



Killearn. Courier

ISSUE 61

SPRING 2025

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18 Mar	Strathendrick Stitchers Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Talk by Penny McWilliams, ‘So What Did They Wear?: Clothing Loudoun’s Regiment of Foote’ at 10.30am. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com .	3 Apr	Golden Years Club Annual dinner.
19 Mar	Killlearn Community Council Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killlearncc.org.uk .	4 Apr	Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>Past Lives</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £5 entry or membership fee £20, £15 concessions.
20 Mar	The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Frances Fowle, ‘Women Collectors and the Early Reception of Impressionism’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk	12 Apr	West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Talk by Clare Hunter: ‘Threads of Life’. CE Centre, Milngavie, G62 8PN, 10am start. Visit weave-spin-dye-glasgow.org.uk or contact the secretary (weavers.in.glasgow@gmail.com).
20 Mar –9 Apr	Strathendrick Stitchers Annual Exhibition. Thomas Graham Community Library, Strathblane, during regular library hours.	15 Apr	Strathendrick Stitchers Kirk Hall, 10am–2pm. Group project: pin cushions. The sales table and library will be available. New members and visitors welcome. Contact strathendrickstitchers@gmail.com .
22 Mar	Killlearn Kirk Guild Easter coffee morning. Kirk Hall, 10.00am–12 noon. Killlearn Country Market Village Hall, 11am–4pm.	16 Apr	Killlearn Community Council Meeting. Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killlearncc.org.uk .
23 Mar	Strathendrick Singers Spring Concert. Killlearn Kirk, 7pm. Richard Michael Jazz Quartet, soprano soloist and the choir of 45 performing <i>Mass in Blue</i> (Will Todd), ‘Birthday Madrigals’ (John Rutter) and ‘Songs and Sonnets from Shakespeare’ (arr. George Shearing). Tickets (£12 adults, under-16s free) from choir members, on the door and Eventbrite. Contact hello@strathendricksingers.org.uk .	17 Apr	The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley Lecture by Marie Conte-Helm, ‘The Art of the Japanese Garden, from Tradition to Modernity’. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am and over Zoom. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk Strathblane Church Maundy Thursday service including Communion, 7pm.
25 Mar	Killlearn Kirk Guild AGM followed by ‘Screen Memories’ with Michael White. Kirk Hall, 1.30pm–3.30pm.	18 Apr	Killlearn Health Centre Closed. Killlearn Kirk Good Friday service, 7pm.
27 Mar	Drymen & District Local History Society Talk by Ian Newton, ‘With Shackleton to South Georgia, Elephant Island and the Antarctic’. Drymen Village Hall, 7.30pm. Membership £10 a year. Visitors welcome, £3 a visit. www.drymen-history.org.uk	20 Apr	Killlearn Kirk Easter Sunday service, 10am.
27–29 Mar	FADs Play, Pakora and some Plonk! <i>Night Shift</i> by Peter Whiteley. Q&A with the characters at the end of the performance. Tickets £10. For details visit www.fintrydrama.org.uk .	21 Apr	Killlearn Health Centre Closed.
		24 Apr	Drymen & District Local History Society Members Night and AGM. Short contributions by members of the Society, followed by a brief AGM. Meeting starts with cheese and wine at 7pm. Drymen Village Hall. www.drymen-history.org.uk
		25 Apr	FADs Play: <i>Something in the Basement</i> by Don Nigro, Menzies Hall, Fintry, 7.30pm. Tickets £7. For details and tickets visit www.fintrydrama.org.uk .
		26 Apr –5 Jun	West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Exhibition ‘Liminal Spaces/Transitions’ will be held in the Auld Kirk Museum, Cowgate, Kirkintilloch G66 1HN during usual opening hours. Admission is free.

Editorial

Welcome to our first issue of 2025. The *Courier* is 21 years old this issue, and how times have changed – for us in Killearn and in the wider world. Some things, thankfully, do remain constant: the village still works together and plays together. KCC liaises with Stirling Council for you and appreciates your valuable support, while KCFC remains integral to so many groups that bring joy to our village (Colourful Killearn, the Village Hall, with all it hosts, and Fireworks, for starters). Killearn Football Club, the Monday Club and Strathendrick Singers are still going strong, not to mention the mighty 10K, which attracts participants from near and far, and not just for the Beer Festival, either. The *Courier* is delighted to be amongst such august company.

We are also delighted to welcome at least one new *Courier* Cub reporter and – in a new category – possibly two *Courier* Apprentices. You will be able to enjoy their contributions in the summer edition. We are always open to new folk joining us with fresh outlooks and angles, so if you have ideas on ways to improve the *Courier* or would like to try your hand at any of the jobs that go towards getting a magazine like this to press, we'd love to hear from you. Just contact Courier@kcfc.co.uk.

We try not to dwell on change in the wider world, which isn't always (or mostly) a cause for celebration. But every rule is meant to be broken, as you'll find in the inspiring news about changes for the better, facilitated in that country by the Killearn Malawi Group. And who would have thought a little stowaway could find international fame in our village?

Indeed, the natural world figures large in this edition, and we are particularly excited about the new addition to Killearn's heritage offerings. Not only will you be able to find valuable information on the AKA website and walk the Killearn Heritage Trail, but with the new Natural Heritage website, we suspect you'll be taking a closer look at the interesting flora and fauna that shares this bit of the world with us. Read all about it in the centre pages, and we'll hope to see you at the Wild Weekend, 26–27 April.

As usual, please continue to support those who support us, our advertisers, who have been putting their wares out there for all these years. We can't thank them enough for contributing the wherewithal to put a copy of the *Courier* through every door three times a year. As for our wonderful distribution colleagues, well, we know they only do it for the festive choics!

Enjoy the issue.

Ian

Cover

Our cover image is from the 'Wildheart' film – to be shown as part of 'Wild About Killearn'. See page 23 for details.

Photo: C. Fergus Gill © Maramedia.

Noticeboard

- 5 May **Killearn Health Centre Closed.**
- 11 May **West of Scotland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers AGM** (all previous minutes upon request) plus a surprise (tbc). CE Centre, Milngavie, G62 8PN, 10am start. See 12 April for contact details.
- 15 May **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Clive Stewart Lockhart, 'The Art Market – How Does it Work?' Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am and over Zoom. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 17 May **Killearn Health Centre Closed from 1pm.**
- 17 May **Killearn Horticultural Society** Plant sale and coffee morning. Village Hall and car park, 10am–12 noon. For further info, see www.facebook.com/killearnhorti or www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk.
- 21 May **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.
- 7 Jun **Killearn Country Market** Village Hall, 11am–4pm.
- 18 Jun **Killearn Community Council Meeting.** Garden Room, Village Hall and live stream over Zoom, 8pm. For link to join live stream, email contactus@killearncc.org.uk.
- 19 Jun **The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley** lecture by Sue Jackson, 'The Cultural Heritage of the Huguenots'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am and over Zoom. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk
- 28 Jun **Golden Years Club** annual outing (tbc).
- 30 Aug **Killearn Horticultural Society** 158th Annual Show. Village Hall and Kirk Hall, 2pm–4.30pm. Restricted mobility visitors from 12.30pm. Scarecrow competition in car park, entries before 1.30pm. For further info, see www.facebook.com/killearnhorti or www.killearnhorticulturalsoc.co.uk.
- Killearn Country Market** Village Hall Garden Room and back green, 11am–4pm.

If you have any dates for the summer issue of the Noticeboard (end of August until mid-November), please contact Heather McArthur (07985 082678; heather.mcarthur1@outlook.com).

News in Brief

Correction. In the winter 2024 *Courier* (edition 60, p.36), the final paragraph of 'From the Archive' stated that Peter Blackburn, who ran the estate from 1897, was the son of James (d. 1893). This is not the case. Peter was the son of Peter Blackburn, who took over the estate in 1840. Apologies for the confusion.

Cllr Gerry McGarvey was appointed as Stirling Council Leader, following a vote at a special meeting of Council on 6 February.

Although not in our direct bailiwick, Bob Buchanan (SNP) was elected to represent Bannockburn (Ward 7) on Stirling Council in the by-election in January, with a very low turnout of 17.6%. Perhaps the electorate were all battenning down the hatches for Storm Éowyn?

TreeLink Stirling applied for and won a Highly Commended Award for Scotland's Finest Woods Awards under the Small Community Woodland category. The award was given at Holyrood on 27 November 2024. If you'd like to know who else won, follow this link: www.sfwa.co.uk/strong-roots-in-woodlands-and-forestry-championed-at-scotlands-finest-woods-awards-2024/.

Morrison Daily has now opened in Balfron where Shearers Garage once stood. This very modern grocery store includes a forecourt in collaboration with Highland Fuels, both of which will be very welcome. Welcome, too, will be the 13 new employment roles based in Balfron. And the curious among us will be able to discover what a Skwisheer frozen drink might be, come the summer.

Anyone interested in adopting a potted three-year-old, self-fertile, white-fleshed nectarine looking for a new home? They are surprisingly hardy, but current curator has no garden space suitable where it will thrive long term. If you have space in a large glasshouse or sheltered outdoor south-facing wall, you will be rewarded with the most exquisite pink blossom and fruit if the bees are buzzing. If interested, contact Courier@kcfc.co.uk.

Letter to the Editor

Dear members of the Killearn Community Council and village of Killearn, Scotland,

I am a member of the committee for planning the Scottish Tartan Day event that will be held at the Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park in Tallahassee, Florida, on Sunday, April 6, 2025.

Alfred B. Maclay's great-grandfather, Rev. Archibald Maclay, came with his family from Killearn to America in 1805. That has been so many years ago, however, the Maclay family has always remembered their ancestral home in Killearn, naming many properties, show horses, and show dogs 'Killearn', and also naming their masterpiece gardens, 'Killearn Gardens'. The park was re-named in honor of Mr. Maclay upon his passing, and later on, Mrs. Maclay and her children gave their garden masterpiece to the State of Florida on April 6, 1953.

Those of us who volunteer at this beautiful park will be celebrating the Scottish heritage of the Maclay family and have our first Scottish Tartan Day in their honor this coming April 6th.

The St. Andrew's Society of Tallahassee is assisting and participating in the ceremony. There will be the traditional toast with whisky from the Glengoyne distillery and the Prayer for the Presentation of the Tartans as well as live bagpipe music from the Tallahassee Pipes.

We are all quite excited about the event and wanted to share the news about the event with your beautiful and picturesque village where the Maclay family came from.

We hope you will put the event in your newsletter for everyone in Killearn to know about, and we would appreciate very much that if you do, that you please send a copy to me to share with everyone here including some of the Maclay children and grandchildren who will be attending the event.

Very Cordially,
Nancy McClure

Volunteer, Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park
Scottish Tartan Day Committee Member
Lifetime Member, Friends of Maclay Gardens
Member, St. Andrew's Society of Tallahassee

Health Centre News

In March, we will be welcoming back Dr Pickering from her recent maternity leave.

We would like to make our patients aware we have started up our new appointment reminder service. This will be done by text message to your mobile phone, so please make sure the surgery has your number in order for you to receive text messages regarding your appointments and any upcoming closures. We are hoping that this will reduce the number of missed appointments.

If you are unable to make your appointment, please contact us as soon as possible to cancel or re-arrange. In doing so, we can allocate the appointment to another patient.

Killlearn Village Hall Classes and Clubs

MONDAY

Monday Club: Main Hall and Garden Room, 1pm–4.30pm.
Badminton and bridge.

TUESDAY

Badminton: Main Hall, 9.15am–10.15am.

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

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

Parent and Baby Wellness Group: Main Hall, 1pm–3pm.

Townbreak Stirling: Garden Room, 2pm–4pm. Contact
Lesley Milne (www.townbreak.org/contact).

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

Killlearn Bridge Club: Garden Room, 6.45pm.
New members welcome. Contact Gavin Hunter
(gavin.hunter1@gmail.com).

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

WEDNESDAY

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

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

Lynda Turner School of Dance: Main Hall, 4pm–5.30pm.
Contact Lynda (770390; geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

THURSDAY

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

Linda Turner School of Dancing: Main Hall, 4pm–
4.45pm. Pre-school dance class. Contact Lynda (770390;
geolyn2000@hotmail.com).

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

Traditional Music Session: Monthly, Garden Room,
7.30pm–9.30pm. All instruments, abilities, singers, players
welcome. Info available from Jackie (550576).

FRIDAY

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

Dancercise (adult 50+ fitness class): Main Hall, 10am–
11am. Low-impact dance-based exercise and routines for
over 50s, ladies and gents. Contact Yasmin (07979 856837;
yasmin@throthegrapevine.co.uk).

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

Advent Windows Earn Praise



The Advent Elves of Killlearn are pleased to report that £2,473.24 was raised for Shelter Scotland by the Advent Window Trail 2024. With the inclusion of Gift Aid, it's around £1,000 more than was raised last year.

The Elves said there was brilliant community engagement, with many people coming out on successive evenings to see the windows unveiled. They especially want to thank all the individuals, families, organisations and businesses that took part and lit up Killlearn on often wet December evenings.

Shelter Scotland supports projects which help people experiencing homelessness or housing need. Alice Sharp from Shelter Scotland wrote: 'This is an amazing achievement, well done. You, your fellow elves and the Killlearn community should be very proud... In terms of impact, the money raised could enable a legal advisor to write 103 letters to landlords challenging unlawful actions. It could also fund 136 webchats for people facing homelessness, so they know their rights, or 80 calls to Shelter's emergency helpline. Either way, the money you have raised will change many lives.'

If you haven't seen the compilation video of all the window unveilings and the people who turned out each evening, search for 'Killlearn advent window' on YouTube.

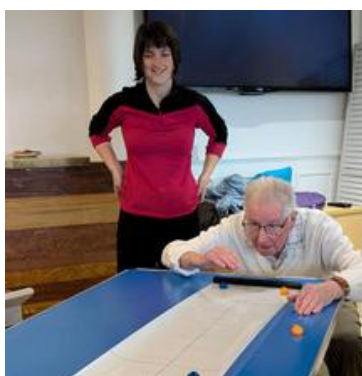
PAUL SEARLE



Killearn Village Hall Celebrating our Warm (and Friendly) Space



As we rolled into 2025 and the colder weather and shorter days made life a little gloomy for our older residents, we were really pleased to be up and running again with our Warm (& Friendly) Space. It was lovely to see the volunteers chatting and smiling as they set up for the afternoon – some even bring along a bit of their home baking (never any leftovers). Then the drivers appeared with residents who have requested help with a lift. And throughout the afternoon, we welcomed a growing number of local residents – some regulars and some ‘popper inners’ – all of whom came along to chat, play dominoes, play table curling, read the papers, or just sit quietly and watch.



In Killearn, we know that there are a large number of older residents living on their own. The feedback that we’ve received over the past couple of years is that having something non-committal, but very welcoming, to go along to on a Sunday afternoon in the winter months is something to look forward to and fills a gap in what can perhaps be a long weekend without other activities.

Those who have come along to the Warm Space have met new people and made new friends and connections and those linkages have been hugely valuable in providing ongoing support throughout the year.

We have a great team of volunteers who help. Big thanks to all of them – we couldn’t do it without you!

We’re also grateful this year to have support from the Co-Op Community Fund and to have been chosen as one of their local causes. If you are a Co-Op member, please help support us by choosing us as your local cause. And if you aren’t a Co-Op member yet, you can join for £1 and you’ll get money off on day-to-day shopping in any Co-Op (www.coop.co.uk/membership).

As a village hall and a community facility, this is what we stand for: bringing local people together, enabling people to meet up and connect through activities, exercise and events of all sorts.

Come and join us. If you need a venue for something, just ask about our fabulous spaces (www.killearnvillagehall.co.uk/book). We’re always happy to see you. We’re still looking to boost income and we’re looking to bring more visitors to the hall and do more for local residents. We’re boosting our wedding/event advertising through Facebook and Instagram, and we’ve updated the website (www.killearnvillagehall.co.uk).

Have you got an idea? Want to chat about a booking? Email us: killearnvillagehall@gmail.com.



Killearn Christmas Post 2024
raised
£786.28
for



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

**Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously-
and to all our amazing volunteer posties!**

Dr Bike is Visiting Killearn!

Could your bike benefit from a check-over?
Would you like to improve your bike maintenance skills? If so, pop along on Thursday, 20 March to Killearn Village Hall (Garden Room).



10am – 1pm: Free Dr Bike checks

Just drop-in for a free Dr Bike check. There's no need to book, but do come early to avoid disappointment! We'll have a mechanic on hand to do checks and minor adjustments. Bring any bike – children's, road, hybrid, gravel, mountain.

2pm – 3pm: Maintenance class

Book a place in the maintenance class at www.cycling-killearn.org/events or scan the QR code. The mechanic will design the class to meet the group's needs. Bring your own bike and gain tips on how to maintain it.



10am – 3pm: Donate a Bike

Do you have a bike that you no longer use? Consider donating it to Recyke-a-bike, and the charity will ensure it is re-loved. Last year we donated 68 bikes... let's see how many we can achieve in 2025! Drop bikes off at the Garden Room at the Village Hall. Read about Recyke-a-bike's work here: www.recyke-a-bike.co.uk.

Event organised by Cycling Killearn – www.cycling-killearn.org. Join @CyclingKillearn group on Facebook and follow us on Instagram!

SARAH DEAS
CYCLING KILLEARN, CO-LEAD



Jenny's Mill, Glasgow Road, Blane, Glasgow, G63 9HY

info@blanevalley.co.uk www.blanevalley.co.uk

Phone: 01360 770983 Mobile: 07786 735 211

 Follow us on Facebook and Instagram 

Bridge by Zorro



Since the beginning of November, Killearn Bridge Club has been playing online using the RealBridge platform. The platform allows members to see and speak with each other, and so supports social contact as well as authentic games of bridge. Very soon, the club will revert to face-to-face bridge in the Village Hall. To join us then (or to play on RealBridge now), please contact us via our website.

The club will take a break from regular tournaments at the end of April, but this year it won't be closing altogether during the summer months. Instead, gentle, introductory tournaments will be held during the evenings of the second and fourth Tuesdays in May, June, July and August, starting at 7pm on Tuesday, 13 May. Bridge players of any standard will be welcome, but the emphasis will be upon supporting those with limited experience of bridge and/or duplicate tournaments. You don't need to join our club to play. To find out more, please contact Christine Howe (550378; cjh82@cam.ac.uk).

One group who will be coming to the summer tournaments are the graduates of this year's bridge classes. It's the first time that we've run classes for

beginners since lockdown, and the sessions have proved very popular, with the majority of the 20 registered students attending every week. The classes started last October and will run until the end of March. They have been taking place in the Village Hall on Wednesday afternoons, and use materials adapted from those prepared by the Scottish Bridge Union. We were delighted that many of the students joined with regular club members last December for the annual Christmas party.

The hand for this issue has been chosen to honour our beginners, because they already have the tools to deal with it. However, the hand does not come from our classes, but from a recent tournament, and South – who held the hand – is not a beginner, but rather an experienced player. You'll find South's hand on the right, and you should note that like most contemporary bridge players, she uses a bidding system that includes 'Weak Twos in the Majors'. In other words, holding six hearts or six spades and too few points to open at the one-level, she opens at the two-level in the hope of disconcerting the opposition.

Holding the above hand (and with both pairs non-vulnerable), South opened Two Spades. Was she correct to do this? See page 39 for the answer.

South

♠ Q 10 8 7 6 5
♥ Q J 10
♦ –
♣ K Q 9 6

The year 2024 can be termed a violent weather year in many parts of the world. There were severe floods in Afghanistan and Pakistan, typhoon Yagi triggered similar flooding in Myanmar, Laos and Bangladesh, and the UK had record rainfall across the nation.

Killearn had an early snowfall which disappeared the next day as temperatures rose, while storm Bert impacted right across the UK in November. Severe flooding affected SW England and South Wales, with the usual damage to properties as rivers burst their banks.

In December, my weather centre recorded 224.5mm (8.87in) with four days having double digit figures.

Storm Darragh hit SW England and Wales again with 90mph winds and heavy rain falling on already wet

ground. Two people were killed by falling trees crushing their vehicles and 259,000 were without power for 24 hours. The Met Office issued a rare red warning for wind.

Other parts of Europe and the Americas were also having a difficult time.

In October, Valencia had a year’s rainfall in one day. The rain fell on three river basins, releasing torrents of muddy water in flash floods that swept down streets, destroying homes, bridges and vehicles, and causing more than 200 deaths. The Calaberra weather station recorded 711.8mm (27in) of rain in 14 hours, with 184.6mm (7in) of that falling in just one hour.

TOM RENFREW

Yearly Summary for Killearn (2024)												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Highest Temp	10.3	10.6	15.8	17.3	24.2	28.9	24.2	24.8	25	15.4	14.1	12.7
Lowest Temp	-4.1	-3.5	-6.7	-2.4	4.2	5.3	6.6	6.3	0.9	0	-4.8	-5.2
Mean Temp	4	6.1	4.8	7.8	11.8	15.7	14.1	14.1	11.6	9.8	5.7	5.8
Days Below Freezing	8	4	12	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	7
Highest Wind Gust	31	36	20	21	23	15	26	26	28	24	26	36
Monthly Rain	136.2	52.2	120.8	61	31.2	57.6	104.6	212.8	36.8	113.3	81	224.5
Most Rain in 24hrs	19	9.8	26.6	24	16	12.8	16.4	25.8	7.6	24.4	34.5	42.9
Days without Rain	9	11	11	18	22	14	6	4	19	14	18	6
Cumulative Rainfall	136.2	188.4	309.2	430	461.2	518.8	623.4	836.2	873	986.3	1067.3	1291.5

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

What Happened There?

Storm Éowyn, which hit Northern Ireland and Scotland on 24 January, was described as ‘the strongest storm in 10 years’.

Wind speeds of 114mph were recorded in Northern Ireland, and the Killearn Weather Centre recorded a gust of 62mph – strong enough to rip tiles off my roof – and it certainly seemed worse. Homes in our area lost power and many were damaged, while trees were blown over, roads blocked and some schools were closed.

The issue of a red warning for Scotland – denoting danger to life – had the desired effect. Glasgow appeared to have completely closed down during the worst of the storm, and most people stayed indoors and off the roads, avoiding the danger from falling trees and debris being hurled around. As a result, there were few fatalities.

Early warnings by meteorologists tracking the path of the storm were timely. The winds that hit the UK were described by the Met Office as a ‘weather bomb’ caused by a powerful jet stream pushing low pressure across the Atlantic. Known by meteorologists as cyclogenesis, a weather bomb happens when the central pressure of a



storm drops at least 24 millibars in 24 hours. Air is sucked into the storm creating more violent winds which are usually strong enough to cause physical damage.

Expect more weather bombs if our planet continues to warm.

TOM RENFREW

Save the Dates

After the storm, the Horti committee has been poking about in the remnants of the greenhouse and potted up its ideas for the year ahead. We're asking you to note the dates and help us, as well to make the events even better by coming along.

First things first. We need your plants and cuttings for our Plant Sale and Coffee Morning on Saturday, 17 May in the Village Hall and car park from 10am. Please start growing some for us when spring starts and bring them along on the day for us to sell. Have a look on our website for the photos from our plant sale in 2024.



Our 159th Annual Show is on Saturday, 30 August, based around the Village Hall, Kirk and Church Hall. It's a family-friendly competition that is open to everyone whether you live in Killearn or not. We even have a prize for the best scarecrow!

We were very pleased to see such a large number of entrants last year. We had 238 youth entries, which was just great, and 866 entries overall, up on 2023's 852 entries. The Show is not just about plants! There's baking, craftwork, art and photography, as well as cut flowers, vegetables and pot plants.

The money we raise at our events supports local voluntary and charitable organisations. The flower sale in 2024 made £163.05 for Strathcarron Hospice and we kindly donated all the fruit, veg, jam, cakes and scones that were left over after the Show to the Drumchapel Food Bank.

Last, but not least, are you part of a local business? The Annual Show's *Schedule of Classes* booklet is an excellent opportunity for local businesses to advertise themselves. The *Schedule* has a three-month shelf life and is sold door-to-door in Killearn, as well as to outlying show contributors in the surrounding villages. So if you are interested in placing an advert, get in touch via our email: info.kchs@btinternet.com.

Thank you for your support and see you soon.

PAUL SEARLE

THE KITCHEN WINDOW
a touch of city dining in the countryside...





Whether it's brunch, lunch, in-house catering, outside catering or wedding catering & co-ordination, the Kitchen Window have what you are looking for!

CAFE OPENING HOURS:
TUESDAY - SUNDAY 10:00-17:00 | KITCHEN OPEN 10:30 - 15:45



SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



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CAFE ENQUIRIES / BOOKINGS:
CAFE@KITCHENWINDOWKILLEARN.COM


WEDDING ENQUIRIES:
WEDDINGS@KITCHENWINDOWKILLEARN.COM
IN-HOUSE / OUTSIDE CATERING ENQUIRIES:
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westhomes.co.uk | [@westhomesuk](https://www.instagram.com/westhomesuk)

Killearn Beer Festival

It's that time of the year again when we start preparations for Killearn Beer Festival 2025 (number 12). As usual the event will take place at the Old Mill, Killearn on Saturday, 7 June, with an earlier opening at 2pm to accommodate the increases in recent attendances.

As on previous occasions, the festival is targeted not only at beer aficionados, but is also one for the wider community, with all family members welcome. In addition to enjoying the occasion itself, it's also an opportunity to raise money for a variety of local causes. To date over £5,000 has been distributed locally these past 11 years.

As always, there will be a wide range of styles to cater for all tastes. As well as favourites from past events, we will have a selection from a number of up-and-coming craft breweries from around the Central Belt.

For more details nearer the event, please follow us on Facebook and X.

MARK WHITE



Long Service Rewarded



Tribute was paid at the Horticultural Society's Annual General Meeting to Glenda Asquith, who has stepped down as the society's secretary. Glenda joined the committee in 1997 and became its secretary in 2000, serving 25 years in the role – one seventh of the 175 years the Horti has been around. As a token of the committee's appreciation, she was presented with a glass plaque, a gift and a card. She will continue to serve as a committee member. Meanwhile, Liz Jones was elected to become the new secretary at the AGM on 5 February. She was assured she doesn't necessarily have to serve a 25-year stint!

Paul Searle

Pictured above l to r: Paul Searle, Chair of the Horti, Glenda Asquith and Sharon Bowness, Vice-Chair

THE OLD MILL

**KILLEARN
BEER FESTIVAL**

**FROM 2PM
SATURDAY 7TH JUNE
2025**

LIVE MUSIC - BEER - FOOD-GOOD TIMES

Thursday Club News

Thursday Club members continue to enjoy their weekly meetings in the Church Hall, from September to May. Games such as dominoes, Scrabble and whist are followed by chat over afternoon tea. A rota of volunteers provide and serve the tea, and offer transport for those who are unable to make their own way. You're most welcome to pop in on a Thursday and find out what goes on.



A group of members and volunteers enjoyed an outing to the panto in Fintry in November, and in December we had a joint Christmas lunch with the Guild at Fintry Sports Centre. We are now looking forward to our annual summer outing at the end of May. We are most grateful for the donation from the *Courier* which has enabled us to fund these outings which enhance the well-being of members through a change of scene and shared experience.

We are always looking to expand our pool of volunteers, so please get in touch if you could give a couple of hours of your time once a month. Contact Maureen (550743), Pat (550074) or Alison (550155).

Introducing Our New *Courier* Cub

My name is Robert Hancock, I am 13 years old and I am in S2 at Balfron High. I live with my parents and brother, who is 16. My dad is Cornish so I spend a lot of time there.

I play hooker in the boys U14 team at Strathendrick RFC.

I am learning Japanese because I enjoy learning languages and Japan has always fascinated me.

I recently achieved my Scouts Gold Award.

The *Courier* Group is delighted to welcome Robert on board, and he will be writing his first piece for us in the summer edition.




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Once A Brownie

Throughout her life, my mother's oft-stated mantra was 'if you join something, a club or a choir or whatever, you attend the meetings and take your turn on the committee'. This was so forcefully impressed upon me that when I joined the Brownies, aged seven or whatever, I found myself asking what a committee was. Fortunately Brown Owl told me not to worry about how things were run, but just to enjoy the meetings. In time, I became Sixer of the Fairies, which carried its own responsibilities, but nothing I couldn't handle.

I loved the Brownies. They were part of my country childhood, and held the kind of freedom modern children don't always get. When weather allowed it, we did a lot outside. I remember being given a list of wild plants, with instructions to find a specimen of each and return to the Guide Hut with a complete set within the next hour. The feeling of freedom propelled us as we spread out across the village looking for buttercups and daisies, docks and dandelions. You couldn't do that in the city. Not only were the flowers not there in anything like the same abundance, but even then one could hardly let loose a bunch of little girls into the traffic and expose them to other hazards of city life. In the villages, however, Health and Safety hadn't been invented.

When we had our own family, we moved from the city to Killearn with our two little boys, hoping to give them the kind of country childhood we had both enjoyed, and on the whole they got it. There was more traffic to be wary of, and there were the nameless threats there always had been, about talking to strangers, but they had

the freedom of the Glen to play in, and like us they had bicycles to take them a fair way from parental jurisdiction.

I am out of touch with the freedoms allowed to children nowadays, but I imagine they are much the same. What I do see is more organised activity in the village that makes a point of including the children. The Heritage Trail is a case in point. Who could resist the lure of a bat watch, or a moth trap? Some adults possibly, but children will love the very idea. Just as they respond to quizzes designed specifically for them, and fun runs designed for everyone.

As these activities involve anyone in the village who wishes to join in, they also encourage, it seems to me, the kind of social interaction that leads a community to look after its own members. There is a network of support that starts with the little nursery school children bringing gifts to elderly villagers at various seasons of the year. At the very beginning of their lives, our children are being taught to care for others. And it carries right on. Storm Éowyn gave lots of people the chance to look after their neighbours, an opportunity they seized with both hands.

As for myself this winter, before and after surgery, I experienced a great deal of help from friends and neighbours as well as family. I won't name names, except for Fiona, but you know who you are. Let me just say a heartfelt thank you to you all. Is there not something in the Brownie manifesto that mentions doing a good deed every day? Whether or not they have any kind of Brownie history, many of our villagers are doing exactly that.

JOYCE BEGG

We now offer consultations with our vets as part of our Pet Health Club Plus!



We now offer Pet Health Club PLUS!



Our Pet Health club Essentials includes all of the below, but we now offer a Pet Health Club Plus too! This includes consultations, 24/7 access to an online vet and extra discounts on neutering and chronic conditions injections!

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Malawi Jumble Sale



Killearn Malawi Group held another successful Jumble Sale in February. Bargains galore realised an amazing total of around £2,000 in aid of on-going projects.

A diversity of clothes, toys, games, books, DVDs, CDs and bric-a-brac were on offer to the many bargain hunters.

The group would like to thank the volunteers who helped sort the mountain of jumble and manned the stalls; also all those who donated and came along to contribute their cash on the day.



Dancing the Night Away!

What connects a night of music and dancing in Killearn Village Hall and a secondary school in rural Malawi in Africa? Of course it's the Killearn Malawi Group!

The Ladies' Night on 15 November was a great success – music by the well-known singer, Alan Parker, and raffles with wonderful prizes, generously donated by local people and businesses. The final total, including Gift Aid, is not quite in, but it is touching £2,000. The KMG committee is most grateful to all those who helped make this such a successful event. Our thanks to Village Hall committee, in particular Ado, the brave waiters, Lesley Moir, Matt Gingles, and especially Shona Kelday, who took on the overall organisation of the event.



And the connection with the school? The money raised is going towards the funds KMG is building up to help the local PTA at Nkhande School to build a much-needed girls' hostel, where girls can have safe accommodation to keep them in education.

KEN ALLAN

Do you need an affordable home?

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

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Strathblane Strathyre Stronachlachar Tyndrum

Further new build developments are being planned for Killearn, Balmaha and Tyndrum. Please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us to plan.

For a downloadable application pack please visit our website www.rsha.org.uk

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Visiting the Warm Heart of Africa

I flew into Blantyre Airport in Malawi, the warm heart of Africa, on the 18 November to begin my visit of almost three weeks, and to see at first hand the projects which the Killearn Malawi Group (KMG) supports in the country. The contrast from dreich Scotland to the blue skies and heat of Malawi was wonderful. I stayed with Dr Kondwani Chidziwisano, who is well known to us here in Killearn, and his family, and I travelled with him from the extreme south to the far north – about 1,500 miles in all.



Our first trip was to Nsanje District to visit Nkhande Secondary School, the most southerly school in Malawi. KMG has helped the local community to build a library/science block, and I was able to see it for the first time, and it looks really good. We are now planning a girls' hostel, which was the focus of the fundraising at the Ladies' Night. I had a meeting on this trip, chaired by Kondwani, the Chairperson of the School Board, with the Headteacher and the Chairperson of the PTA to discuss the girls' hostel and how that is progressing. We even looked at potential sites for the building.

We also awarded scholarships to 11 students at the school. These are to cover school fees, as secondary education is not free. The scholarships were provided by the KMG committee and some individuals.

While in the area, I saw the borehole which KMG funded ten years ago, and which is being well maintained by the community. These are all in the area where I lived and worked for two years as a volunteer teacher, and I was able to see the house where I'd lived over 50 years ago.



Borehole at Muyang'anira Village

The next trip from Blantyre was to Mzuzu, about 400 miles north, where KMG has worked for many years. On the way, we made a detour to the remote area near Embangweni Mission to find Chrissie Nyirongo, whose work with widows and orphans we have supported for many years. With the help of local people, we found Chrissie at home with her daughter Rachel, and had an excellent visit. Chrissie had been head of the Women's Guild for the Livingstonia Mission



Children in the village

of the CCAP, the local Presbyterian church, for many years, and had visited Scotland and Killearn. She was in great spirits at the age of 90, despite very restricted mobility and poor eyesight. We're now in regular contact with Chrissie and Rachel through WhatsApp, even in remote rural Malawi!

In Mzuzu, I visited Kileni School, where we send materials to the nursery and craft group. I had a long talk with the daughter of Rev. Levi Nyondo, who is managing materials which we send out to Malawi. I also saw some of the work which the Bananabox Trust is doing to develop farms to grow food for primary school children and to be self-supporting. I'm very grateful to Alan Laverock of the BBT for putting me up in Mzuzu.



Infant class at Kileni School



Our final trip was further north to Livingstonia, the most famous of the Scottish mission stations in Malawi. It's an amazing site, situated on an escarpment 1000m above Lake Malawi. There are many historic buildings there, including the church and the first technical college in central Africa.



Dawn over Lake Malawi from Livingstonia

This is a very abridged version of my trip. It's impossible to write briefly about all the adventures we had, not least the variety of roads we drove along, from the excellent to the appalling! Nor have I mentioned all the beautiful places I visited. But my abiding memory is of the warmth and laughter of the people I met, and the ambition of young people to improve their lives and their country.

KEN ALLEN



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The Press Gang!

🍄 Hello Killearn, good to see you again! Killearn Primary School can't wait to share their exciting school work with you! We learned poems for Robert Burns Day and there was a competition – the winners went to the final and they got to recite their poem at assembly in front of the whole school.

🌹 Primary 1

This term we have been learning about Katie Morag and the Isle of Struay as that's where she lives. We have also been busy learning about adjectives in literacy, as well as all about our families! Freya has enjoyed learning about Katie Morag, Rory loves learning about maths and literacy, Eriska has enjoyed making the map of the Isle of Struay, and Harry likes learning about Katie Morag and adjectives.

🌸 Primary 2/3

We are learning about Stirling Castle and King Alexander I. P2/3 have also been learning how to add and subtract to 20, and in literacy they are learning about conjunctions. They made clay pots for their crocus plant that they grew. In PE, P2/3 did gymnastics; they are learning how to do rolls and balances. Skyler said, 'I like to practise handwriting!' Eloise enjoys doing top maths to practise her sums.

🌸 Primary 3

We are doing shapes and adding and subtracting in maths. In literacy, P3 are doing instruction writing and handwriting. They are doing Scottish artists for their topic. Frankie said, 'I like doing instruction writing.' Archie likes to test himself with intricate maths, and Lori enjoys handwriting!

🌻 Primary 4

We have been learning about times tables, chimney sums, multiplication and some division in maths. In literacy, P4 have been writing Scottish leaflets and they did a non-fiction text about playing in the snow. P4 made delicious shortbread that they got to eat! Sana said, 'I liked making a painting with salt and glue, and I also enjoyed making tasty shortbread that I soon devoured.' Findlay likes playing Sumdog in his free time, and he also enjoys break and lunch!

🌻 Primary 5

Currently in maths we are learning how to multiply three-digit numbers by one number. In literacy P5 made a Robert Burns fact file, and they have been doing handwriting. Their topic is the Scottish Parliament, and they also made a dinosaur eye in art. Freya exclaimed, 'I like sketching and writing stories!' Ollie enjoys doing times tables in numeracy, and Aila loves doing flips and tricks in gymnastics in PE.

🌸 Primary 6

We have been learning about fractions, decimals and division; we used skittles to count in maths and then got to eat them!

In literacy P6 acted out Macbeth by Shakespeare, and they learned about Glencoe and its history. P6 did art by nature by tracing over leaves and plants. They have been learning French and handwriting with Mrs McCormick. Laura said, 'I like doing gymnastics in PE!' Ian enjoys doing lacrosse and poetry, and Carla adores playing games with her little buddy!

🌸 Primary 7

We have been learning about algebra and fractions in maths. In literacy, P7 have been doing dialogue writing and handwriting, and in art, they have been doing Scottish Pop Art with Mrs McCormick! P7 have been researching and presenting their learning to their class about world religions, light and sustainability in science, and they have been learning French and handwriting with Mrs McCormick. Gregor said, 'I have really enjoyed futsal, lacrosse and handball as it will help me in the future.' Tom really enjoyed learning all the aspects of algebra because it will help him in high school, and Struan liked the massacre of Glencoe online workshop as he found it really intriguing!

THE PRESS GANG

(FREYA, SAORLAITH, NANDINI AND SAUL)

P.S. We hope you enjoyed this article, and found it fun and amusing! 🍌



Balfon
Community Singers

SPRING CONCERT

*Saturday 22nd March 2025
7pm in Balfon Church*

Tickets £4/£2
available from choir members
or
Balfon Library

We continue to operate a hybrid meeting system – in person in Killearn Village Hall, and also via Zoom. This seems to work well (with many thanks to Andrew and Fiona for their IT abilities), and the numbers attending both virtually and in person are good.

The main focus of the past few months has been the planning system, with several energetic and forthright discussions taking place. As this has been such an important topic, we were pleased to welcome Sharon Marklow, Stirling Council's Head of Planning and Enforcement Services to a well-attended January meeting. Sharon gave us an excellent presentation, and answered many questions from ourselves and from the floor. Questions and concerns around the planning procedures remain, but I think everyone gained a valuable insight into the legislative process. I feel that KCC has an opportunity to work with the department in a collaborative manner, which will hopefully afford us the ability to better represent village views when necessary.

Work continues on the Local Place Plan. Our two surveys have now closed, with good engagement apparent for both. We would like to thank everyone who has engaged with the process. Your responses and free-text comments are vital to our understanding of how the village views its natural assets, and how quality of life here can be protected and enhanced. The information gained is now being analysed for a draft plan, which we aim to share in both written form and at in-person events

this spring. Again, the IT skills of Andrew and Fiona have been crucial here, but a huge debt of gratitude also goes to Michael, who is leading on the project, and without whose creative ideas and enthusiasm we would not be where we are. KCFC and Killearn Trust continue to be our willing partners in this endeavour.

One concern which featured strongly throughout was the love of Killearn's trees, and the need to value and protect what we have. Natasha Houchin, our planning associate, is leading on this, and we are working with Stirling Council with a view to examining the possibility of extending the current tree protection orders to cover a greater number of prime and much loved specimens.

The housing development at CALA is clearly well underway, as is the pavement from the site, which will extend to the roundabout and on up Station Road. To everyone who has experienced the horrors of the lower Station Road pavement in recent years, this is a very welcome improvement.

Progress on the Rural Housing Association houses at Lampson Road is also going well. Completion is expected late summer 2025, and there is a waiting list for the rented properties.

As ever, we are grateful to the support of the KCC committee, our councillors, who regularly attend our meetings, and most of all to the residents of Killearn. Please keep coming...

ELIZABETH JONES, KCC CHAIR



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From Killearn to Shanghai

Last summer, I travelled to Shanghai for what was my third visit to China. I was offered ample opportunity to explore the city, and to visit the nearby (and very historic) city of Hangzhou. However, as with the previous visits, I had been invited there to present my past research and to discuss this with policy makers, educational practitioners and academic researchers. They were keen to explore the relevance to teaching and learning in Chinese schools.



The aspect of my work of particular interest was that relating to classroom dialogue, both the dialogue that occurs between teachers and students and the dialogue that occurs among students when they work in small groups. Through work in Scotland and more recently Cambridge, I have contributed to our understanding of how patterns of dialogue in these contexts bear upon effective student learning.

Chinese students have traditionally played passive roles in classroom dialogue, and on previous visits I have seen many examples of this. For example, ten years ago I observed a geometry lesson in a Beijing secondary school. There were about 60 students in the classroom, seated in rows facing the teacher. Dialogue comprised multiple questions from the teacher to which carefully selected students gave very brief, but invariably correct, answers.

My Chinese hosts, both on the recent visit to Shanghai and previously, wanted to learn about alternative approaches to dialogue, and from some perspectives this is surprising. International assessments show Chinese students to be performing at the very highest levels in mathematics, science and reading, far outstripping the performance of students from the UK for instance. So why should they be considering change?

The answer lies with the growing emphasis on advanced technology (including AI) within the Chinese economy. The established methods of teaching in China are recognised as conducive to rote memorisation and preparation for assessment. However, there is acceptance that students need to be more actively engaged to develop the strong creative and critical thinking skills that advanced technology requires. My research was seen as clarifying what active engagement means.

So, I gave lectures about my work in both Shanghai and Hangzhou, and I also discussed the findings and underlying methodology with smaller groups. For me though, the highlight was another school visit, this time to observe and comment on an English language lesson. The 13-year-old students read and discussed a short story by the American author Kate Chopin. I was intrigued to hear them (and the young teacher) speak with flawless American accents, in contrast to the British accent used by the older member of staff who showed me around.

There were only about 20 students in the class, they all made lengthy and thoughtful contributions, and they even worked in small groups, something I had never previously seen in China. However, while this is precisely what my research supports, I doubt it was typical. The school was a highly selective, girls-only institution, whose resources were scarcely believable. For instance, when I discussed the lesson with some monolingual Mandarin speakers, we used an AI system that translated their comments into faultless English (and presumably mine into faultless Mandarin). The systems that produce subtitles with British national news have much to learn!

Typical in its approach or not, the school was continuing to achieve the stellar academic results it has always achieved, and perhaps there is a message for the UK here. I have seen it suggested that we need to emulate the traditional Chinese approach to teaching to approximate their educational achievements, and not one that emphasises active engagement in dialogue. I don't think this is correct. Active engagement is compatible with high academic attainment, while also promoting the creative, critical thinking that modern society requires.

CH





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Citizen Science Monitoring Butterflies

In the autumn edition of the *Courier* there was an article describing butterfly monitoring through a 'transect'. This involves walking a fixed route weekly from April to September, but many of us will not have the time available for such a commitment. However, there are other schemes available which allow individuals to contribute to the important task of butterfly monitoring and which are easier to fit around our busy lives.

Garden Butterfly Survey

To take part in this survey, you simply record whenever you see a butterfly in your garden. There is no specific survey time. To make your records part of the National Records, you need to register your garden at gardenbutterflysurvey.org. Once your account is set up you can report your sightings, which will be added to the Biological Records Centre database.



iRecord Butterflies

This butterfly recording scheme for the British Isles is organised by Butterfly Conservation and the Biological Records Centre. It is intended to be used to record butterflies wherever you see them during your day-to-day activities. Download the 'iRecord Butterflies' app and set up a free account to enable you to add records to the national monitoring scheme. If you are also using the Garden Butterfly Survey, it is recommended that you use the same account details so that all your records are available together.

With location and data enabled, the opening screen on the app shows photographs of the species likely to be seen where you are. Selecting the 'Record' icon opens a screen for adding details of your sighting. Selecting 'Species' will open a page showing illustrations of the species likely within your area at the time and tapping the appropriate illustration adds it to the record. If your butterfly is not listed, scrolling down the screen will show alternatives less likely to be seen in the area.

After selecting the species you will be asked for the date and a site name (e.g. the village or more local location). The app will automatically add the grid reference and



show a satellite view of the area with the location marked so you can position it correctly. You then add the number of specimens seen and the stage of development. This will usually be the adult, but you can record eggs, larva, or pupa if you see them. Finally there are the options to add a comment or a photograph.

After completing the form, selecting 'Finish' will save it and you can then upload it to the records centre. All reports are verified by experts before being added to the database and you will receive an email to confirm that your record has been accepted. All records, your own and those submitted by others, can be accessed from the iRecord website www.irecord.org.uk.

PETER SMITH

JOHN CURRIE

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KILLEARN'S WILD WEEKEND

Killearn has hugely rich and varied wildlife, a result of our location, our geology, our climate and human impact. From popular garden birds such as robins, finches and tits – to rarer, specialised species such as lampreys in the River Endrick, red squirrels in Kirkhouse Woods or carnivorous sundew plants on Dumgoyne – we have a unique and precious environment.

How much do you know about our local flora and fauna? Would you like to find out more, help track changes or hear about ideas to protect our natural world?



WILD ABOUT
KILLEARN

Exploring and celebrating
Killearn's natural heritage

This community project is:






- Building a brand-new section of the Killearn Heritage website describing over 150 species of bird, fish, mammal, reptile, insect, plant or fungi found in this area – with images, authoritative information and fun facts.
- Organising activities investigating our natural world: these include dawn chorus bird walks, moth trapping, bat watch and a photography workshop.
- Leading nature walks with every class of Killearn Primary School.
- Promoting citizen science projects that collect records on local species and monitor changes, including i-Naturalist and national schemes such as the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch.
- Providing links, contacts and information on conservation and environmental issues.

SATURDAY, 26 & SUNDAY, 27 APRIL

As well as launching the new website, a range of events will explore and celebrate Killearn's natural history in Killearn Village Hall and activities around the village.

Saturday, 26 April – 11am to 3pm

Attractions will include:

-  **Demonstrations of the WILD ABOUT KILLEARN website and i-Naturalist**
-  **Exhibitions of artwork and photography from:**
Killearn Primary School | Art4You | Strathendrick Stitchers
Killearn Natural History Photography Workshop
-  **Activities for children including: an animal fancy dress competition**
face painting | puppet making
-  **Representatives of national conservation organisations: RSPB and Woodland Trust**
-  **A natural history quiz around the village**
-  **A guided walk around Killearn Glen**

Sunday, 27 April
Killearn Village Hall
7pm

UK premier of
'WILDHEART'
a wonderful nature film
by leading local TV producers
Maramedia.

The film will be followed
by a Q&A session with the film
producers, and a discussion
of local wildlife issues.

Tickets at the door:
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Felt Rabbit Badge

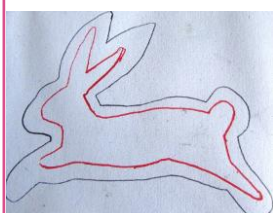
Here is a chance to bounce into spring with our little bunny friend.
It's a great chance to learn a few simple embroidery stitches. Look online for examples.
(I used lazy daisy stitch on my grey bunny).

What you'll need

- Felt, any colour
- Decoration: little beads or fabric flowers. Embroidery thread for special stitches. Think spring!
- Needle and thread for attaching decorations and sewing up
- Medium-weight cardboard
- Badge bar or safety pin

What you do

STEP 1



Copy or cut out the template and make a medium-weight cardboard template, cutting round the outer black line.

STEP 2



Draw round the template on your felt. Remember to flip the template over so you have mirror images. Then cut out.

STEP 3



Now cut your cardboard template round the inner red bunny image. This will form the stiffener for your badge.

STEP 4



Stick your badge bar or safety pin to the back of your rabbit cardboard shape with some glue. Then align it with your back felt piece, making the two ends of your badge bar. Cut two slits in the felt to take the pin through.

Then glue the template onto the back felt (see the drawn outline). Make sure to leave an even space around to enable stitching up later.



STEP 5

Now while the glue sets you can have fun stitching the front of your rabbit. You can use pen, beads, charms, flowers, embroidery, felt shapes. Just remember to leave space to stitch round the edge. Stitch the front onto the prepared back. You can use blanket stitch or a running stitch. Pin it on and wear with pride.



Happy spring from Strathendrick Stitchers (and thanks, Heather, for the tutorial).

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Our Dance and Sing for Parkinson's Scotland (Charity no. SC053743)

Just prior to the first lockdown in February 2020, I began to volunteer for the Killearn Dance for Parkinson's group, run by Julie Symmonds, a very experienced dance teacher with a suitcase full of considerable expertise, extensive energy and her primary passion: to share the therapeutic value and enjoyment found in dancing. Originally from South Africa, she trained with David Leventhal's US Dance for PD programme, and was the first to

introduce this programme in her native country. At the start of the pandemic, Julie and her family had not long moved into Killearn.

When I started volunteering, I had little idea of just how much I didn't know about the disease. I was completely unaware of the startling fact that Parkinson's is the most frequently diagnosed of all the neurological conditions.

Julie clearly had a lot of practical experience with working and dancing alongside people with Parkinson's, whereas mine had been much more limited. In the preceding year, I had a music therapy placement in Day Care at Kilbryde Hospice, which helped me begin to realise the challenges faced by many individuals when speaking, singing and even breathing. Of course, symptoms will vary, but the voice is the most commonly identified part of the body to be affected, with more than three quarters of people living with Parkinson's experiencing vocal issues.

It wasn't until 2023 that I was able to undertake specific training, and learn how breathing can support the voice in people living with a number of different conditions. Phoebe Cave's 'Singing for Lung Health' course proved a very deep first dive into laryngeal and lung physiology, some of the less commonly occurring lung conditions, as well as a comprehensive toolkit of ways that the voice can be supported. It also covered how singing and some elements of singing technique can be harnessed to develop and maintain lung health. Since each neurological condition has its own particular challenges, I then signed up for a Parkinson's specific course, run by 'Sing to Beat'. Launched in January 2018 by Canterbury Cantata Trust, since 2019 the organisation has been training practitioners to help people living with Parkinson's to galvanise the resources they have, in order to combat weakening of the vocal apparatus.

At this point, Julie very generously agreed to the possibility of expanding the remit of her Dance for



A dancing community led by the Dance for Parkinson's group in Killearn



A class

The day will feature a tapestry of dance shared by two of Julie's dance groups and our Friday Dance for Parkinson's group. As a diverse dance community, we will be weaving a co-creation, which will involve everyone present. We are also very fortunate to be able to be joined by The Nutcrackers, a group comprising neurologists, neurosurgeons working at the QEUH, and their lead vocalist, who is also a member of one of Julie's dance groups. Last year, this group performed the soundtrack for the Movers and Shakers @moversand6. Check out the video here: <https://t.co?NJWTwHoyWUX.com>.

Tickets are limited, owing to the space restrictions, but they will be available from mid-April. Please email dsforparkinsons@gmail.com for more information. It should be quite an afternoon!

In the meantime, if you have recently, or even not so recently, received a diagnosis of Parkinson's, please know that you are welcome to join us any Friday at 12noon in the Church Hall, and afterwards for a tea or coffee. You might just find it's your cuppa!

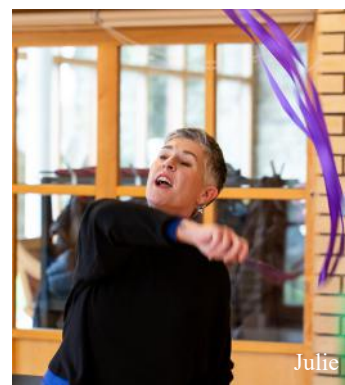
After all, there is growing research to show how beneficial the arts are in restoring a positive balance within mind, body and soul, so do come and join our growing community.

Parkinson's class to incorporate an element of specific breath and vocal work.

We have now been working together for over a year. Our Dance and Sing for Parkinson's class has just been awarded charitable status as 'Dance and Sing for Parkinson's Scotland', and we are about to embark on preparations for our first fundraising afternoon, which is going to be held on 18 May, at Killearn Church Hall.



Clare



Julie

CLARE CUSHING

Community Engagement and Reassurance

PC Matt McCammon and PC Laura Newlands, Ward Officers
for the Forth and Endrick area are based at Balfron Police Office
and can be contacted at the office,
on 101 or at **ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk**.

Please note that this email address should be used by the
local community for email contact – it should not be used to report crimes.

Assault

A person was issued with a recorded Police warning after they assaulted a colleague by striking them to the head, fortunately no injury was sustained.

A report was received of a disturbance within a property which resulted in a number of victims being assaulted. Officers attended the property a short time later, traced and arrested the male responsible. He was subsequently cautioned and charged, and remained in custody to appear at court the following day.

Vandalism

A vandalism has been recorded after lead flashing and roof tiles had been removed and stacked to the side of the roof allowing for ingress of water to the apartment below. This appears to now be a civil matter with contractors and no further criminal inquiries are taking place.

A vandalism was reported following damage caused to a vehicle. The front tyres of the vehicle had been damaged, and a number of windows smashed. There is no further line of enquiry, and this incident remains undetected.

Theft

Unknown persons gained entry to an old stand-alone garage; this has been recorded as a housebreaking with intent to steal. Two pogo stick and two bikes were taken, but found close by and undamaged. No suspects have been identified; it is believed that children have opened the old garage door and played with the toys inside before leaving them nearby.

A house breaking with intent to steal has been recorded after attempts were made to force open a garage door. No entry was gained, and no items were taken. It is possible persons were disturbed by dogs within the adjacent dwelling. Please remember to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

A theft has been recorded after a quantity of stones were removed and taken from a wall of a property. Unfortunately, there are no further lines of enquiry, and this remains undetected.

For advice on how to protect your home, go to scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/your-home/your-house/.

A vehicle was broken into while parked unattended near to Finnich Glen. The rear window was smashed and items taken from within. Enquiries are still ongoing, with a positive line of enquiry.

A report was received of an attempted theft from a clothing donation bank, where attempts were made to force the lock securing the donation bank. Although no items were taken, there was damage reported to the lock. Following enquiries, no suspect was identified.

A report was received of a theft of a mobile phone. The mobile phone had been left in a taxi and was subsequently taken. Following enquiries, no suspect was identified.

Road Safety

A driver was issued with a vehicle defect rectification (VREC) ticket after it was found driving during the hours of darkness with a defective front head light.

While on patrol, officers dealt with a male in regard to driving without having a valid insurance policy in place for the vehicle. The vehicle was seized by Police and the male was reported to the Court.

A driver has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal for causing serious injury by dangerous driving after turning on to the A81 and failing to check the roadway was clear before striking a motorcyclist. The motorcyclist was taken to Queen Elizabeth hospital for treatment. Injuries are not believed to be life threatening.

A report was received of vehicles driving at excessive speed on the A81 near to Oakwood Garden Centre. No registration numbers were noted and vehicle were not traced. Please bear this in mind and report similar incidents.

Other

With the assistance from Mountain Rescue and SFRS a dog was successfully rescued from the Devil's Pulpit.

A report was received of livestock worrying whereby a dog, off the lead, chased and killed a sheep. The dog owner was traced, cautioned and charged, and a report has been submitted to the Court.

Police Report (continued)

Advice for Dog Owners

Livestock are valuable assets and any harm to them could significantly affect the owner's livelihood. There are a number of simple things dog owners can do to reduce the chances of their dog attacking or worrying livestock.

In the countryside, it may not always be obvious when animals are around. So be wary of your dog approaching other animals, and avoid a situation where your dog might come into contact with livestock.

If you're in an area where livestock are nearby, always keep your dog in your sights and maintain control over them. If you can't guarantee this, use a lead.

It's important to be aware that under certain circumstances, landowners can shoot your dog if it is attacking or causing distress to their animals.

Contact Us

We appreciate any calls in relation to suspicious persons or vehicles in your neighbourhood. Please do not hesitate to contact us on 101 if you observe anything suspicious, as these types of reports are taken very seriously, and your report may assist us with any ongoing enquiries. Follow us on social media for information and updates:

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Let's Dance Day – Killearn Style

A packed Village Hall was alive with foot tapping, hip swinging and arm stretching, when an enthusiastic group from near and far came together to take part in Let's Dance Day on 2 March.

During an afternoon inspired by Angela Rippon's initiative to promote the health and social benefits of dance, everyone enjoyed taking part in short sessions of tap dancing, 'Dancercise' and Line Dancing, expertly guided by dance masters, Julie, Yasmin and Kara,

Energy levels were kept topped up thanks to home baking and refreshments provided by the volunteers of the Village Hall Warm Space.



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STRATHENDRICK Classic & Sports Car Club



Our winter programme covered a variety of topics again, some of which are illustrated by the pictures below of the ex-Martin Brundle 1983 Formula 3 Ralt from the talk on the highs and lows of racing both Formula 2 and Formula 3 cars, and in contrast running a 1964 Rover P6 in the 2019 Monte Carlo Rallye Historique.

Now that our meetings at Ross Priory for dinner and talks have concluded, we look forward to getting out in our more interesting cars over the summer months. We start again with Drive-it-Day at the end of April and then our away days to Doxford Hall near Alnwick in May combined with a visit to the Jim Clark Museum in Duns. Also in May, we plan do another display at the Drymen Show and hopefully Gartmore Gala. June sees us heading up to Kenmore for



lunch, followed by a return over Ben Lawers if the road is open. Great views anticipated! Meanwhile July is undecided as yet, with several options being explored. For the third year running we are hosting a tour for pre-WWII vehicles in August. Last year we had 28 entrants and we're hoping for more this year. We have several suggestions under consideration for September and October before next winter's programme starts, so watch this space!

If you'd like more information about the club and joining in our activities, you don't actually need a special vehicle, just an interest in motoring in general.

So if you are interested, please send an email to: SCSCC.Sec@gmail.com.

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Digital Phone Switchover Update

Those of us who have already made the change to a fully digital telephone service got an early experience, due to January's storm Éowyn, of the one of the main concerns about the change – what happens with a power cut?

Unlike the existing service, the digital service is not powered from the exchange, where backup is provided by the network, but by the user's own power. BT offer to supply a backup power supply, but only expect it to last for a maximum of four hours. It highlighted the benefit of having a working mobile phone. I also have a small powerbank (costing under £20) that will provide at least four full charges for my phone and therefore backup for several days. Having said that even my mobile service

was off for about three hours (mains power was off for eight hours and longer for some others). Maybe a combination of both battery backup options would be the best solution.

BT provided an update in January, which is summarised below. You can read BT's entire presentation, at www.killearncc.org.uk/kgb-killearn.html where you will also find all the information we currently have, along with details of how to contact us.

My key advice remains – for any supplier, not just BT – talk to them and ask what they plan to do to maintain your services with them regarding this BT Openreach changeover.

Move to digital telephone service to be complete by January 2027.	Existing phone number to be retained and equipment re-used.
Landline-only users and those not wanting to change can continue until 2030 by adopting the 'dedicated landline service'.	Adapter provided to allow phone to be located away from hub.
Non-vulnerable customers will start to be switched from January 2025, with vulnerable ones in Scotland from summer 2025.	EE will offer the same services as BT. New or regrading customers will be offered an EE contact rather than a BT contact. Plusnet will only be offering a broadband contract. If a landline phone is desired then a switch to a BT/EE contract or alternative supplier is necessary.
When a customer is identified for a move, they will get at least four weeks' notice by letter or postcard. See below for full timeline.	Vulnerable users will be offered either hybrid phones (that automatically switch to the mobile network) or a back-up power supply in the event of a local power cut.
New Digital service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers improved reliability and call quality Will help prevent the vast majority of scam calls. 	Additional support for vulnerable customers, and also for landline-only users, is being offered to ensure healthcare equipment especially continues to work.
BT is building more 4G masts in rural areas.	Partnerships formed with charities and local groups: ageUK, carersUK, Independent Age, Hearing Partners, Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, KeyRing, NFU, mind, Rural Services Network, Scope, AbilityNet, Which?, RNID, RNIB, Alzheimer's Society.
BT plans to make more full-fibre connections to 25 million homes and businesses by 2026 (50% of homes and businesses already have access to a fibre connection).	BT are relying on local authorities, housing associations and telecare providers, but also customers, to ensure that service providers are aware of their needs and safeguard the most vulnerable customers. Stirling is one of the local authorities that have already signed up.
BT apparently has 447k landline customers, 50% of whom are still to switch; 28% of these are landline-only customers while the other 72% already have broadband.	More face-to-face awareness sessions will be held nationally, and items will appear in the media. Help BT by raising awareness with family members and carers of vulnerable customers and telling BT of them.

Individual customer switchover timeline:

- Day 1: customer receives initial notification
- Day 3: customer receives an equipment check notification
- Day 28: switchover order placed (on Openreach) and activation email sent
- Day 33: customer receives set-up information postcard and automated phone confirmation
- Day 35: customer's service is switched to DV and is sent confirmation email

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An Encounter at the War Memorial

In the afternoon of Remembrance Day last year, members of the All Killearn Archive group were working at the War Memorial securing the wreaths. A couple arrived to place a cross of remembrance on the memorial and a conversation developed. The couple were Karen and Ian MacDonald. Karen is the daughter of Duncan McCuaig and niece of Eric McCuaig, two names that will be familiar to those who have attended Killearn Remembrance Day services, as their names are amongst those read out each year. They were brothers and RAF pilots, both of whom were killed on active service in World War II. Their names are inscribed on the Killearn War Memorial together with the other Killearn casualties of the two World Wars. Karen regularly adds a cross of remembrance for her father and uncle.

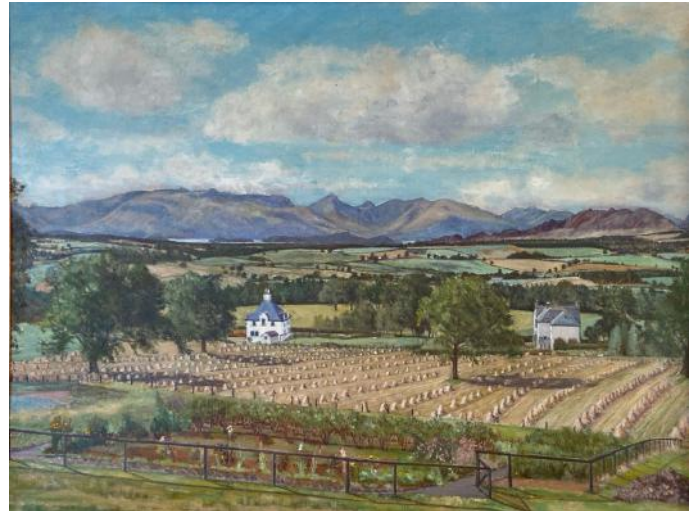
During the conversation, Karen mentioned that her maternal grandfather, John Cairney Buchanan (known as Cairney), was an amateur painter and that she had two of his paintings from the 1940s showing views from his house, Crowhill. She recalled spending much of her childhood at Crowhill, where her grandfather painted the views from the north-facing attic. When we indicated that AKA would be interested in seeing the pictures, Karen agreed to provide copies and later emailed photographs of the paintings to us.

Cairney Buchanan was clearly a talented painter and the two paintings show almost photographic detail. They are an important record of this part of Killearn in the 1940s, showing views from Crowhill towards the north. The views differ substantially from those we see today. The gardens of Crowhill form the foreground, but beyond, the most obvious contrast to the present day are the fields of corn filling much of the area down to Station Road. The fields are shown with stooks of drying corn indicating that the paintings were made just after the start of the harvest.



In the picture above, it is possible to see Endrick Road leading to the drive up to Crowhill, but New Endrick and Allan roads are yet to be built. On Endrick Road, only Darrochmhor and Balgownie had been built and the site now occupied by Blairclova was still field. It is more difficult to identify the properties on Station Road, but Spittal Cottage and the two houses forming Benvue

(nos. 20 and 22) are clearly identifiable. Spittal Farm, now a private house, can be seen together with the small bungalow at number 23 which Karen refers to as her 'wee Granny's bungalow'.



In the second picture (above), the corn field extends from the edge of the Crowhill gardens to the grounds of the Pepper Pot and Two Oaks, which can still be seen on Station Road. The field itself has now vanished under houses and gardens. The two pictures provide a unique view of the historic landscape of the area.

Pictures painted by John Cairney Buchanan.

Our thanks to Karen McCuaig MacDonald who provided digital copies.

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If you thought getting Oasis tickets was a challenge, the Killearn 10K was even tougher! This year's race, set for Saturday, 7 June, broke records by selling out in just 2 hours and 14 minutes – securing its place as one of Scotland's most sought-after running events. We are sorry if you missed out on a place this time, but take note: registration opens at 8pm on the first Thursday in December, so mark 4 December in your diaries for next year.

Our local race is a firm favourite in the running calendar, drawing a fantastic mix of local runners as well as club competitors from across Scotland. Special shout-out to our friends from Bellahouston and Garscube clubs, who always show up in numbers! The tough but rewarding 10K route takes runners along the scenic, undulating pipetrack before finishing in the park, where we hope to see plenty of supporters cheering on the competitors.

Big thanks to our sponsors

This event wouldn't be possible without the support of our incredible sponsors. Our main sponsors, West Homes and The Old Mill Killearn, have been long-time

champions of the race. We're also grateful for our supporting sponsors, Killearn Pharmacy, plus new supporters Willow and The Olive Branch and Royal & Plaid. Their generosity helps keep this much-loved event going strong.

Our amazing marshals

A massive thank you goes out to our dedicated team of marshals, who brave all weather conditions to keep runners safe, motivated and supported. If you'd like to join the marshal team and be part of the action, please email marshals@killearn10k.com.

More than just a race

As well as the 10k, we are delighted to be working with Active Stirling again this year to run the Killearn Mile, which starts before the main race. Many competitors use this as a warm-up with their little ones, making it a fantastic family-friendly addition to the day. Sign-ups for the Mile happen in the park on race day.

The Killearn 10K isn't just about running – it's a true community event. Organised by a team of volunteers, the race also supports local groups and organisations through donations from event proceeds. After the race, the Killearn Beer Festival takes place at The Old Mill, and is the perfect way to round off a fantastic day.

See you at the start line!

To all the runners who secured a spot, we hope your training goes well. Stay up to date with all the latest news by following the Killearn 10K Facebook page, where we post plenty of updates. June 7th promises to be a great community day, and we can't wait to cheer you on at both the start and finish lines.

Here's hoping for perfect running conditions!

JUDE HOLT



Killearn Football Club News– Another Season Beckons

Everyone at Killearn FC is looking forward to the new season starting in mid-April. The team have been in training since February and it has been great to welcome some new players along with the usual well-kent faces. We still have room for more players, as the bigger the squad we have, the better we can cater for injuries, work commitments and holiday cover during the season.

As a community club we want to offer the opportunity to welcome as many local players as possible, so if you are interested, please get in touch on social media, or contact Scott Norval (07403 464878) or Colin Banks (07447 498341).

Support for the club has been brilliant both at our matches and through fundraising. This support is very much appreciated as it ensures a strong and sustainable foundation for the club.

We would especially like to thank Endrick Vets, The Old Mill Inn, S Mac Joinery, A Total Clean and VSN



sport for their ongoing support, as well as all our loyal 59 Club participants.

We look forward to seeing everyone for what we are sure will be another enjoyable and exciting season, full of the usual ups and downs!

ALL AT KILLEARN FC

Killlearn Tennis Club – Ready to Ace 2025 On and Off the Court

After a summer of social tennis and competitive club championships, we finally got to start work on the clubhouse with our grant from Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environmental Trust. With the help of David Scott and Park Homes Scotland Ltd, we now have a fully re-clad and, may we add, bonnie facility. Perfect timing to create a cosy environment for the next event on our social calendar!

We finished off 2024 by participating in the Advent Window Trail on the 8 December. It was an evening that truly had it all, with mulled wine, hot chocolate, mince pies and even a visit from Santa Claus himself! Thank you to all those who helped make the event possible, especially to our members, Kari and Pete Morrison, who created our Serving Santa for our clubhouse window!



A special mention must go to Eden Mill who donated our wonderful Christmas tree, delivered by Daniel Quinn.

It was a night that encompassed everything we all love about our village, our tennis club and our community.

If you are interested in joining us, information and club memberships is available at tinyurl.com/ktcG63. Kids memberships start from £20 (age dependent), with adult and family memberships costing £140 and £280, respectively, for the year.

Professional and affordable coaching is available all year round with Shaun Tulloch, whether individual or in group classes. Further information can be found at 10outoftennis.com.

Keep your eyes peeled for any further events, special offers and discounts by following us on Facebook and Instagram @killlearntennisclub.



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Curling Second Stones

The Mixed Club has completed the first two leagues. The Autumn League was won by Fiona Glass's team of Moray Weir, Gill Smith and Mario Cannavina, who were 3 points clear of the next team. The Winter League finished up with the three teams tied on 2 points each. The winning team with 8 ends was Moray Weir, Fiona Glass, Gill Smith and Jane Weir.

The Ladies Peat League was won by Deborah Macken's team of Jean Leitch, Gail Pain and Patricia Brown by virtue of more shots up than the two other teams tied on 5 points. The victory of Alice Fraser's team of Jean Leitch, Anne MacKay and Patricia Brown in the last round of the Chris Gardner League won them the competition, by putting them 2 points clear of three other teams.



Ladies Christmas Bonspiel

The Ladies Christmas Bonspiel was contested by six teams and won by Fiona Glass's team of Jinty Halley, Anne MacKay and Helen McKinnell, winning 5 ends out of 6 played. The draws to the Christmas puddings were won by Anne MacKay, Anne Lochhead and Deborah Macken.

Anne MacKay completed a treble by also having the best Christmas outfit. We then adjourned to the Lion and Unicorn for Christmas lunch.

The Mixed Club Ladies v Gents Bonspiel was won by 8 ends to 6 by the Ladies. This was followed by drinks at Springkerse View.

The Mixed Club Pairs competition was played in the form of a bonspiel with 4 pairs. The winning pair was

Tony Flisch (for the third year in a row) and Gill Smith (for the first time).

The club came second of six clubs in the Province away day at Kinross. In the Low Road of the Province Knockout, the club has reached the final.

A team comprising Fiona Glass, Jean Leitch, Jane Weir and Mary MacDonald came second in the Emily Tait competition run by Stirling Ladies Branch.

The highlight of the season so far came on 11 January when we had sufficient ice to throw a few stones on Drumore Pond and socialise at the Curling Hut. Some 20 people came and enjoyed the fun.



The various team members, scores and our programme of events are available on our website at strathendrickcurling.org.uk. Both the Mixed Club and the Ladies Section play regularly during the season from the end of September to late March. The Mixed Club plays at 3pm on Tuesdays and the Ladies at 10am on Thursdays.

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

GILL SMITH



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Exciting times at Strathendrick – 50 Years On!

As you read your spring edition of the *Courier*, rugby fans will be reflecting on the result of this year's Six Nations: did Scotland fulfil their potential or once again fall a little short? Either way there will have been some exciting sporting moments over the past six weeks.

These are certainly exciting times at Fintry, where all sections of Strathendrick Rugby Club appear to be flourishing! At the time of going to press, the Men's 1st XV sit top of Arnold Clark West Region League Division 2 undefeated, so far, in the league this season. (That statement will invite a slip-up!) The team are playing attractive rugby and have a number of young players coming through from the youth ranks. The 2nd XV – a rich mix of experienced players and developing talent – are also top of their league!



The Midi and Youth teams – both boys and girls – have done well in their respective competitions and are now planning their June tours to Sweden, to take part in the Viking Cup. Strathendrick Women have both contact and touch rugby squads. Women's Touch Rugby is at Fintry every Monday evening at 7pm – new players are always welcome. And dates for summer Tartan Touch, for all the family, will be announced soon.

The Minis are looking forward to their Charity Festival on Sunday, 27 April. This is the biggest Mini Tournament in the area with hundreds of young players – and supporters – enjoying jubilee rugby in the sunshine (we hope!) whilst raising money for local hospices. So put the date in your diary and come along to cheer the youngsters on.



SRFC Girls Team



SRFC Belle Glasgow Warriors Mascot

Speaking of Jubilees, Strathendrick RFC was founded in 1975, so this year marks its 50th birthday! Celebrations will follow, so watch out for announcements on social media.

www.strathendrickrfc.com



Strathendrick 1st XV on the way to beating Birkmyre 92-0 in January

Craig Gardner 1957 – 2024

Craig was born on 25 July 1957 at the family home in Knightswood in Glasgow to Margaret and Alastair Gardner, and grew up there with his older brother Graeme. After leaving school he decided to pursue a career as a quantity surveyor, attending college on a part-time basis whilst working for a practice in Glasgow. He qualified and continued to work in a professional office environment, eventually on a freelance basis which afforded him the opportunity to be involved in a wide variety of different projects. Many lasting friendships were forged with colleagues during this time.

Craig had a church association from an early age. He went with his family to the local U.F. church, and he joined the Boys' Brigade when he was seven years old. He was a faithful member and officer for 47 years. It was through the Boys' Brigade that he met the love of his life, Peggy, who was on holiday in Bridlington in 1975 when he was at a Boys' Brigade camp. A long distance romance ensued as Peggy was training to be a nurse in London. They were married in 1979, and Peggy moved up to Glasgow. They lived on the west side of the city, and their son Andrew was born during this time in 1986. The decision to move to Killearn was made three years later, and their daughter Kay was born the following year.

Craig embraced family life, never failing to encourage and support Andrew and Kay in all aspects of their lives. As teenagers they even managed to persuade him to extend the family unit to include a very lively and lovable Jack Russell called Callie. Like everyone else, Craig was completely smitten, enjoying her antics and going for long walks together. Family holidays were always a highlight, especially those spent at the family caravan in St Andrews. More recently, Craig was absolutely delighted to become a grandparent when Norah was born in August 2023. He just loved spending as much time with her as possible.

Craig was an active and valued member of Killearn Kirk, serving as an elder and Depute Session Clerk. He was also a leader with the church-based Open Doors youth group for many years. His Christian faith was evident in every aspect of his life. He was generous with his time, putting others before himself and willing to help out in any way that he could, usually quietly and behind the scenes.

Craig had a lifelong love of sport, particularly football, American football and golf, which he played for most of his life. In his 20s, he decided to start running on a regular basis, finding it to be a great source of relaxation as well as a really good form of exercise. He even completed two Glasgow marathons. Craig was well known for his running in and around Killearn as he ran almost every



evening after work and for several hours at the weekend. Craig would not have described himself as competitive, however he took part in all sorts of games at family gatherings and managed to win annoyingly often! He also discovered that he enjoyed watercolour painting and, although he refused to accept that he had any real talent, he was actually very good at it.

However, some of the routines associated with a busy work schedule, family life and usual activities had to be adjusted after Craig received an unexpected diagnosis of advanced stage cancer in February 2023. Nevertheless, his faith, determination and the loving support of family and friends helped him to maintain a positive attitude to life and its new challenges. He was still working until October of last year when limitations imposed by declining health prevented him from continuing. Craig was able to have the care he needed at home provided by his wife, followed by a short time in Strathcarron Hospice where he died peacefully with his family beside him.

Craig will be remembered by many for a myriad of reasons. He was a loyal, reliable and selfless friend and colleague, always ready with a listening ear or a helping hand. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather, and his family will cherish memories of life with Craig and the love they shared together.

THE GARDNER FAMILY

Jess Mason

News of the death of Jess Mason has been received by the *Courier*. Jess and her husband Robin moved to Branziert Road in 2010, and she was a regular online bridge player. She will be missed by her family and friends.

Bridge by Zorro

Solution to the problem on page 8

South was wrong to open Two Spades. It is true that she held six spades, and her hand was only valued at 10 high card points. Nevertheless, she should have opened One Spade.

The Rule of 20 is an important guideline in bridge. It states that to decide whether and how to open with unbalanced hands, the player should add their high card points to the number of cards in their two longest suits. If this comes to 20 or more, they should open at the one-level. The number of cards in South's two longest suits was 10 (i.e. six spades and four clubs). Added to her 10 high card points, that makes 20 and a one-level opener.

The full deal is shown below. Holding a modest hand and expecting South's hand to be weak, North passed as did the two opponents, so the contract became Two Spades. Deciding to make a passive lead, West led ♥6, and ten tricks rolled in for the North-South pair. In fact, ten tricks were guaranteed for North-South on any lead, for all they could ever lose were two Spade tricks and the Ace of Clubs.

Had South opened One Spade, North would have responded Two Hearts. Knowing that North must have five hearts (as required for that bid), South

would then have bid Three Hearts. North would have raised to Four Hearts. Once more, ten tricks were guaranteed, even with East now making the initial lead and even if he starts with Ace of Spade on Trick 1 and switches to a low Spade for West to ruff on Trick 2 rather than continuing with the King. So North-South would have scored 420 for a game contract rather than the 170 they actually scored.

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

Contact for Obituaries

The *Courier* will be pleased to include a tribute in our pages following a local death. Generally, a tribute is between 250–300 words, and is accompanied by a photograph. If we can be of service at this difficult time, let us know by contacting courier@kcfc.co.uk.

Jamie Pearson

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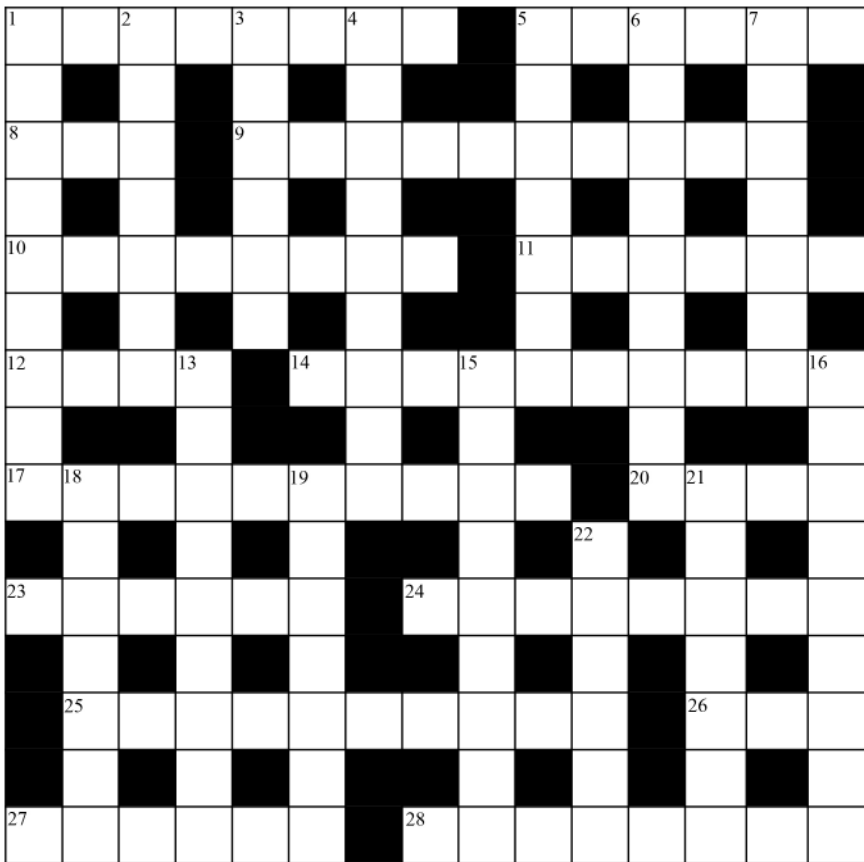
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Prize Crossword *Set by Peewit*

Our prize for the Prize Crossword is a Family Ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. Our prize for the Children's Prize Wordsearch is £10. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank the Ambassador Theatre Group for their generosity in providing the prize for our crossword competition.



ACROSS

- 1 Light on Sussex town (8)
- 5 Rotter wearing protective gear played for his country (6)
- 8 This pot can make money we hear (3)
- 9 Neutral territory has place for polisher (6,4)
- 10 A punk brat was penniless (8)
- 11 Dose on wild group of cinemas (6)
- 12 A shoe repaired on this at the end (4)
- 14 Where lower liquid may be found (4,6)
- 17 Can six wangle a way to close old letter (7,3)
- 20 Idiot found ripped inside (4)
- 23 Trash pitcher contains remains of a fire (6)
- 24 I libel someone from Brodick (8)
- 25 A lone comic can be thrifty (8)
- 26 Musk not a learner for a long time (3)
- 27 Could be denied for sure (6)
- 28 Elgin Symphony Orchestra starts to let the newspapers in for a coffee. (8)

DOWN

- 1 Sad ringers give flowers (9)
- 2 Batsman's turn when rewards fail to start (7)
- 3 Rod is very warm outside Tasmanian city (6)
- 4 Jump off before children (9)
- 5 Terrorist device, doctor replaces end of diamond element (3,4)
- 6 Reject pod found to be stuck out (9)
- 7 Go in around, nearly everything's for ever (7)
- 13 Ring then elope bizarrely (9)
- 15 First king takes short sleep before he gets rid of his backpacks (9)
- 16 Ten operas are written in this language (9)
- 18 Oriental drug behind the boat (7)
- 19 Fault in tennis etc in French north (3-4)
- 21 Make good when clothed again (7)
- 22 Back in the barrel lather gets higher (6)

How to Enter: Solve the crossword and place your solution in the postbox outside the Village Hall together with your name, address and a contact phone number. Alternatively, count the number of times the letter 'p' appears in the grid and email to peewit@kcfc.co.uk with your name, address and a contact phone number. Your entries should be in Peewit's mailbox by 25 April 2025.

Solution to the Christmas crossword: ACROSS : 1 tea; 3 state; 6 rope; 8 Egremont; 9 walker; 10 statin; 11 scrubbed; 12 circus; 15 emigrate; 16 straw hat; 19 Nevada; 21 guerilla; 22 muesli; 24 limber; 25 espresso; 26 tent; 27 yield; 28 sir. DOWN: 1 tight; 2 aseptic; 3 swoon; 4 artiste; 5 Edwardian; 6 roll bar; 7 presented; 13 intrusive; 14 scholarly; 17 acrobat; 18 trapeze; 20 viewers; 22 moped; 23 loser.

Winner of the Christmas crossword competition: Catriona Thompson, Killearn

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

Sudoku

How to Play

Fill in the blank squares so that upon completion, each row, each column and each block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9

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

Children's Prize Wordsearch

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

Eight of the words are: Craigallian, Drunkie, Katrine, Linlithgow, Marie, Rannoch, Tummel, Venachar.

Can you find the other two lochs? Write them down and post or email your answer to the *Courier* for a chance to win £10 for you to spend.

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

Instructions for sending it are given in the box below.

Good luck to all the contestants.

Peewit

HOW TO ENTER

We urge everyone who tries our competitions to send in an entry – everyone has a chance to win. Email your solution(s) to peewit@kfc.co.uk, or drop it in the postbox outside the Village Hall. Remember to give your name, address and a contact phone number. Late date for entries: **25 April 2025**.

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

Well done to the winner of the last wordsearch:
Christina McGraw, Killearn

Children's Spot the Difference – Just for Fun



Can you find 10 things that have changed in the right-hand picture? Good hunting!

Solutions to the non-prize puzzles may be found at: kfc.co.uk/admin/puzzles61.pdf

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First Time for Everything

When it comes to watching wildlife, finding something new is always something special. This might be spotting a new bird species for the garden from the kitchen window. Or going further and discovering something that no one has recorded in the local area before – a mammal, bird or something smaller, like an insect. I have previously written about finding moths that were new to the Stirlingshire recording area. For me, it rarely gets better than that. However, the lucky few go still one better and find a species new to Scotland. Or even one never previously recorded in Britain. Wow! That surely can't be beaten, can it?

But what if your discovery is something new for... the planet?

On 12 July 2022, we discovered a tiny moth resting on a downstairs wall of our house next to a couple of potted plants. It was something that could so easily have been overlooked, shooed out or even destroyed. However, having an interest in such critters, I examined it closely instead, keen to put a name to our home invader. I quickly recognised it as something new (for me at least) and not in any of my field guides.

At this point I could not have predicted events that would subsequently unfold, set in motion by my curiosity. An incredible voyage of discovery over the next two years involved moth experts and scientists from all over the world, the Natural History Museum in London, mind-blowing DNA analysis and the dawning realisation that this micro-moth had never previously been identified or described anywhere on Earth. Here was a species new to science!

But this was no 'Scottish' moth. It had likely been imported (as a pupa) on one of the houseplants. Efforts to establish its country of origin – enquiries began by focussing on a local garden centre and its Dutch nursery import routes – were far from straightforward.



Initial hypothesising had Central America as the likely candidate, but ultimately it became clear that the creature hailed from East Asia. The irony is not lost on me that, after hunting for new moths all over the country, this global first turned up in my own house in Killearn.

After a long drawn out process, the record was finally accepted, and the account and associated science published in January 2025 in *Nota Lepidopterologica* 48 (for those of you who want some bedtime reading). The four authors of the paper are to be congratulated on their incredible skill, expertise and investigative drive that pushed it over the line. While I contributed to the manuscript, I could not be listed in its authorship if I wanted recognition in the official naming of the moth. Securing this accolade was not a difficult decision.

A new species for the world: *Sufetula culshawi*.
Now beat that!

MARTIN CULSHAW

Killearn Courier
is published by Killearn
Community Futures Company



Anyone wishing to contribute to the summer edition of the *Courier* is reminded that it will be distributed on 15 August 2025.

Advertisements and artwork should be sent to us by Friday, 20 June 2025.

Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by 20 June 2025.

Please send them to:
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