and Albert Secondary and then taught in Aden where, in 1967, she found herself in a war zone when 'mad Mitch' and his Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders moved in to quell the riots. Returning to Glasgow she taught in Allen Glen's and in 1969 was appointed head teacher of Glasgow High School for Girls.

After a few years the Girls' High ceased to be and was replaced by Cleveden Secondary. This change signalled the beginning of the comprehensive system and demanded much of a staff set in traditional patterns of education. Helen met this challenge with energy and dedication. Her abiding interest in people combined with a keen sense of humour and boundless energy saw her leading her school by working and playing alongside her pupils, involving herself in sports and social activities, excursions and residential trips.

Retirement was a time of continued activity in her village and beyond. Her house, which she shared with her sister, always had an open door, especially for children of the area, who loved to be sent on errands knowing they would be rewarded with sweets - whilst their dads were always given a dram! Helen followed her interests in Scottish culture by travelling far and wide in the highlands and islands, where she had many friends. She was much missed by her neighbours when failing health necessitated her move from Killearn.

BP/SM

Agnes McKeich 1925 – 2010

Agnes was born in Drymen where her father was a gamekeeper. The family moved to Inversnaid, Braco and finally to Buchlyvie where Agnes attended the primary school and then moved on to Balfour High school. On leaving school she went to work in a munitions factory in Stirling. At the end of the war she left Stirling and went to work in Duff's grocery store in Buchlyvie.

Then along came John (Iain) McKeich and they married in 1953 and resided in 7 The Square, then Easterton at Dumgoyne, Carbeth stables and then at Kirkhouse garage. At the garage Agnes manned the petrol pumps, did the book-keeping and raised three boys Allan, Ronald and Iain and also helped her husband in the garage. Age crept up on the buildings at Kirkhouse and they were condemned. Iain was approached by a developer and an arrangement was reached. He built four houses, one being a bungalow for Iain and Agnes. While this development was being completed they lived at 45 Main Street. They had only been in the bungalow two years when Iain died.

Agnes worked in the village Co-op, at British Steel at Dalnair and finally at Killearn Abbeyfield. When she reached 75 she retired and gave time to look after her grandchildren: Ashleigh and twins Adam and David. She was the heart of the village, enjoying Coffee Mornings and Jumble Sales. Her friendly smile and welcoming personality will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

The family wish to extend their sincere thanks to all who befriended her and for their generosity in donating £188.50 to MacMillan nurses who helped their mother at the end of her life. *J.Fallas*

Ian Campbell Richmond Archibald 1919 – 2010



Ian experienced a most interesting and satisfying life. He enlisted at the age of 20, serving in the 52nd Lowland Division of the Highland Light Infantry Brigade and seeing action with the Second British Expeditionary Force after the Dunkirk evacuation. Ian played down this episode but it was a fund of interesting and sometimes

amusing stories. He was then shipped out to East Africa where he was attached to the King's African Rifles until he transferred to the Military Police. Becoming proficient in Swahili not only earned him the respect of his men but also the nickname 'Bwana m'Swahili' meaning Swahili man. At 23 he became the youngest Regimental Sergeant Major and went on to officer training.

It was during his transfer to the forces in Mauritius that Ian met his future wife Peggy who was serving with the Queen Alexandra Imperial Nursing Service. They married in Nairobi before returning to civilian life in the UK.

After a short time in Scotland, Ian served with the Federation of Malaya Police for 10 years during which he added Malay and Hokkien Chinese to his linguistic abilities and received the Pingat Ibrahim Sultan medal from the Sultan of Johore for his services. After stints in Nyasaland and Tanganyika, he returned to the UK and worked for 20 years fundraising for medical and children's charities until his retirement in 1984.

Ian and Peggy returned to Scotland in 1998. Sadly Peggy died only two years after they joined us in Abbeyfield, Killearn – in an area of the country that Ian had loved as a boy. At Abbeyfield he was the Residents' representative on the committee and was much respected by residents and volunteers alike. A regular attender at Killearn Kirk, always immaculately turned out, often in his kilt, as befits an officer, he was regarded in the village as "one of the last real Highland gentlemen". Ian will be much missed but long remembered.

Mike Pell

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Thomas Andrews 1985 – 2010



Thomas, born 19 March 1985, moved into the family home, Kirkhouse Cottage (Sunken Cottage) at the corner of Beech Drive and Main Street, when he was just two weeks old. He was educated at Killearn Primary School and Balfron High School – with a high IQ but, as with some dyslexics, he had little interest in

academia. He left school at 16, proud of his six standard grades. He enjoyed sports: rugby, gymnastics, running, cycling, to mention a few, with archery, sailing, climbing and boxing being added later. He became a chef and worked in many of the local establishments and his picture still hangs in the Black Bull Hotel. According to Thomas, he was the good-looking one. He joined the British Army Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and was trained as a mechanic. Like most army personnel he moved around and his last post was in Germany preparing vehicles for deployment to Afghanistan.

As reported in the *Courier*, Spring 2009, Thomas was married on 7 February 2009 to Kimberly Collins from Stafford. They have a son, Zane and unknown to Thomas, Kimberley is expecting a second child in August 2011.

Thomas was not a Facebook or a telephone type of guy, but a face-to-face type of guy. He liked nothing better than returning to the village and talking ever-taller stories over a pint in one of the village hostelries. To him every day was a brand new day, he was generally a happy, cheeky chap wearing a beaming smile happy to speak to anyone.

As a dad I had the pleasure of walking the West Highland Way with Thomas just after his Army induction training. While I had difficulty keeping up, we managed to discover how each of us ticks as adults and progressed from parent child to inseparable friends. A journey some of us find difficult but all of us should make. Sadly Thomas was taken from this world on 25 November 2010 in a workshop accident in Paderborn, Germany.

He is and will always be missed especially by his wife, son, brother and sisters, mum and me. Without fail he telephoned once a week and we'd sign off with familiar parting words, short but poignant – Love you lots son.

From the funeral over £700 was donated to Cancer Research.

Brian Andrews

Solve the crossword, fill in your name and address, and place it in the box in Spar.

The first correct entry to the crossword drawn out of the box after the closing date will win a Family Ticket to Theatre Royal or The King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days.

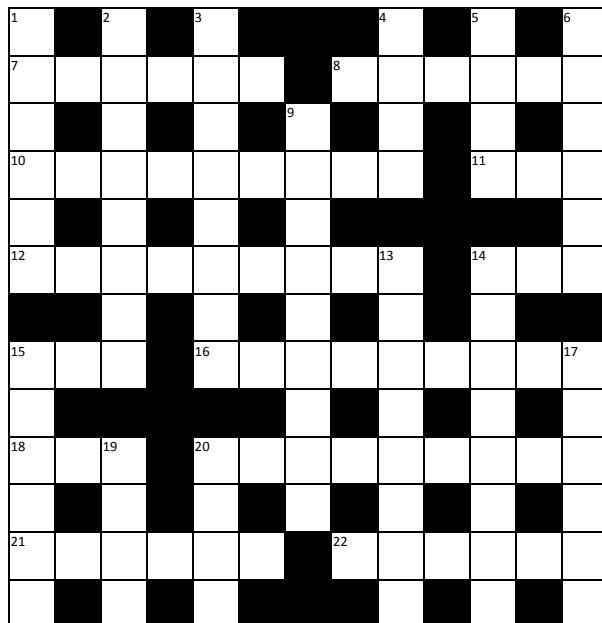
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Solution to the last Crossword Across: 1 present; 8 rehouse; 9 academy; 10 icicles; 11 treat; 13 right edge; 15 araucaria; 18 siren; 21 splurge; 22 voicing; 23 eremite; 24 retreat. Down: 1 plant; 2 evade; 3 electric train; 4 trying; 5 Christmas gift; 6 mulled; 7 lessee; 12 rear; 14 game; 15 aisles; 16 asleep; 17 river; 19 raise; 20 night.

ACROSS

- 7. Smoother charge follows sale item (6)
- 8. First wife was ill and cried bitterly (6)
- 10. A ruder pet must take its leave! (9)
- 11. Drug is nothing in exercise (3)
- 12. Hundred in way out, competent and easily aroused (9)
- 14. Pole took a short ride (3)
- 15. Hair dressing, ageless content (3)
- 16. Wrapped up when prison gets stripped (9)
- 18. Current time for a performance (3)
- 20. Examples when I get men in glasses (9)
- 21. Horsey one of five between easy starts (6)
- 22. Food to make you smile (6)

DOWN

- 1. Soft shelf forms a bond (6)
- 2. I play act characters, that's uncommon (8)
- 3. Ducks in doctor break restrictive device (8)
- 4. Creature sounds as if it should be on top (4)
- 5. Strong cut is a failure (4)
- 6. I between two Edwards corrected this (6)
- 9. Unburdens painful condition (9)
- 13. I hear that I name this sense (8)
- 14. Ever idle, I'm thankful (8)
- 15. Scraped knee having chewed grass (6)
- 17. Quickly followed a dotted line (6)
- 19. Time passed for a ticket seller (4)
- 20. Despatch Japanese coin to Germany (4)

Congratulations to the winner of our last Crossword: *Pauline Holden, Killearn*

Name Phone No.

Address

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Name Age.

Address Phone No.

Congratulations to the winner of the £10 Spar voucher in our last competition: Luke O'Neill, aged 10

Closing Date for both competitions – 3 April 2011. Please place your entries in the box in Spar.

The Eagle Has Landed *by Martin Culshaw*



Was it a bird? Was it a plane? No, right first time, it was a bird – and a huge one at that!

On 2 January, a flying door soared into view by the River Endrick at Killearn and revealed itself as a white-tailed eagle. Larger than a Golden Eagle but with a shorter and wedge-shaped tail, this magnificent raptor remained relatively faithful to a small area between Gartness and the B834 road bridge over the next few days. Here it could be seen perched in its favourite dead tree or on the ground by the side of the partially frozen river.

It hunted ducks on the Endrick and even gave a grey heron a bit of a fright. Local crows were its permanent escort but didn't seem to know whether to mob the eagle or just gaze at it in awe!

Also known as a sea eagle, this first-year bird bore a distinctive yellow wing-tag allowing it to be identified as originating from the re-introduction scheme in Fife (a joint RSPB, Scottish Natural Heritage and Forestry Commission

Scotland project). Born in Norway last year, it had been transported to Scotland under licence as part of the continued effort to restore a healthy population of sea eagles to this country. It had obviously wandered some distance, as young eagles tend to do, and chosen Killearn as its stopover.

White-tailed eagles are already doing fairly well on the west coast of Scotland following a major re-introduction project which began famously on the Isle of Rum in 1975. Mull, Skye and the Western Isles are now favoured haunts but it is probably the more recent east coast scheme that gives us a fighting chance of seeing one of these fantastic creatures in the central belt.

The bird was present for about six days before wandering off. It and/or another wing-tagged sea eagle were then seen at several spots in the Loch Lomond area before the Killearn bird was positively identified on the Isle of Bute on 15 January! Where will it turn up next?



Russian invasion in Killearn



These beautiful and rarely spotted waxwings, all the way from Russia, have been seen in the village lately. These pictured were seen by my son Ruairi and me in Harpers Road recently and we have also seen them on the West Highland Way, along from the Wishing Well. They are mostly to be found in berried trees. The flock in Harpers Road suffered three fatalities by flying into windows all within the space of one hour on the morning we spotted them. We wondered if anyone knows why this should be? *SF*





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