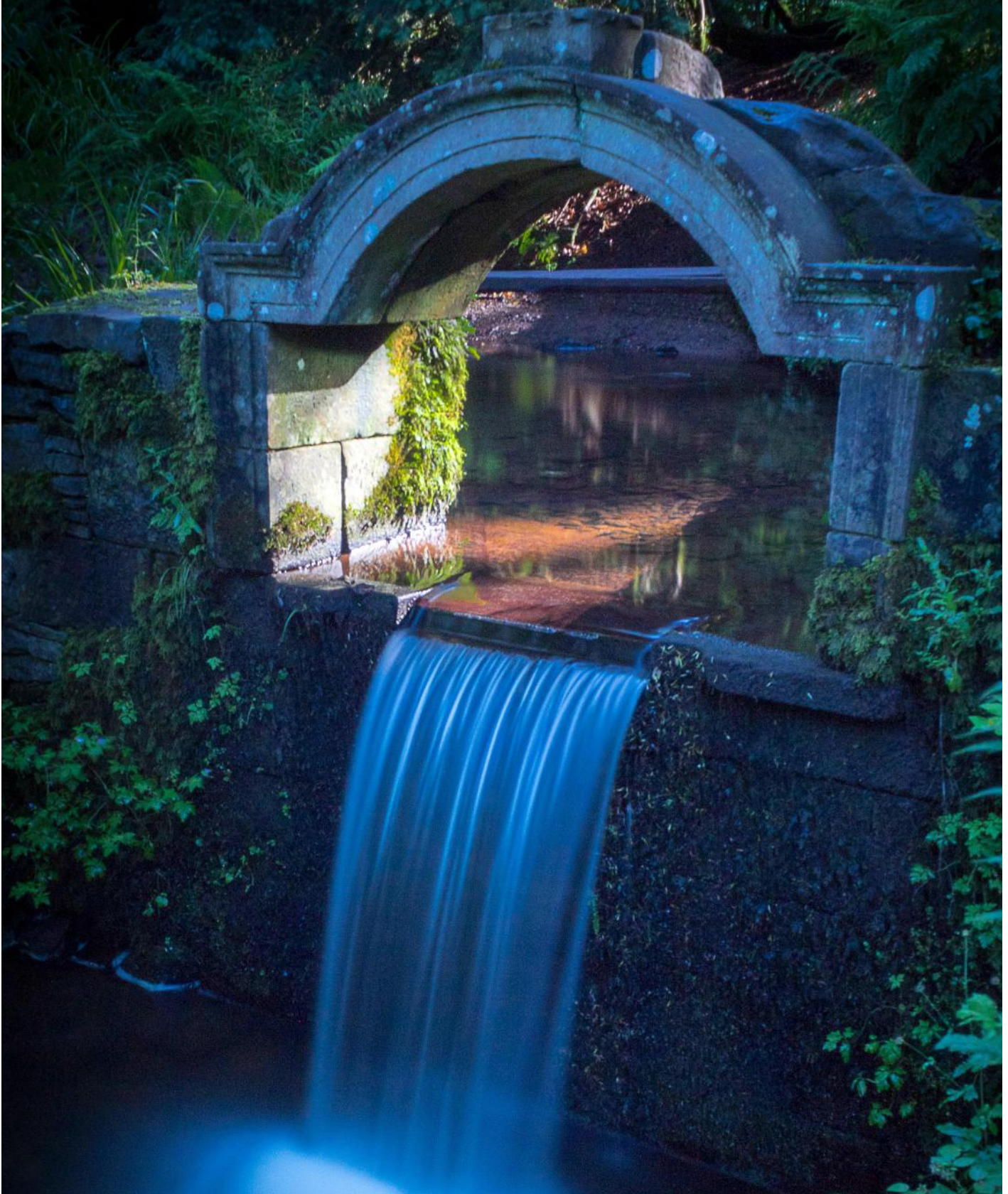




ISSUE 42

WINTER 2018

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Noticeboard

20 Nov	Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch workshop 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk by Judith Wynne, 'Palestinian Embroidery', 2pm. Kirk Halls.	1–2 Jan	Killearn Health Centre closed.
21 Nov	Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.	7 Jan	Monday Music spring term starts. Kirk Hall, 10.30am. For details regarding age groups and availability contact Moyra (moyrahawthornbg@googlemail.com ; 07786 704969)
22 Nov	Killearn Kirk messy play. Kirk Halls, 9.30am–11.30am for ages 0–5 years, thereafter 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Drymen & District Local History Society talk by Craig Mair, 'The Battle of Stirling Bridge'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. www.drymen-history.org.uk	15 Jan	Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch workshop. Kirk Halls, 10.30am–3.30pm. Visitors welcome. £4 for full day, £3 for half day.
24 Nov	Killearn Primary School Fundraising Group Christmas Fair. Kirk Hall, 2.30pm–5pm.	16 Jan	Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.
29 Nov	FADs pantomime 'Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs'. Menzies Hall, Fintry, Thursday–Saturday, 7.30pm and matinee, Saturday, 2pm. More information and tickets at tickets@fintrydrama.org.uk .	17 Jan	The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley lecture by Dr James Grant MBE, 'The Plague Art and the Ultimate Calamity'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am.
–1 Dec		22 Jan	Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Ian Dickie, 'Memories of a Police Officer'.
30 Nov	Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>West Side Story</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.	24 Jan	Drymen & District Local History Society illustrated talk by Bruce Keith, 'Bridgescapes', celebrating Scotland's bridge building heritage. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. www.drymen-history.org.uk
2 Dec	Killearn Kirk Communion Service. 10.30am.	26 Jan	Killearn Primary School Fundraising Group Burns Coffee Morning. Village Hall, 10am.
4 Dec	Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Talk by Kevin and Lynda Clarke, 'Cycling the Via Francigena, Canterbury to Rome Pilgrimage Route'. Bring and Buy.	1 Feb	Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>Phantom Thread</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
6 Dec	FADs pantomime 'Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs'. Menzies Hall, Fintry. Times and ticket information at 29 Nov above.	5 Feb	Killearn Kirk Guild meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Project – Empowering teenage mothers in Zambia.
–8 Dec		15 Feb	Strathendrick Film Society showing <i>Jean de Florette</i> . Balforn High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
8 Dec	Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12noon. Baking stall and sales table.	19 Feb	Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch workshop. Kirk Halls, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk by Louise Martin, 'Far North: woven tapestries inspired by the Icelandic landscape', 2pm. Visitors welcome. £4 for full day, £3 for half day.
9 Dec	Killearn Kirk Christmas Gift Service. 10.30am. Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert. Gartmore Village Hall, 7pm. Tickets at the door or from choir members. Refreshments provided. Contact Judith Neil (secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk).	20 Feb	Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.
13 Dec	The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley lecture by Sue Bradbury, 'Stained Glass Design Creation'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. www.theartsocietystirling.org.uk Killearn Kirk Guild Christmas Lunch with Thursday Club . Catering by Turnip the Beet. Kirk Hall, 2pm.	21 Feb	The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley lecture by Marc Allum, 'Antiques Roadshow'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am. Killearn Kirk Guild meeting with Thursday Club . Kirk Hall, 2pm. With Joyce Begg and singers. Bring and Buy.
14 Dec	Strathendrick Singers Christmas Concert, Killearn Kirk, 7.30pm. Vaughan Williams <i>Fantasia on Christmas Carols</i> and Cecilia McDowall's <i>A Winter's Night</i> as well as the usual favourites. Tickets at the door or from choir members. Refreshments provided. Contact Judith Neil (secretary@strathendricksingers.org.uk).	23 Feb	Killearn Malawi Group Jumble Sale. 10am–12 noon, Kirk Hall. Entry fee £1. Receiving donations in Kirk Hall, Friday 6pm–8pm. Sorry, no electrical items or large items such as furniture.
16 Dec	Killearn Kirk Kids' Christmas Party. 10.30am.	28 Feb	Drymen & District Local History Society illustrated talk by Paul Bishop, 'The Local Scottish Water Mill'. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. www.drymen-history.org.uk
19 Dec	Killearn Community Council meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.		
24 Dec	Killearn Kirk Christmas Eve service, 11pm. Carol singing followed by watchnight service.		
25 Dec	Killearn Kirk family Christmas day service, 10am.		
25 Dec	Killearn Health Centre closed. For help or advice contact NHS 24 on 111.		
–26 Dec			

Noticeboard continued

- 2 Mar **Strathendrick Singers** Musical Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon. Home baking, musical entertainment and much more.
- 5 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** meeting. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Trisha Cumming, 'Fitness for the third age'.
- 8 Mar **Killearn Horticultural Society** Whist Drive. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm. Entry £2 at the door including refreshments; raffle.
- Strathendrick Film Society** showing *The Third Man*. Balfron High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.
- 16 Mar **Killearn Kirk Guild** Spring Coffee Morning. Kirk Hall, 10am–12 noon.
- 19 Mar **Embroiderers' Guild Strathendrick Branch** workshop. Kirk Halls, 10.30am–3.30pm. Talk by Sheila Dalgleish, 'North and South, wherever next?', based on her recent exhibition of textile art, 2pm. Visitors welcome. £4 for full day, £3 for half day.
- Killearn Kirk Guild** AGM and light supper with Ros McGowan. Kirk Hall, 7.30pm.
- 20 Mar **Killearn Community Council** meeting. Killearn Primary School, 8pm.
- 21 Mar **The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley** lecture by Nigel Bates, 'Tantrums and tiaras: backstage at Covent Garden'. Albert Halls, Stirling, 11am.
- 23 Mar **Killearn Primary School Fundraising Group** Swedish afternoon tea. Village Hall, 2pm–5pm.
- Classics at Kippen** concert. Kippen Parish church, 7.30pm. Tickets and information at www.classicsatkippen.co.uk.
- 24 Mar **Strathendrick Singers** Easter Concert. Kirk Hall, time to be confirmed. Featuring Haydn's *Creation*.
- 26 Mar **Killearn Golden Years' Club** Annual Dinner. Kirk Hall, 6.30pm for 7pm.
- 28 Mar **Drymen & District Local History Society** talk by Ken Colville, 'The Kaiser's Pirate', the story of WWI legend Kapitan Count Felix Von Luckner and his Clyde-built sailing ship Seeadler, formerly Pass of Balmaha. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45pm. Admission £2; annual membership £7, payable at the door. www.drymen-history.org.uk
- 29 Mar **Strathendrick Film Society** showing *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*. Balfron High School Theatre, 7.30pm. £4 entry.

If you have dates of events for the Spring 2019 issue of the Noticeboard (mid March until the end of August), please contact Heather McArthur (550137; heather.mcarthur@virgin.net).

Cover Image

The beautiful cover picture of the Ladies Linn was taken by Robert Dunn, and remains his copyright.

You will find the Ladies Linn in Killearn Glen, which is part of the original estate of the Place of Killearn. It is a designed waterfall and is the only remaining feature from the gardens associated with the house. It was restored through a collaboration of the Killearn Trust and Stirling Council. It is interesting to compare this photograph with the painting on page 8 by Athena McLellan. This illustrates the article on Killearn's Heritage Trail, where you will find more details of the Place of Killearn.

Editorial

Well, here we are, five weeks away from Christmas and six weeks away from 2019. Where on earth does the time go? It sort of sneaks up and then passes so quickly you get a bit of a shock and wonder what you have missed. Never fear! The *Courier* will endeavour to keep you informed on matters in and around the village and even, sometimes, further afield. Did you know that we send subscription copies not only to former villagers living in Scotland, but also to far flung parts of the UK, as well as France? I also have it on good authority that a reader acquires a copy and sends it to New Zealand. Copies are also held in the National Library of Scotland as part of their collection of record, which has a copy of everything printed in our part of the world. And don't forget we're also available, with a slight delay, online!

I am always quite astounded when I learn something new or have reason to recall things that I had forgotten. For example, did you know that KCFC holds a variety of equipment on your behalf which you can borrow? Are you aware of the Heritage Trail Project (which the *Courier* supports) which will provide a wonderful insight into old Killearn? An article on the potential effects of climate change offers a thoughtful last paragraph. Then there's the 'App of the Issue' compiled by our Cubs – not being a techno buff, I learn something new every time.

But enough of the serious stuff. This is our Christmas issue, after all. You will notice that we've moved away from the usual wintry front cover and have featured a photograph of the Ladies Linn, which you can see yourselves in the Glen. In case you were curious about how other countries and communities celebrate Christmas, the answers lie in our centre pages.

The issue wouldn't be complete without instructions for creating Christmas decorations or a recipe to excite your taste buds. (That said, I wouldn't save the pecan and salted caramel tart just for Christmas.) And puzzles. Don't forget them: puzzles mean prizes!

You will also find articles from our usual contributors as well as adverts from businesses that support us. Your *Courier* is hand delivered by a group of volunteers after it has been produced by the dedicated *Courier* group members.

To all of them, and anyone I may have forgotten but should have mentioned, I thank them for their efforts in 2018 and wish them – and you – a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Ian

What a Brilliant Show!

Killearn Cottagers' Horticultural Society 152nd show was yet another great event. The gardening displays were bright and impressive; the home craft and arts and crafts were inspiring. A mouth-watering experience all round, not least in the tearoom.

It was also nice to see the companion organisations in their gazebos adding yet more value to this annual event.

Credit to all the committee and helpers and, of course, to the contributors who made the day so enjoyable for everyone.

These community events contribute so much to the life and identity of the village. However, as with all such events, the work to produce them starts well in advance. There was a request from the platform for more people to get involved, not only in the show itself but also in the sale of the schedules in the two months beforehand. I know many people appreciate having the schedules come to their door, but to do this takes a lot of people to cover the village. If anyone feels they could volunteer a few days in the summer to sell schedules or help with the set up or clear up of the show, the committee would love to hear from them. The payback of having this great event go from strength to strength is well worth a few hours.

Here's looking forward to the 153rd show! HW



McLaughlin – Hunter



Stuart Hunter and Claire McLaughlin were married on 14 July 2018 at Lochside House Hotel, New Cumnock. Stuart grew up in Killearn and Claire is from Strathblane, and they both attended Balfron High School. The couple now live in Bearsden with their 18-month old daughter, Lexie.

Jonathan Passes Muster!



Well, I conquered Pass Dello Stelvio on the 5 and 6 September. It was an unbelievable feeling getting to the summit (twice), and even more fun descending!

We had gorgeous sunny weather, with blue skies on both days, and a very warm 30°C, which was tough on the first day. But my legs did me proud, and I couldn't have achieved my challenge without the help of my support team: my wife, Louise, and my little girl, Florence.

And I also couldn't have achieved my target of £2,000, without the amazing support and generosity of everybody who has kindly donated. Not only did the target get smashed, the total at the moment is £4,500. And, as I'm writing this in September, the site is still live, so there is more filtering in and the final total will be larger.

So a huge thanks to everyone, it means a lot.

JONATHAN BRUCE

Inspiring Speakers and Malawi Gin

The annual gathering of the Killearn Malawi Group (KMG, SC043555) on 6 September in Killearn Kirk Hall was a new, informal format for the Group's annual general meeting. It was an opportunity for the Friends of the Group to hear about its work over the preceding year, and to sample Malawi gin and buy Malawi produce. The gathering was also fortunate to hear from inspiring guest speakers, Andrew Parker and Alan Laverock.

Andrew grew up in Killearn, and is now a development economist who has lived and worked in Malawi. He has a great love of the country, while recognising its many problems. He explained that there is a serious lack of investment and opportunity in the country, which holds the people back from realising their potential.

The main work of the KMG over the past year has been working with the local community to build a science/computing block at Nkhande Secondary School. Reports by Ken Allen, chairperson and Sue Beck, treasurer, illustrated how the building has progressed. The Group also provided desks and chairs for the school, and provided Killearn-Regson scholarships for some of the students. We are also fortunate to be working with our Malawian partner, Kondwani Chidziwisano, who recently stayed for a month in Killearn.

Ken and Sue also reported on successful fundraising events. The fashion show was great fun, and the jumble sale brought together many old and new friends from the community to help sort and then sell the mountain of donations. The next jumble sale will take place on Saturday, 23 February 2019.

The Gathering also approved the accounts of the Group, and re-appointed the committee of nine Trustees, and Eva Mailer, our Junior Member.



During the year the Group has continued to support Chrissie's Meals in the northern region, and supported newly registered charity, the Banana Box Trust, which is now sending containers to northern Malawi, including goods donated and stored in the kirk.

We were fortunate to have Alan Laverock, who set up the Banana Box Trust, speaking to us about its work. He told us how the new Trust's first container to Malawi met with a major problem when the ship it was on encountered difficult weather off Durban, and lost a number of containers overboard. Fortunately, although the Trust's container was seriously damaged, its contents were intact, and were packed into new containers to continue their journey to Malawi. Alan picked up Andrew's point about investing in people by describing other projects the Trust is involved in.

Throughout the evening, the Gathering offered refreshments, including Malawi gin and KucheKuche beer, and home baking. There was also a stall selling Malawi rice, coffee and hot peri-peri sauce, as well as other African goods and Malawi crafts, mostly provided by Gavin's Mill Fair Trade shop in Milngavie.

This was a novel, enjoyable way of reporting on the work of the KMG. Please join us as Friends – it doesn't cost anything but your interest. You can contact us by email at info@killearnmalawigroup.org, or visit our website at www.killearnmalawigroup.org.

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Torrance – Thursday and Friday, 9.30am – 2.00pm

Review: *Journey's End*

Every once in a while you see a play that leaves a deep and lasting impression, and which you revisit in your thoughts again and again. The recent production of R.C. Sherrif's *Journey's End* by the Fintry Amateur Dramatic Society was one such. Everything about it – the location, the staging, the pre-play tableau, the set, the grim storyline and the performance itself – was moving and thought-provoking.

The signing of the Armistice 100 years ago on 11 November 1918 brought to an end one of the most destructive and disastrous conflicts among the great European nations. *Journey's End* was first performed in 1928. It was a big hit at the time, and has lost none of its poignancy.

The five performances by the Fintry group took place at 'The Studio', a converted barn just outside Killearn, most appropriate for a play set in the trenches. The producers and director (Kevin Boland, Alan Cuthbert and Jonny North) and many others, clearly put a lot of effort into creating just the right atmosphere. Approaching the venue up a wooded drive, silhouettes of armed soldiers peered out from behind trees, and a field of white crosses provided a stark testimony to the horrific death toll this war involved.

The play was preceded by a short tableau centred on a recruiting drive. Unlike most of the other nations involved, at the start of the World War I Britain had only a small volunteer army, trained for colonial conflicts; conscription was not introduced until later. Massive recruitment of woefully inexperienced volunteers took place rapidly. As illustrated in the tableau, British people were optimistic that the war would be short and end in victory for the Allies. A wave of patriotism swept through the population. Cheery women carrying placards urged men to do their 'duty' and sign up to an experience that would, in fact, destroy, if not end, their lives.

A display of exhibits hammered home the effect this had on local communities. The programme, a mock edition of the soldiers' trench newspaper, 'The Wipers Times' for 18 March 1918 (when the play begins), provided short reflections from each of the 11 cast members on how their own families were affected, demonstrating their level of personal engagement with the subject matter.

The play is centred on a group of British officers in a dugout in the trenches, covering four days leading up to the great German offensive that started on 21 March 1918. All three of the lead characters were brilliantly and convincingly portrayed. The ambiguous company commander Stanhope, loved by his men, masking his fear by excessive whisky drinking, prone to irrational outbursts; Osborne, a calm, civilised, sympathetic school teacher on whom Stanhope relies for support; young Raleigh, fresh out of school, painfully keen and naïve and initially finding it all so frightfully exciting. The boredom of waiting in the trenches is conveyed through the



interactions among these three, punctuated by occasional visits from gruff and obedient company members.

We learn that Raleigh has used his contacts at home to get into Stanhope's company, having known him at school. Stanhope is not pleased at this, realising that the ghastly reality of their situation will topple the pedestal on which Raleigh has placed him, possibly damaging his relationship with Raleigh's sister.

The antics of their cook in trying to present their rations in a manner worth eating brought a lighter note, while Hibbert, the frightened shirker, feigns illness in a futile attempt to get sent home. In this we see another side of Stanhope as he coaxes Hibbert out of a plan to desert.

Then we have the arrival of a general and his news of the forthcoming offensive. He outlines a hopeless plan to capture a German soldier via an unpractised raid to be led by Osborne and Raleigh. Even more foolishly, this is to take place in daylight, apparently to fit around a formal dinner planned for the senior officers in the evening.

Stanhope is horrified at the prospect of sending Osborne, Raleigh and a group of men, on this risky and futile mission. His protests go unheeded; orders from above must be obeyed. The raiding party sets out and, while they do capture a hapless German, the majority, including Osborne, do not return. The gloom that follows, and Raleigh's misunderstanding of Stanhope's attempts to obliterate his devastation at Osborne's death through jocularly and drink, was almost painful to watch.

The feared German offensive then starts. Many men, including Raleigh, are killed and the dugout is blown to smithereens. Key elements of this dreadful war, its futility and tragedy, the conflicting emotions it generated, the price paid by the living and the dead, were captured in this excellent production.

The uneasy peace that finally came about following the Armistice laid the foundations for World War II, just 21 years later.

Journey's End certainly provided a night to remember. And also a prompt to reflect on the consequences of our departure from the union that has helped keep war among the major European nations at bay for the longest period in 2,000 years.

PAT MONAGHAN

Summary January to September 2018 for Killearn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Highest Temp	11.5	12.4	11.3	19.9	25.7	31.2	27.3	21.9	19.6
Lowest Temp	-6.6	-5.8	-5.3	-1.9	0.6	6.4	7.5	4.9	2.7
Mean Temp	3.2	2.7	3.1	7.5	12.2	14.5	16.5	13.7	11
Days Below Freezing	10	14	13	3	0	0	0	0	0
Highest Wind Gust	30	24	28	23	30	47	26	16	29
Monthly Rain	184.4	70.7	90.8	88.2	27.4	45.4	59.6	68.4	43.2
Most Rain in 24 hrs	33.4	17.9	13.4	19	6.2	9	18.4	11	15
Days without Rain	6	11	10	12	6	15	19	9	4
Cumulative Rainfall	184.4	255.1	345.9	434.1	461.5	506.9	566.5	634.9	678.1

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

The year 2018 to September is notable for two spells of weather – the snow, ice and cold temperatures of winter and the very warm summer months of May and June.

The mean temperature over the whole of the UK up to September is a record. In a previous article in the *Courier*, I pointed out that over the 10-year period 2005–2014, the mean temperature in our district increased by 0.1°C each year.

One cannot be definite about the causes of this rise, but climate scientists are increasingly sure that the release into the atmosphere of carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour and ozone together with other ‘greenhouse gases’ trap heat at lower atmospheric levels and are responsible. They warn that if we allow temperatures to keep rising,

we may have to change the way we live our lives.

As well as creating a warmer atmosphere, these higher temperatures allow the atmosphere to hold more moisture and this may be reflected in the incidences of flash flooding in the UK and other countries across the world.

There is concrete evidence that warming is responsible for recent partial melting of the polar ice caps. If it continues, this would allow larger quantities of cold fresh water to enter into the surface layers of the oceans, with a subsequent rise in sea levels. Increased polar melts of fresh water and the decline of salinity in sea water have been linked to the slowing of the Gulf Stream with potentially unwanted consequences for Scotland’s maritime climate.

It does not mean that the effects of warming will be the same across the whole planet. Those journalists pointing to a change in southern Britain to a climate something akin to southwest France encourage the public to think of this as a good thing if it brings ‘Mediterranean summers’, vineyards and reduced heating bills. It may, however, wash away our beaches, flood low-lying areas and bring new pests and diseases.

The safest approach is to strive hard not to live in ways that accentuate a warming lower atmosphere by reducing our ‘carbon footprint’, for example by sharing transport, and by insulating our houses, re-using and recycling.

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Killearn's Heritage Trail – a new community project

Killearn Glen is a magical place with ancient oaks and glorious bluebells, tumbling burns, and mystical lichens and fungi. In the past, the Glen was a managed woodland and its boundaries have stayed largely unchanged for 250 years. On the edge of what we now call the ‘cow field’, was once a manor house, ‘The Place’, although not a tile, a brick or a piece of glass remains today. Across the burn, past the Ladies Linn, the foundations of an even older building were discovered by an archaeological survey in 2016. Wouldn't it be interesting to excavate this site and to uncover more of the history of the Glen?

And our village has other historical gems: the beautiful Old Kirk was built in 1734, the Buchanan Monument was erected in 1788, the Station Road/Balfron Road junction was a toll road in the 18th century and the Old Mill and The Square also probably date from this time. And there is more! Did you know there were once at least three pubs in the village: The Black Bull, The Wheatsheaf (where Spar was until recently) and The White Horse (where the Health Centre car park now is). The Old Mill was only converted in the 1980s.

Now a new community project – involving local people, as well as schools and businesses – is being initiated to explore and explain the heritage of our village and promote use of footpaths and cycle paths in the area, one day possibly linking the Glen with the West Highland Way and beyond. The proposed Trail will lead residents or visitors through the village, past intriguing sites and finishing with coffee and cake, or a glass of something stronger, in one of our local hostleries.

The project plans are: Phase 1 to excavate the building in the Glen, under expert supervision, hopefully next



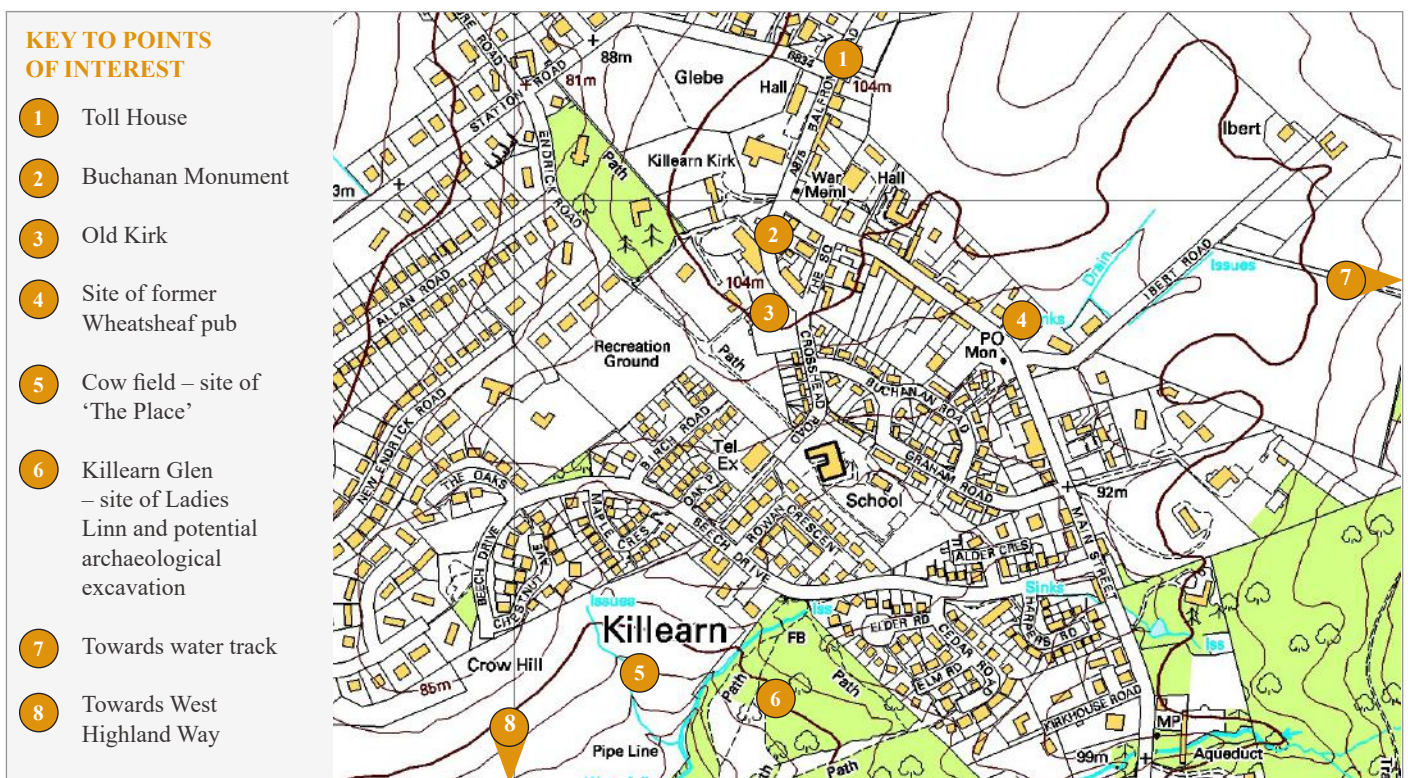
Old Kirk sunset – courtesy of Sandra Smith



Painting of Ladies Linn courtesy of Athena McLellan

year; Phase 2 to design and produce interpretation boards at sites around the village and an app providing further historical information; Phase 3 to promote use of the paths network and encourage trade for local businesses; Phase 4 to improve local trails and develop a new route down to the West Highland Way.

If you would like to know more, or to be involved in the Killearn Heritage Trail project please contact heritage@kfc.co.uk and we will keep you posted on progress, developments and opportunities to participate.



An Elegy



Jan Millar
and RT,
1988

Can you remember what you were doing on the evening of Wednesday, 21 December 1988? Some of you will know exactly, even though it was 30 years ago. For me, newly qualified as a search and rescue dog handler in mountain rescue, I was wondering when and where my first callout would be. An avalanche in Glencoe? Missing person in Stirlingshire? Lost hill walker on Ben Lomond? That evening my question was answered. My young dog and I were off to Lockerbie.

December is dark and fas
Mirk ower Border march and moor.
December is a shroud. The banshee blows
Thru the langest day and darkest hour.

The sky-wrack strewn
Wi torn and twisted bodies scattered,
The wing-wreck ligs ower field and toun,
Metal mangled and bomb-battered.
The horror o this fire-ship, fresh-fa'n,
Wad seecken the mind speired in its ugsome hale:
Lockerbie wauks ti a hellish daan,
Its crater-carved streets unmade til Paschendale.

JM

'Lockerbie Elegy' verses 1 and 3 by William Purcell.
If you would be interested in reading 'Lockerbie Elegy'
in its entirety, contact the *Courier*.

Christmas Post is Back

You will be pleased to hear that the familiar Christmas postboxes will be back in the Co-op, pharmacy and church from Monday, 1 December.

The final uplift of mail will be at 1pm on Sunday, 16 December. Deliveries will be made within the village 30mph signs, including all of Lampson Road and Drumbeg Loan.

Please remember to put the full name and address (no postcodes needed) on the envelope.

All of this year's proceeds will be donated to Robin House Children's Hospice, and we very much hope that you will give generously.

Anyone interested in joining our merry band of Christmas posties, please call Glenda (550142).



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Let There Be Light

Has anyone noticed how many sets of temporary lights there are around these days? Not only have they become an intermittent feature of village life, but also the road to Larbert is peppered with them. So much so that one is advised to leave an extra 15 minutes to cope with them, in addition to the 15 minutes you have to allow for finding a parking spot at the other end. This of course also means that you could arrive for your appointment half an hour ahead of time. But it's a risk worth taking. You can always read *The Herald* or do a sudoku or two while you wait.

Over the last weeks, we have had to negotiate quite a few sets of lights in the village. The Main Street was a source of tribulation in the summer, when traffic from Balfroon had to go down Station Road, and people had to re-think their route to town. But was this not a small price to pay for the swanky stretch of tarmac that now extends in front of the Co-op? Gone are the potholes that would have disgraced a third-world country. Now we have a streamlined carriageway, with nice bright painted lines.

The turmoil in Station Road has lasted a little longer, and in view of the ongoing building work, may well come and go indefinitely. Most of the time it's fine, but on the day of Storm Ali, things got a little more adventurous. None of the men appeared to be working, due in all likelihood to the fact that they wouldn't have been able to stand upright and wield a hammer simultaneously, so there was no one on hand to sort out the problem when all the traffic lights went red. Queues formed in three directions, until the word went from car to car – in rain that sluiced in

if you opened the window the merest crack – that nothing was going to turn green any time soon, and people ventured forth at five miles an hour. At least the lights didn't all go green. That would have been a much more exciting scenario.

And isn't it interesting how quickly one's eye adjusts to changes in the landscape? To begin with, the houses in the new development in Station Road looked enormous and darkly forbidding, but now that they have been rendered in a pale colour, they have shrunk and become much more viewer friendly. The view from the Glebe field has altered, of course, with the removal of a whole stand of trees, but even after Storm Ali we are not short of trees, and the houses will soon fit in fine. In fact, there might even be advantages. According to Nancy, some views have been improved, and she is now able to witness a pretty pink dawn that was previously denied to her.

While still on the subject of lights, we are approaching the season of having lights everywhere. Hopefully, the Christmas illuminations won't get mixed up with the traffic ones, but the whole ambience should get much cheerier. The Christmas tree outside the church always extends a welcoming glow, and the roof of the Old Mill has been known to twinkle. Decorous Advent arches appear in almost every window, building a feeling of pleasant anticipation. And then there's the riot of cheerful colour that is Graham Road in December. It's all ahead of us, all there for us to enjoy. We may, or may not, get the snow we got last year, but we will surely have the lights, and the brightness. Happy Christmas, everyone. JOYCE BEGG

Killlearn... Gateway to Glasgow?



Was it a modern art installation? Was it an exercise on how to set up temporary traffic lights? Why did a van appear one Monday morning to erect three-way traffic lights at the junction of New Endrick Road and Lampson Road as well as 'No Parking' signs for that week?

This left the residents for five days with 'a fairyland of glittering lights, changing all the time: green... amber... red... red and amber... and back to green' (for those who remember the parody comedy sketch 'Balham, Gateway to the South' by Frank Muir and Dennis Norden, performed by Peter Sellers).

Then on Friday afternoon, everything disappeared just as mysteriously!

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Monumental Stitching



Strathendrick branch of the Embroiderers' Guild has been involved in two big national projects, both with historical tones, albeit centuries apart.

Knitted, crocheted, felted or embroidered, 8,000 poppies made by willing hands including those of the Strathendrick branch cascaded down the tower of Liberton Parish Church in Edinburgh to mark the centenary of World War I. Strathendrick was honoured to be involved.

We were also part of the Scottish

Region team who, working with the artists and designers, stitched 'bricks' that when assembled became the Wallace Monument (pictured above). The completed work is now on display at the Wallace Monument in Stirling and is much admired by all who visit.

Do you enjoy stitching? Are you curious about expanding your knowledge of textile art in all its forms? The Strathendrick branch meets on the third Tuesday of the month in Killearn Kirk Hall from September to May. Our workshop mornings start at 10.30am and we usually have a speaker in the afternoon. These talks start at 2pm. You are welcome to visit us for either a half or full day. We look forward to meeting you.

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App of the Issue: Hostelworld

As I enter my sixth and final year at school, I'm starting to look at life and the world beyond Killearn.

In the age of Instagram and YouTube we're constantly being shown beautiful, stunning images of exotic places around the world, but actually finding your own places can be tricky. Hostelworld is an app (website and social media, too) that allows you to get your own insta-worthy photos.

When you go onto the app it shows your top destinations and allows you to look for your perfect hostel by searching your location, dates and number of guests. You can add places you love to your favourites list and plan your trips. Hostelworld, contrary to its name, isn't all hostels. The app provides many accommodation options including hotels and bed and breakfasts. Some of the hostels are truly incredible and nothing like you imagine a typical hostel to be. Some are really works of art within buildings, or with bedrooms in old camper vans or even beds hidden in bookcases. If you're planning a trip or simply looking for some eye candy, I highly recommend having a look at Hostelworld.

KD



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Christmas Cracker

It was lunchtime on Christmas Day. The house was a riot of discarded ribbon and wrapping paper, and we had arrived at the moment when the turkey, golden brown and steaming fragrantly, was borne into the dining room on its huge platter and set down at the head of the festive table by the Master of the House.

A magical moment indeed. Except... There seemed to be something wrong with this particular turkey. The Master of The House, having studied it carefully, enormous carving knife and fork in hand, made an initial sally with the fork. This surgical instrument pinged resonantly as it bounced off one of the bony protuberances which seemed to be all that the poor creature had in the way of legs.

'This turkey,' he announced, 'has no legs. Where did we get it?' On such dramatic occasions where blame was about to be apportioned, 'we' usually meant 'you'.

My mother could always be depended on for the answer to any problem whatsoever. Her solutions were usually sourced in *The Daily Telegraph*.

'I know what this is,' she announced triumphantly, 'It's not a turkey at all. It's a super duck. I read somewhere that they've been breeding them specially this year. For Christmas.'

The Master of the House was not to be distracted from his Christmas Day ritual. Grasping the carving knife he whacked the turkey again. His purple paper hat, which had looked quite stylish when he first put it on, had slipped

down almost to his nose and he was beginning to look rather sinister.

At that moment the doorbell rang. The untimely caller was a local farmer who had come to complain – not for the first time – that his sheep were escaping into our garden because we had failed to repair the fence, or hedge, or both. I asked him, as politely as possible, whether, since we were about to eat our Christmas lunch, he could perhaps come back at another time?

'No,' he wheezed, 'I definitely could not. My chest is so sore that I can hardly walk at the moment. I need to speak to HIM.' He nodded towards the dining room whence came the unmistakable rasp of knife sharpening.

I decided to call for the assistance of the Master of the House. Back in the dining room, I explained the problem to him. I thought he was about to explode. Abandoning the turkey, he went to the open door, grimly clutching his weapons. No words were exchanged. Our Christmas visitor took one look at his armed adversary in the purple hat, turned, stepped away from the door and set off down the drive at lightning speed, considering that he could 'hardly walk at all'.

It wasn't a super duck, by the way. I had deliberately cooked the turkey upside down. It was the latest Yuletide cooking tip which I had gleaned from some newspaper or other. Probably *The Daily Telegraph*. Happy Christmas.

CHRISTINE BOWIE



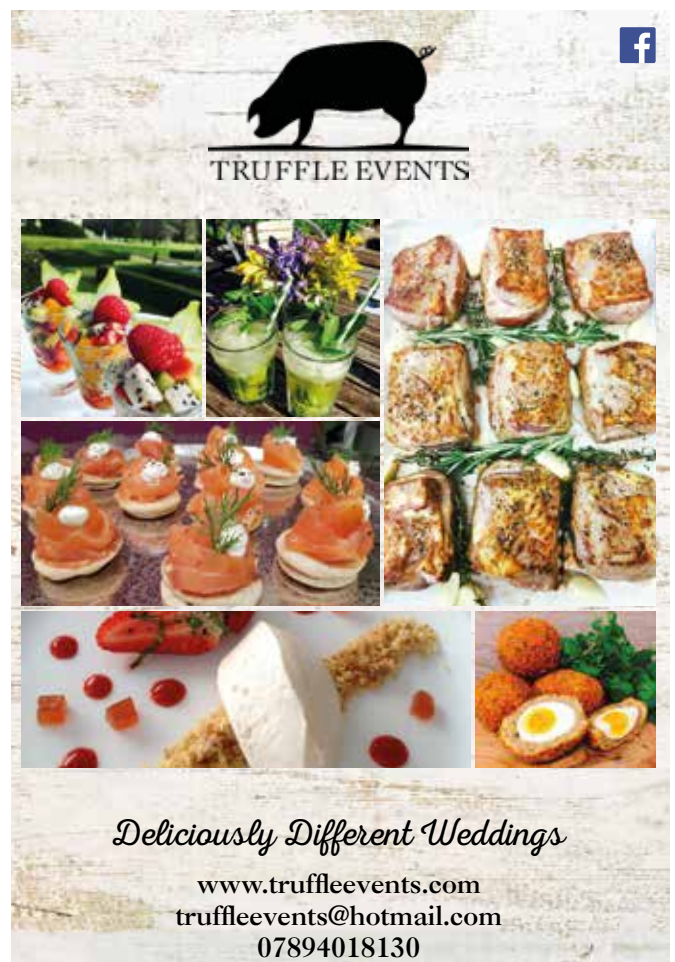
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Onstage at the Proms

Many of you will have seen broadcasts of concerts of the London Proms in the Royal Albert Hall. Have you ever wondered what it is like to perform there?

I was very privileged to travel with the RSNOC Chorus in early September to take part in a Prom concert, broadcast on Radio 3. It was a truly memorable experience.

The Royal Albert Hall is an amazing space to perform in. The work we were performing was Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* which intersperses the text of the Requiem Mass with poems by Wilfred Owen, who wrote movingly about World War I. This concert marked the centenary of the end of that conflict, so it was especially poignant.

The concert also marked the 175th anniversary of the founding of the RSNOC Chorus, and it was undoubtedly the highlight of my 28 years in the Chorus.

The Royal Albert Hall can accommodate an audience of 6,000, and a decision was taken to invite another choir to team up with us, so that our combined voices would ring out in the climaxes. The Huddersfield Choral Society joined us in London, following a weekend of joint rehearsals in Glasgow.

Add to that the angelic voices of the RSNOC Junior Chorus, singing in the top gallery, and the



young men of the Changed Voices section, who sang with us seniors, the whole RSNOC family was in the Hall.

We initially got lost in the labyrinthine corridors of the building, but eventually found our way into the auditorium in the afternoon for a final rehearsal and sound check. And what a sound it was! The acoustic in the Albert Hall is very 'live' and you feel personally that you're making a vital contribution to the sound, even in a combined chorus of 250.

As the hour of the performance approached, the excitement intensified. We watched as the concert-goers filled the vast space to capacity. The microphones reminded us that thousands would be listening around the world. Was I nervous? Yes, in a good way. We were very well prepared by our chorus director, Greg Batsleer, but this was a live performance of a complex work. Conductor Peter Oundjian was in total control of his massed forces, and we all sang with heartfelt feeling. I know there were people in the audience moved to tears, and the huge audience was rapt throughout.

At the end, the conductor held the audience in silent contemplation for what seemed like an eternity. Then the warm applause and cheers rang out. We all felt elated at the success of the performance, shaking hands with our singing colleagues. We knew that we had successfully communicated the essential message of this work, about the 'pity of war', to many thousands of people.

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Wines for Christmas

For many, Christmas is all about the presents and the food, and I am sure some of us even remember it is a religious holiday. For a small few, however, the wine is at least as important, and I am glad to sit firmly in that camp.

This year, as every year, the one meal I allow myself to 'cheat' at is Christmas dinner with Waitrose or Marks & Spencer doing all the hard work, and like every other year, the wines will be chosen and the food then selected to match. We all have our guilty pleasures, and this is one of mine.

But what if time has run out and there is no wine in sight? What can our lovely local shops offer worthy of our biggest feast of the year? A few recommendations to take you from morning fizz right through to the cheese:

The Best Fizz

Co-op Irresistible Prosecco

Delicate and refined, this prosecco is the perfect fizz to start the celebrations and as a base for Bucks Fizz. From the original vineyards of the region, it's not quite bone dry with lovely notes of green apples and almonds.

Bollinger Special Cuvée

One of the oldest Champagne houses, this wine is a beautifully complex fizz that is rich, toasty and full-bodied with classic notes of brioche and shortbread. Perhaps one not to dilute with orange juice.

Two Great Whites

Robert Oatley Chardonnay (Margaret River, Australia)

Ideal for roast turkey, this well-balanced chardonnay has white peach notes and just a touch of subtle oak.

Saint Veran

This elegant wine will work well with a smoked fish starter, with the richness and complexity needed to hold its own next to the main event. It is honeyed with white fruits and a touch of almond on the finish.

Three Lovely Reds

Rioja Reserva, CVNE

Produced only in the best vintages using fruit from the oldest vines. An intense, spicy red that is a great match for Christmas dinner and one that will last through to the cheese board.

Trapiche Pure Malbec

The label describes it perfectly: 'A glorious, clean and, yes, pure Malbec with no oak influence; the fruit "speaks for itself". The apotheosis of dark, black Malbec!' This is a wine that will suit almost every palate.

Montagne St Emilion, Comtesse Saint Hilaire

This is a characteristically velvet textured wine from the Montagne Saint-Emilion region. Produced predominantly from the merlot grape, the palate shows blackcurrant and blueberry fruit flavours followed by a smooth rich finish. This smooth claret makes a wonderful accompaniment to roast dinners.

ET



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Make Your Own Bauble Hat Ornaments

What do I need?

- Cardboard paper rolls (the inside of a toilet roll is perfect, and will give you about five rings)
- Yarn in lots of colours; almost any yarn, is suitable including 'art yarn' and textured yarns (chunky yarns don't work so well)
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Paper tissues

How's it done?

- Cut the paper roll into 2cm/1inch rings
- Choose your yarn – the brighter the better; cut about 60 pieces of yarn to 30cm/12inch lengths for each ring; depending on the size of your ring and the thickness of your yarn, you might need more or fewer strands; one of these will be used to tie the top of the hat
- Fold the yarn in half then thread the yarn, loop first, through the inside of the paper roll
- Next take the two cut ends together over the cardboard roll and thread them through the yarn loop; pull to settle it snugly around the ring, but not so tightly as to crush the cardboard; continue to do this until your roll is completely covered; be careful not to let any of the loops of yarn overlap
- Once the roll is covered, you will need to push the yarn through the paper roll; the easiest way to do this is to gather together all the dangling yarn ends, gently twist them and push them back through the ring; pull to settle them so that all the yarn lies straight

It should now almost look like a little hat!



- All that's left to do is to tie a knot around the threads about two-thirds of the way up to get a nice hat shape
- Roll a small ball out of paper tissue; push this into the cardboard roll to perfect your hat shape
- Trim the top 'pom pom' to get a nicer shape, taking care not to trim the tying thread; instead, tie the ends of this together to make your ornament hanger



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Police Report



What you read in the newspapers and hear on the news is true – crime in Scotland really is at its lowest rate for 45 years. Statistically you’ve never been safer walking down the street, and today you are least likely to become the victim of theft than at any time in the recent past.

This, of course, is down to a variety of reasons. Huge advances in forensic techniques mean criminals are more likely to be caught – is there any better deterrent? While the design of valuable objects makes them harder to steal – when was the last time you heard of a car being ‘hot-wired’?

Nevertheless, crime still happens and there is often no better opportunity than in the cold, short days of winter. When was the last time you left your car running on the driveway to warm up on a cold morning? Have you ever left the car running when you’ve dropped the kids off at school or run into a shop?

We’ve all done it, and every year people in rural Stirlingshire lose their cars thinking it’s perfectly safe to leave the keys in the ignition. The biggest shock for these victims is yet to come though, when insurance companies refuse to pay out because of their negligence.

The same applies to your home in winter. As my colleagues and I patrol the villages during the late afternoon when darkness falls, it’s very easy to spot

the houses which are empty – and there are many. It’s also safe to assume that there are likely to be rich pickings within these homes as people buy in presents for Christmas.

As your local police officers, we do everything we possibly can to prevent crime occurring in west Stirlingshire. The thing is, we can’t do it alone. It’s important that you take all the necessary precautions to avoid becoming a victim of crime. Keep valuable items out of sight in your home, time lights (and a radio) to switch on as darkness falls, and always keep car keys safe and out of sight.

As always, Balfour Police Office will have a full complement of staff working throughout the Christmas and New Year holiday. If you need us, we are always happy to assist.

Prevention is better than cure though, and by taking some simple precautions, you can almost guarantee you will not become a victim of crime.

On behalf of myself and my colleagues, we wish you all a peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year. With any luck, perhaps 2019 will see the lowest crime rate for 46 years.

DAVID McNALLY

Killlearn Primary Fundraising Group News

By the time you read this, our Halloween school disco will have been held, with DJ Kidnetick and everyone getting into the spooky spirit with scary costumes, boogying and ghoulish games.

The annual Christmas fair is having a snowy shake-up this year. We have moved to the church hall and are holding it on Saturday, 24 November from 2.30pm–5.00pm. We have had an incredible response from local makers and have an exciting new range of craft, gift and baking stalls along with Santa’s grotto, face painting and carol singing. Everyone is welcome to come and have a glass of mulled wine or tea/coffee. Christmas hamper raffle tickets are also available from the school.

Saturday, 26 January 2019 – save the date for our Burns coffee morning. Come and celebrate Burns with Scots poetry and songs recited by our hugely talented children and parents. Coffee, tea and home-baking.

When funding for schools is stretched to its limits, the money raised by Killlearn Primary Fundraising Group is becoming more and more essential to provide the basics we took for granted years ago.

The funds raised have provided everything from interactive whiteboards and buses for school trips to the daily keep-in-touch books for each pupil. More recently we have purchased ukuleles, sports bibs, lacrosse sticks and skipping ropes. Sadly, the school has to rely more and



more on donations to fund such basics; every little helps. Everyone is welcome to come and have a coffee or a glass of mulled wine at our events, stroll around our Christmas fair stalls, or listen to some Scots poetry and songs at our Burns coffee morning in January. We love to see new faces, young and old, so please keep an eye on the village noticeboard and *Courier* diary and pop along.

If you cannot attend an event but would like to contribute in any way as a business or individual, we would be delighted for any sponsorship offers, raffle prizes or donations that will always be used to further the education of the children of Killlearn.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Killlearn Primary Fundraising Group. KPFG

Killearn Health Centre News

Staff News – Dr Andrew Haslett will be leaving us in February 2019 to continue his training. He will be back in February 2020. Dr Aodhan Glyn will be with us until August 2019. At the start of October, we welcomed Dr Anna Pickering on her return from leave.

Shingles Vaccination – a change to the shingles vaccination programme means that if you were aged 70 to 79 on 1 September 2018 you will be entitled to the shingles vaccination from now until August 2019. If you are in this age group and have not yet been vaccinated, please contact the surgery to make an appointment. If you had not reached the age of 70 on 1 September, you will be entitled to the vaccination from September 2019.

Flu Vaccinations – we are still offering flu vaccinations. If you are aged 65 or over, as at 31 March 2019, or aged under 65 and in an ‘at risk’ group and you are still to be vaccinated, please contact the surgery to arrange a suitable appointment.

District Nursing – our district nurses now have a central contact number. They can be contacted on 01324 567247.

Online Appointments – you can book appointments online at www.killearnhealthcentre.com.

Test Results

Please phone between 11am and 4pm for results of any blood tests, x-rays or similar investigations.

Christmas and New Year Closures

- Closed 25–26 December, reopening Wednesday, 27 December 2018
- Closed 1–2 January, reopening Wednesday, 3 January 2019

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raising funds for Killearn Primary Fundraising Group

Bridge by Zorro

Killearn Bridge Club has started its 2018–2019 season and is again inviting new members to join. We meet on a Tuesday evening from 7pm at the Kirkhouse Inn in Strathblane. This season, we have been particularly pleased to welcome the new members who came through our successful classes last season. Building on this, we are repeating the Scottish Bridge Union’s 30-lesson programme starting in January. For those wishing to take part, we will arrange a suitable day and time for you to meet. To join in, please contact Roger Sparkes (440448), Doug Ashworth (550074) or Eileen Lindsay (770686), or visit www.bridgewebs.com/killearn and use the contact link.

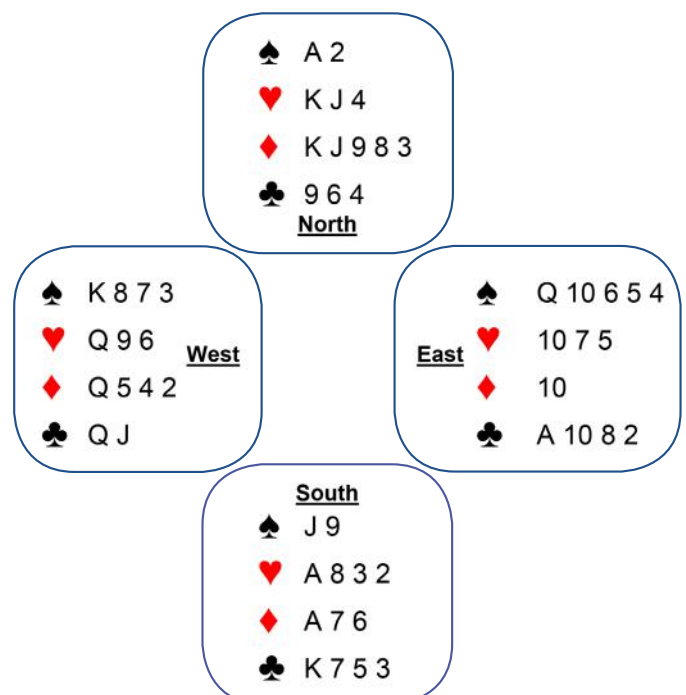
The hand in this issue illustrates the importance of considering entries. As declarer you can sometimes find that you don’t have the entries you need to get to the appropriate hand, and it all derives from an early, incorrect decision. Luck was necessary on this hand, too, but how would you have played the hand? It is from an inter-county match.

South opened 1♣, with 1♦ in response from North. South continued with 1♥ and North made a fourth suit forcing bid of 1♠. South bid 1NT, which should really promise a spade stopper, an alternative bid being 2♦. However with the encouragement from South, the contract of 3NT was bid by North.

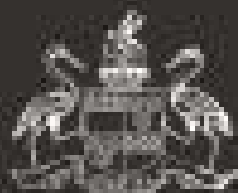
Quite predictably, West led a small spade, won with ♠Q by East who then returned ♠5 to North’s Ace.

Declarer can see that to make the contract it is necessary to make five diamond and three heart tricks. What lead will you choose to play at trick 3? See later in the *Courier* for what did, or could, have happened.

Dealer: South East/West Vulnerable



The solution is on page 39.



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What a lovely summer we had – no doubt enjoyed by all the residents of Abbeyfield. On a particularly hot summer's day the residents visited Benview at Ward Toll Nursery for lunch. A most enjoyable day was enhanced by the extra care taken by the staff there, who carried out cold drinks to the residents when the transport home was delayed.

In June, some of the Friends of Abbeyfield joined the residents for high tea. This is always an enjoyable afternoon, giving the opportunity for the residents to chat to the Friends.

Another event which took place during the summer was an ASL strawberry tea held in July. The house was packed with residents and their guests. Scones, cakes and sandwiches served on beautiful china rapidly disappeared. Many residents and their guests struck lucky with the raffle which had many excellent prizes, and the proceeds swelled the coffers for future outings for the residents.

All in all a most enjoyable and successful afternoon. Particular thanks go to Angie and Barbara who not only organised the raffle, but also baked and assembled the delicious spread and ensured everything ran smoothly.

In August, the residents visited Forth Valley College's catering school where the students prepared an excellent lunch at very good value which was enjoyed by all.

The fortnightly 'news reviews' continue on Monday mornings. The recent coverage of the London fly-past celebrations for the RAF centenary

were shown at one of these meetings. Two of the ladies had been in the RAF during the war, and this generated some amusing and informative discussions.

The nursery school visits to the Abbeyfield also continue on a fortnightly basis, and residents and children alike enjoy these visits tremendously. In addition, a church service is held in Abbeyfield on the last Sunday of the month.

In October, Michael Pell gave an illustrated talk on the Austin 7 motor car. This talk had been scheduled to take place earlier in the year, but was postponed due to a storm and subsequent power cut.

Future events to look forward to are an outing to the House of Darroch, a musical afternoon, visits to school musical events and carol concerts, then last – but not least – the annual Christmas lunch, which is always a very happy festive event.

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Pecan & Salted Caramel Tart

Pastry

180g plain flour
55g icing sugar
Pinch of salt
115g cold butter cut into small cubes
1 egg

Begin by making the pastry. Put flour, sugar and salt in a food processor and pulse until combined. Add butter then pulse again until you have a crumbly mix. Add the egg and continue to pulse until the dough begins to form but still remains slightly crumbly. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and form into a ball. Wrap with cling film and refrigerate for at least an hour.

Caramel

397g can sweetened condensed milk
100g sugar
100g unsalted butter
1 tsp salt flakes
A few handfuls of pecans

Melt the butter and sugar together in a pot on a low heat. Add the condensed milk and increase the heat. Keep stirring until the mixture reaches a caramel colour. Remove from the heat, stir in the salt and leave to cool.

Method

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough into an 11-inch circle and place in a 9-inch tart case. Return it to the fridge and preheat the oven to 190°C. Once the oven is ready, take the tart case out of the fridge, line with baking parchment and fill with baking beads.

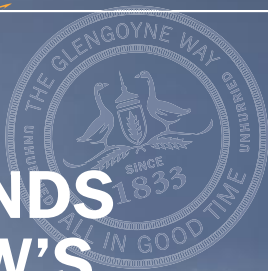


Place in the oven for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes remove baking beads and parchment and return pastry to the oven until it is cooked through (10-15 minutes longer). Remove from the oven and allow to cool. Once cooled, sprinkle a handful of pecans into the tart and cover with the caramel sauce. Sprinkle over more pecans and enjoy!

Laura Burt

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A World of Christmas Festivities



The *Courier* has been looking at how, or indeed if, Christmas is celebrated across the globe. The common theme is that families and groups come together to eat, drink and be merry.

A DANISH EXTRAVAGANZA

The Danes do Christmas in a big way. They celebrate on our Christmas Eve, but their festive season starts at 9pm on the first Friday of November – ‘J-Dag’ – when specially brewed Tuborg festive beer, julebryg, is released to the public. Although only on the market for 10 weeks, it just about outsells regular beers. Carlsberg, the company which brews the beer dispatches employees all over the country to dish out the much sought-after brew.



Danes burn more candles per head of population than any other country, so homes abound with lit candles of all shapes and sizes – even more so at Christmas. Rooms are decorated with the usual displays, but this is



overtaken somewhat by nature-based decorations: twigs, cones, bits of tree, a piece of bark, all of which is collected in the nearby woods

Before any exchange of gifts takes place, the Danes have a roast dinner. Traditionally, this is roast pork, but it can be goose, turkey, duck, beef, lamb or chicken – in fact, anything they fancy. The roast is served with small boiled caramelised potatoes and red cabbage. This is followed by rice pudding mixed with ground toasted almonds, lashings of cream and accompanied by hot cherry sauce. One whole almond is left in the pudding and whoever gets it ‘wins’ a marzipan pig. However, the finder is expected to keep this discovery a secret, thus encouraging everyone to eat the rich dessert until it is finished.

The festive meal is accompanied by copious amounts of beer, wine and schnapps, the latter served ice cold in shot glasses. When anyone in the company shouts ‘skal’, the others are expected to raise their schnapps glass and down the contents in one.

When all is finished at the table, the next stage of celebrations starts. The family gathers round the Christmas tree, but not before 6pm. The tree is

decorated with emphasis on the colours of the Danish flag, complete with fairy lights and real candles (a bucket of water is kept nearby). The tree, decorated all the way round, is moved into the middle of the room and the gifts, which had been under the tree, have been sorted out into named bundles. The family then join hands and dance around the tree singing Christmas songs and carols.



Once everyone has had enough of singing and dancing, it is time to open the presents. This ritual starts with the eldest, followed by the second eldest and so on, with everyone opening one parcel at a time. Present opening can last for quite some time!

When all the parcels have been unwrapped, the family relax with coffee and cake – as well as more beer and wine – and this continues into the wee small hours.

TID (based on a number of years’ personal experience)



LIECHTENSTEIN DOES MARKETS

In a similar vein to the UK, Christmas in Liechtenstein is a family occasion. This usually involves visiting relatives who live elsewhere, giving presents and chatting. It is traditional to buy a Christmas tree two weeks before the big day; however, the tree is only to be decorated on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve is also when the presents are to be brought out, as in Liechtenstein, it is not Santa Claus who puts the presents under the tree, but an angel named Christkindl. Christmas markets are commonplace in Liechtenstein, selling traditional snacks as well as Christmas classics like mulled wine. One of the most famous of these markets is in the capital of Liechtenstein, Vaduz, a town of fewer than 5,500 people. JC

A SPIDER FOR LUCK IN UKRAINE

Ukraine follows the Julian calendar, so they celebrate Christmas on 7 January. St Nicholas visits the children on 19 December and brings them presents. However, the main celebrations take place on Christmas Eve, with most people fasting all day until the first star appears in the sky. The Ukrainians then enjoy a holy supper known as *Sviata Vecheria*. It consists of 12 dishes – each representing one of Jesus’s disciples. The main dish tends to be a sweet porridge made of wheat, and other dishes include mushrooms, whitefish, pierogi, cheesecake and bread. The room where the meal is eaten usually has a wheat decoration to symbolise the Ukrainian wheat fields. Christmas trees are often decorated with plastic spider webs, as it is said to bring good luck if a spider is found on the tree. SG



RING THE BELLS IN SERBIA

Christmas is celebrated on 7 January as, like Ukraine, Serbia follows the Julian calendar used by the Orthodox Church, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar that we use. However, festivities start six weeks earlier, when Advent starts – generally the Sunday closest to St Andrew’s Day. During Advent, many people stop eating meat and other animal products until Christmas Eve (6 January). Traditionally on the morning of Christmas Eve, families would chop down a young oak tree called a *Badnjak*, but now most people buy one. It’s not decorated like our Christmas trees. Instead, the *Badnjak* is burned, accompanied by rituals and prayers for prosperity in the coming year. At dawn on Christmas morning, church bells are rung and sometimes people fire guns in the air. The first person to enter the house on Christmas Day is called a *Polaznik* and that person strikes the *Badnjak* with a poker to create sparks, which is thought to bring good luck. However, if the family then experiences bad luck, the *Polaznik* isn’t invited back! People celebrate by eating *česnica* (a special bread), as well as *pečenica* (roast pork), *sarma* (cabbage stuffed with rice and ground meat) and lots of cake. Straw is normally spread under the table of the meal to symbolise the stable in which Jesus was born. SG



DOUBLE PRESENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Christmas celebrations in the Netherlands start on 5 December, a date known there as St Nicholas Eve. That night, St Nicholas travels from Spain by boat with his servants, his white horse and a sack of gifts for all the children. Children leave their shoes out near their fireplace in anticipation of St Nicholas filling them with sweets – which, of course, he does! On St Nicholas day itself, 6 December, families and friends exchange gifts and write poems for each other. Families celebrate with good food, hot chocolate, traditional cake called *banketstaaf* as well as chocolate letters (*lekker*) corresponding to the first letter of the recipient’s name. Surprise presents are also given. Traditionally, a stove is placed on the table and, although families eat together, everyone cooks their own individual meal. The lucky children in the Netherlands not only receive presents on St Nicholas Day, but also on Christmas Day, when ‘de Kerstman’ (Santa Claus) visits from Lapland and delivers even more presents. SG



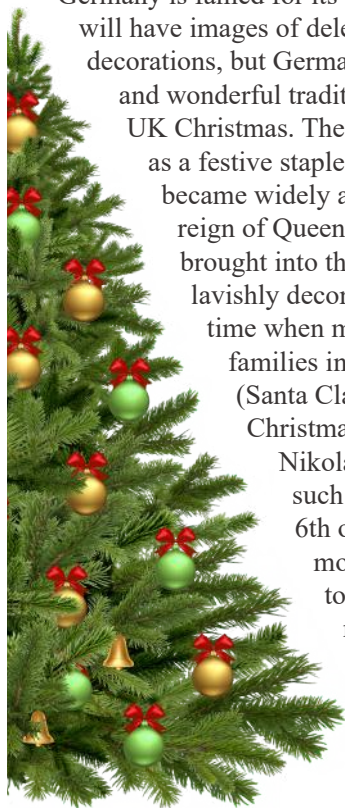
NEW ZEALAND – SUMMER STYLE

‘Meri Kirihimete’, as the Maori say! As New Zealand is in the southern hemisphere, Christmas falls at the height of summer. This means that there are no wintry, snowy sights to be seen, despite the magnificent glaciers of the country’s Southern Alps. A popular Kiwi gift, but strange to us, are jandals. This gift was first made popular in the late 1950s, and combines the two words – ‘Japanese’ and ‘sandals’. Fitting for the sunny setting is the traditional Christmas desert in New Zealand – a pavlova often topped with sliced kiwi fruit and raspberries. KD



EIN DEUTSCHES WEIHNACHTEN

Germany is famed for its Christmas markets. Many people will have images of delectable food and awe-inspiring decorations, but Germany also has many more weird and wonderful traditions, very different from a typical UK Christmas. The Christmas tree we now regard as a festive staple originates from Germany and became widely adopted in the UK during the reign of Queen Victoria. Trees were normally brought into the house on Christmas Eve and lavishly decorated. Christmas Eve is also the time when most gifts are exchanged between families in Germany. Der Weihnachtsmann (Santa Claus) brings the main presents on Christmas Eve but children also ask der Nikolaus to bring them small gifts such as sweets and chocolate on the 6th of December. Krampus, a horned monster, accompanies der Nikolaus to punish the children who have not been good. *Kinderspunch* (children's punch) is a popular drink in Germany; similar to mulled wine, it's a mix of hot fruit juices and spices that really does smell like Christmas. KD



ALL NIGHT LONG IN HAITI

In Haiti, it is not stockings that children leave to be filled by Santa (known locally as Tonton Nwèl), but shoes stuffed with straw. The children hope that in the morning the straw will be gone and replaced with gifts from Tonton Nwèl. Parents allow the children to have an alcoholic beverage known as 'anissette' which contains anise leaves, rum and sugar. Most of the Christmas celebrations in Haiti take place between midnight on Christmas Eve and dawn on Christmas Day. Midnight Mass services are fairly popular, usually followed by some carol singing. Haitian children commonly play in the streets until 3am, with the older children being expected to look after the younger ones. These festivities are traditionally followed by a large meal called the 'Réveillon', which lasts until sunrise on Christmas morning. Christmas Day in Haiti is often a very relaxed day, allowing those tired from the wild night of revelries to take a nap and giving the children a chance to play with their new toys. JC



CHINA'S WINTER FESTIVAL

China as a country doesn't celebrate Christmas, instead they have their own winter festivities. A traditional activity in the south of China is creating dense, sticky rice balls, often brightly coloured, that represent the coming together of family. In the north of China, meat-filled, crescent-shaped pastries are favoured. The last festival of the year, Dongzhi, falls six weeks before Chinese New Year and marks the start of winter for the county. KD



DO DRUIDS DO CHRISTMAS?

Many modern Druids (albeit they grew up in a Christian tradition) and pagans in general celebrate the winter solstice. Druids welcome the first rays of the midwinter sun, the Divine Child, the Mabon, who brings life back to earth. The name for this festival is Alban Arthan, 'Light of Winter', also known as Yule. Many ancient pagan traditions still survive at Christmastime – burning a Yule log is one, decorating our homes with evergreen branches is another. Holly, mistletoe and ivy are plants heavy with ancient symbolism, and find themselves woven into well-known Christmas carols. Candles are still lit in windows. In cider country, orchardmen will wassail the trees, blessing them so that they'll get a good harvest. We reward strolling carol singers with money, food or drink for good luck.

The winter solstice is possibly one of the oldest festivals in the northern hemisphere. It was originally celebrated by people who were totally dependent on farming and their livestock for whom the return of longer days really did mean life. We understand the movements of the earth around our sun, but still there is an sense of optimism to see the days drawing out.

Stonehenge conjures up a picture of people dancing and drumming at mid summer. Newgrange, the Neolithic passage tomb in Ireland, has an entirely different atmosphere. It was built over 5,000 years ago in such a way that the winter solstice sunrise would illuminate a particular passage and shine on a pillar incised with a megalithic triple spiral. Maes Howe in



Orkney is also aligned towards the midwinter sun – in this case the setting sun illuminates the back wall of the tomb. Perhaps they held that the day began

at sunset, rather than sunrise, which was common among ancient groups of peoples, of which the migrant Celts were one.

Christian theologians are agreed that the oldest recorded celebration of Jesus' birth was in 336AD in Rome. Once Christianity was adopted as the state religion by the eastern Roman Empire in 380AD, there were good (if complicated) theological reasons to think that Jesus must have been born in December, nine months after the spring equinox, another important celebration in the Druid's calendar. Christmas on 25 December also handily displaced a popular pagan midwinter holiday, *natalis solis invicti* – the 'birthday of the unconquered sun'.

So, the next time you hear *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*, give a thought for that fourth verse which a modern Druid might happily join in singing:
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace
Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings

NB

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Edenmill Farm Re-opening

Edenmill Farm will re-open on the last weekend of November in time for the Christmas tree farm opening.

The café, shop and soft play area at Edenmill have been extensively refurbished by owner Mark Gibson, using mainly local tradespeople. The soft play area caters for toddlers and juniors with a warm comfortable seating area for accompanying adults. The complex includes a meeting/events room which can be used for children's birthday teas, separate from the soft play room. The butchery is returning, with a shop area located within the café. Locally sourced produce will once again be on sale, including freshly baked pies straight from the oven.

Mark has enlisted the support of Brenda Anderson who has a background in the hospitality industry, to oversee the café, butchery and soft play operations.

Expect healthy and hearty 'fayre' made with fresh, local produce, top-quality coffee and freshly baked cakes.

Edenmill is located on the A809 Stockiemuir Road near to Auchengillan Scout Camp; it has the John Muir Way running through it and is not far from the West Highland Way. With this in mind, the upper floor is being refurbished into a bunkhouse/hostel with



Edenmill owner, Mark Gibson with Brenda Anderson, (right) and Laura Buchanan (left)

communal kitchen/dining area and accommodation ranging from a 12-bunk room to three-bed en-suite rooms. It will be available on a self-catering basis or catered by the café. Accessible accommodation is also available. The hostel is being run by Patrick Stevenson and should be available from spring 2019.

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First Killearn Children's Book Festival a Success



Remember, remember Sunday, 2 September – the day you met Porridge the Tartan Cat. It doesn't get much better than that!

And so it was for a gang of children aged 4–8 years who, armed with their storybooks and cuddly toys, came streaming into Killearn Village Hall to hear again from Chae Strathie about Gorilla and his choice of vanilla ice cream and to meet Alan Padre and Porridge, his tartan cat, and to experience the first Killearn Children's Book Festival.

But it wasn't just about meeting authors and listening to their favourite stories. There were chances to make a guidebook, to learn about nature and to draw dragons. The range of sessions was something that clearly enthused the parents – they could (and did) join in, too!

It was just lovely to see all the children happily

engaged in the activities, dancing and singing along with some of the authors. It gave a lovely buzz to a Sunday afternoon in the village. One of the helpers commented, '#community spirit'.

A big thanks go to everyone who played a part in bringing this new adventure to Killearn: Stirling Council, the authors and illustrators, Three Sister's Bake (the cakes were lovely!), and to Joanna and the team from the village hall. It was a great way to showcase the village to some new faces and to test out the idea of a Children's Book Festival – something that has proven itself and is now being pencilled in again – bigger and better – for September 2019.

For information about the festival and the authors and illustrators who ran the sessions search online 'Killearn Children's Book Festival' and we look forward to welcoming you next year.

FR



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Straws Aren't Enough

The world seems a pretty parlous place at the moment. If you have watched *Blue Planet* and the discouraging *Drowning in Plastic*, you will probably also be aware of the newest conclusions about the climate coming from the International Panel for Climate Change (IPCC). In order to keep global average temperatures from rising more than 1.5°C above levels last seen between 1850 and 1900, it has concluded that drastic measures will need to be put in place.

Our wealth and resources will cushion us for a while. Scotland is on course to become wetter, but more of the same doesn't seem very scary until another named storm brings the place to a grinding halt. People living in island nations like the Maldives, or areas dependent on monsoon rains or our friends in Malawi will all feel the full effects before we do. Where will they go when they can't stay where they are?

New Zealand has proposed officially recognising victims of climate change as refugees, which gives them rights that other migrants don't enjoy. That government



has tempered its stance, however, in the face of opposition from residents of low-lying Pacific islands who want to stay in their own homes and countries, and are arguing for stronger climate change mitigation by those mainly responsible for the problem in the first place. And who can blame them?

The IPCC document is full of frightening detail, and that's after the representatives from national governments have had their chance to water it down. Most of the broad outlines of climate change were understood 40 years ago, of course, but now we have more of the uncomfortable detail.

The need is now so dire it will mean everyone has to change the way they live. That includes you and me. It's all just so overwhelming and difficult to imagine how anything we do now will make a real difference. But surely it's better to grasp the nettle ourselves than to have Mother Nature throw us into an entire bed of them, as will surely happen if we carry on as we have been doing?

With all that in mind, is it too early for a New Year's Resolution? Edward Everett Hale was a 19th-century American writer, a minister and anti-slavery campaigner. Perhaps one of his most well-known quotes might serve as a resolution for 2019:

'I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.'

NB



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As you read this, the club will be well into its winter schedule of events with final preparations for the annual Christmas quiz night. Following on from our successful programme last year, we are again meeting at Ross Priory for evening meals followed by a speaker. We have already had an enjoyable and interesting talk on ‘Strange Things to do in an Austin 7’, and we are looking forward to further sessions on ‘The Future of the Super Car’, the 1955 Mille Miglia highlighting Stirling Moss’ phenomenal victory and, in contrast, ‘My Life in Land Rovers’ by one of our members who has been a devoted enthusiast of the brand for more than 50 years.

The summer programme concluded first with our CarBQ event which mixed autotests using our own cars with using a centre-pivoting mower (aka ‘The Beast’) which proved the ultimate challenge, especially when attempting to reverse! Members and guests enjoyed an excellent BBQ in the sun, with the social chat no doubt comparing performances and determining whether anyone succeeded in taming The Beast.

This event was followed by a trip to the Dundee Museum of Transport where members were able to see a variety of classic cars, buses, trams and general transport-related memorabilia, including a special exhibition recounting the Tay Bridge disaster of 1879.

An excellent lunch was served on bone china in a luxury static coach fitted out in Pullman style with facing seats and tables featuring individual lamps à la Orient Express.



The assembled collection of SCCC cars parked outside the museum provided an additional welcome attraction to members of the public who were lucky enough to visit on the same day.

Our last driving events were further lunchtime circular drives out to Crianlarich and the Kelpies. These followed a different format from usual featuring less navigational skill, but more educational content, with the provision of interesting items of local information scattered along the route.

If you are interested in joining us, you can be assured of a warm welcome. You don’t need to have a classic car – a general interest in motoring is enough. For more details of our monthly meets, please contact Club Secretary Robin Johnston (SCCC.info001@gmail.com).

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All You Ever Wanted to Know About... the Lieutenancy of Stirling and Falkirk

Across the UK, the country is divided into ‘Lieutenancies’, usually along the county or former county lines. In each, the Lord Lieutenant is the personal representative of the Queen and attends the events and carries out the duties which might otherwise be expected of the Head of State.

Our Lieutenancy is Stirling and Falkirk, and Mr Alan Simpson of Port of Menteith is our Lord Lieutenant. He is assisted by a number of Depute Lieutenants, available in local areas to support events and organisations when invited, and to be on hand, if desired, for special celebrations like centenary birthdays (or greater) and 60th wedding anniversaries – occasions which merit a card from the Queen.

Our local Depute is former provost and councillor, Mr Colin O’Brien, from Drymen. He will be pleased to respond to requests and invitations and can be contacted by phone or email (01360 660616; cobrien20@btinternet.com).

Art4you moves to Oakwood

Local art school art4you has recently moved from Ballochruin Farm to Oakwood Garden Centre.

The newly created studio is more than twice the previous size and will enable new artistic classes to be held in print-making, ceramics and pottery.

There is a permanent gallery space which has art for sale and is open to the public each day.

Art4you proprietors, Claudia and Ewen Duncan are excited about the new bright and spacious studio and the expansion of the school that this additional space facilitates.



Fibre Broadband Update

A third cabinet has been erected about halfway down Drumbeg Loan and may be live by the time you read this update. As well as serving premises both up and down the Loan, it may be close enough to the Branziert to finally allow better and faster connections in that part of the village. It might also be used to serve premises back along Main Street towards the village centre and the closest premises down Glasgow Road towards the distillery.

A contractor is also in the process of running fibre along the B818 towards Killearn from Fintry. Several local residents outside the village have taken advantage of the improved mobile 4G signal to get fast broadband by this route. While the cheaper packages have a monthly cap on the quantity of data, 'unlimited' packages are also available. Although both are more expensive than a landline service, the speeds achieved are excellent. A monthly contract is possible, though typically they are for 12–18 months, but is a relatively easy and fast, personal solution if you have good reception. Meanwhile the volunteer team setting up Phase 2 of the Killearn Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) system continue to make progress and the project is nearing completion despite ongoing

difficulties with weather and the availability of workers.

Stirling Council decided to disband the Broadband Delivery Group which had been a useful conduit between the rural communities and the BT Openreach and Digital Scotland programmes. However, Shaun Marley, recently appointed as Community Broadband Officer, remains in post. The Rural Award Scheme has been reviewed again by the Finance and Economy Committee, but no update was available at the time of writing. A new gigabyte scheme has become available, geared to assist business premises to achieve a full-fibre connection, and which can also help neighbouring residential premises as part of the same scheme. The scale required, however, may only make it suitable for certain specific sites. The Better Broadband Subsidy scheme continues for individual premises.

A monthly report on the progress of Broadband improvement round the area is provided to KCC at their meetings and then are available online at www.killearncc.org.uk/kgb-docs.html.

DOUG ASHWORTH
CHAIR, KILLEARN BROADBAND GROUP

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I wish we could borrow...

Over the years community groups within the village have acquired quite a range of items that could be useful to other people, avoiding the need for them to spend hard-won money on unnecessary duplication. But what do we have and where is it now? Who do I ask to borrow it?

It would be handy to have a list so Killearn Community Futures is making a start with a register of equipment owned by its various working groups. Please help us extend this list by adding equipment that you or your group would be happy to lend out for appropriate purposes. Just let us know what, where and who to contact. Updates will appear in the *Courier* from time to time.

If you would like to use any of the items listed below for the benefit of the village, please contact info@kcfc.co.uk in the first instance. MG

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Asset	Owner	
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Flipchart stand		
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Shovels/Spades		
Pruning saws/secateurs/loppers		
Rakes/leaf rakes		
Pinch bar		
Mattocks		
Litter pickers		
Hi-vis jackets		
Gazebo		Fireworks
Coin sorter and counter		
Snow shovels	KCC/Resilience	
Display boards	KCFC	

#villagehall #killearn #comms

Would you be someone who is active on social media, interested in writing articles, developing websites and web content? We are looking for help.

The Killearn Village Hall Operations Committee is responsible for the day-to-day running of the village hall. We are looking for a volunteer to join us to lead on social media, website content, PR, etc. The committee would welcome help to build awareness of events within the hall, to support community engagement and involvement through social media, photos, news items, articles in local publications and to help develop the content on our website.

Please get in touch via Facebook (Killearn Village Hall) or email killearnvillagehall@gmail.com.

Maybe you and a friend think you could help and could work together? Maybe you have a student project? Maybe you just enjoy tweeting and posting on FB and hadn't considered that you could help out at the hall?

We look forward to hearing from you... #thanks.

All Killearn Archive News

All Killearn Archive (AKA) had a successful work party in the Old Cemetery in June. We cleared the shrubs and larger plants from the walls and tackled the brambles and ivy at the end closest to the playing field. In the process, we uncovered several gravestones which had not been seen for many years.

We were hoping to have another session but were thwarted by forecast heavy rain and thunderstorms. A further work party may have to wait until next spring.

AKA contributed a display to the exhibition by local villages at the Fintry Amateur Dramatic Society's production of *Journey's End*. As the production was a sell-out, the display should have been seen by many people and hopefully, helped with the understanding of the effects of World War I locally.

At the time of going to press, we are working on special displays for Remembrance Sunday which falls on the 100th anniversary of the Armistice on 11 November 2018. AKA



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From the Archive: the 1891 Census

The Archive Group has now finished extracting Killearn data from the 1891 census, which was taken on the night of Sunday, 5 April 1891.

The number of people recorded in Killearn was 1,182 (1901: 929) of whom 18 were visitors. Most of the visitors were either the Harvey in-laws at Carbeth House or 'Pilgrim of the Faith' missionaries at Dunkyan.

There were 635 (1901: 447) males and 547 (1901: 482) females. The average age was 29 and the oldest person was Mrs Agnes Edmond of Laighpark, aged 96.

Unusually, we have a good idea of the youngest, as the Sinclair family at Benvue had an unnamed infant daughter. She was christened Evangeline, and 26 years later she married Matthew Penman, who was a serving soldier 'in camp' at the Botanic Gardens in Aberdeen.

Of the 1,182, 632 were recorded as being born in Stirlingshire, 1,026 were born in Scotland, 30 in England and a surprising 100 in Ireland. There was also one person born in Malta, a valet at Ballikinrain Castle, and also a railway porter who was born in Gibraltar.

There were 306 married people, 473 single people, 54 widows and widowers, and 349 children under 16. Of the children, there were 206 scholars and 121 of pre-school age.

The number of separate households was 299 (1901: 215). There were, however, only 249 heads of household.

This census was taken at the time of the building of the second pipeline from Loch Katrine to Glasgow at a point when the workers were in Killearn. There were 84 navvies, of whom 54 were born in Ireland, 27 tunnel miners, and probably other workmen as well.

There were hut encampments at 'Brainert Hill' [sic] and 'Blairgarr' [sic] with 59 and 41 occupants respectively.

Most of these workers were transitory, but Peter Balfour, who was a tunnel miner living at Ledlewan, briefly left Killearn around 1901 with



Tunnel Shaft on the Water Track

his family only to return shortly afterwards and stay for many years. He, his wife and a daughter are buried in the Old Cemetery. Interestingly, his wife was born in Balquhider, when her father was an engineer building the Callander Oban Railway.

There were 143 people who were recorded as living-in servants. These include both domestic and farm servants. There were around 103 people whose occupation is recorded as domestic service.

Otherwise the most common occupation was farming with 67 farmers, including family workers, with a further 45 farm servants and also ploughmen, shepherds and farm labourers. Other occupations tended to be support roles such as shopkeepers, carters, gardeners, blacksmiths and teachers.



If anyone is interested in having a copy of our extraction of the census details, please contact the Archive Group.

ALL KILLEARN ARCHIVE



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What a Makeover

Anyone who has happened to glance over the hedge while passing Killearn Tennis Club recently may have noticed things looking somewhat brighter and shinier than previously. There is a major reason for this – we have new courts!

The surfaces of all three courts were completely relaid in July in a massive project which involved several days of expert work.

Needless to say, this put a substantial dent in the club's cash reserves. But the work was essential, and its completion ensures that tennis will be played in the village – on an excellent surface – for years to come.

The courts are bedding in nicely and improving all the time, robbing certain members of their favourite 'funny bounce' excuse for poor shots. The overgrowth at the back of Court Three has also been cut back, removing the risk of taller members disappearing into the foliage while attempting a return. Trimming the hedge also stops slippery moss accumulating on the court below, making play on the 'back court' an altogether more pleasant experience.

The summer improvements at the club did not stop with the court resurfacing and hedge haircut. We have also taken possession of three pristine new nets, which served to show us how grubby the old ones had got without us noticing.

We were helped substantially in financing the nets by a generous donation from the Killearn Hoolie Dhu




committee, who disburse funds raised at their annual event to local groups. So a big thank you from us to them, for the valuable help they have given us and all the excellent work they do in the community. It is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to enjoy our lovely new facilities, and the fun and fitness offered by the wonderful game of tennis, memberships are available and visitors are most welcome. Weather permitting, we play all year round.

We provide a friendly, inclusive environment for all ages, from under 9s to over 90s, and for all levels of ability and experience. We hold regular open days and come-and-try events, and there's a chance every year for members to win tickets to Wimbledon.

For more information on the club, visit killearntennisclub.org.uk or find us on Facebook.



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Buchlyvie	Gargunnoch	Lochearnhead	
Callander	Gartmore	Strathblane	
Deanston	Killin	Strathyre	

We may be able to build in other communities in the future – please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us plan for the future.

If you are interested in renting one of our properties when they become available please contact us:

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Killearn 10K: Do It Now

Killearn, this is your advance notice that the annual Killearn 10k will take place on Saturday, 1 June 2019. As you know, it's a popular event and the Committee has had feedback from locals that when they go to sign up there are no places left. This is both a good and bad thing for us. Of course we want Killearn to be the 10k trail race of the year, attracting people from far and wide. But we also want to see the people of Killearn crossing the start and finish lines.

So, save the date: Thursday, 6 December 2018 at 8pm. when registration opens for 2019. 'Why would I sign up?' you might ask. Well, it's fun and it's good for you.

Signing up now will, I can almost guarantee, give you the motivation to get and stay fit across the winter ahead. If you start a 10k training plan now, you have the benefit of dark night training when no one can see you as you build from a quick walk to run-walk and finally to 'I ran the full length of Beech Drive'. By the time we get to the light nights, when people can see you out in your running gear, you will be able to hold your head up high knowing you look the part.

If that's not enough to convince you, consider this, psychologists have evidence that running can have the following benefits:

- It can improve overall health markers. Research has shown that running for 10 minutes a day at a slow speed is associated with reduced risk of cardiovascular disease.



- It can help with joint health. For example, there is research evidence that runners are less likely to suffer from osteoarthritis of the knee compared to people who describe themselves as 'walkers'.
- It burns calories.
- It's linked to positive mental health, including being a way of managing stress.
- And in Killearn, it promotes social support networks or, for those who don't like jargon, chatting.

For the pessimists out there, if you do sign up and decide nearer the time that, for whatever reason, you can't participate, there will be an opportunity to give up your place and offer it to someone on the inevitable waiting list.

We look forward to seeing you out training over the coming months.

KM

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Rugby Round-Up

The 2018–19 rugby season is in full flow: at international level Scotland play Wales, Fiji, South Africa and Argentina on consecutive weekends in the Autumn Test series – quite a challenge with the World Cup in Japan looming next year.

At club level, Strathendrick are battling in Tennent's West Regional Division 1 against sides from considerably bigger clubs.

The senior squad is being coached by a new team this season, Grant Sweenie and Les Wilson, who run really good training sessions combining skills and fitness work in a variety of imaginative drills.

The club also turns out a 2nd XV when possible – often involving younger and older players. Although a talented bunch, Strathendrick does not have enough strength in depth so new players are always welcome.

The Balforn/Endrick Midis are in their second season in the Schools Barbarian Conference with good, competitive games every weekend. With teams at S1, S2, U15, U16 and U18 age groups, the



Strathendrick beat Kilmarnock earlier in the season

commitment of players, parents, coaches and teachers is tremendous.

Community Coach, Ciera Campbell, helps coach the Midi teams, but also visits primary schools in the area running taster sessions. She is also developing girls rugby at Balforn High School.

The Minis go from strength to strength, with teams at all levels

from P1 to P7, and more players and qualified coaches than ever before. Boys and girls play together at this level, and having had a series of coaching sessions at the beginning of the season, they now play fixtures, festivals or tournaments every Sunday.

For more information about Strathendrick Rugby Club, please visit www.pitchero.com/clubs/strathendrickrfc.



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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

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Dean Lockhart MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament

For Mid-Scotland and Fife

Christmas Crackers

What is the best Christmas present? A broken drum, you just can't beat it.

Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing? They always drop their needles.

What athlete is warmest in winter? A long jumper.

What did Adam say on 24 December? It's Christmas, Eve.

What famous playwright was terrified of Christmas? Noel Coward.

What does Santa do with overweight elves? He sends them to an elf farm.

Who goes Oh, Oh, Oh? Santa walking backwards

Answers to the Quiz on page 41

1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (b) 4. (a) 5. (b)
6. (a) 7. (b) 8. (c) 9. (a) 10. (b)

Curling – First Stones

The 2018–19 curling season for Strathendrick Curling Club started in September as usual. The main club commenced their season with the President v Vice-President bonspiel. Many members were on holiday in mid September so we played with six teams of three. The result was a win for the President by 14 ends to 10, giving Sandy Park four wins out of four for his Vice- and Presidential terms.

This year we are playing a seven team single-round league up to December, and a six team single-round league from January to March. All matches will take place on Tuesday afternoons at Stirling.



The Ladies Section started with a successful practice session supervised by Fiona Glass. They then played an injury-hit opening bonspiel with three teams of three and one team of two. The result was a win for Muriel Holroyd, Lynne Mackenzie and Elspeth Murdoch. The ladies are playing a four team triple Round Robin

Killearn Football Club News

At the end of the season the Killearn FC trophy cupboard unfortunately remains bare. As the players left the field after losing the Cameron Cup semi-final on penalties, we knew it was over for another year. Our enthusiastic players had tried their best, and had it not been for injuries at crucial times during the season, who knows what could have been?

However, a top-half finish in the league combined with some tremendous derby victories during the season gives us the confidence that this young Killearn team can build for the future. The future of the club is looking good – new changing rooms, a reasonable bank balance (even after this investment), thanks mostly to the participation in the club's '59 Club' and the 10k fundraising by our players and supporters. We continue to attract new players into the squad – a firm foundation to build on. However, the future will have to be tackled without two of Killearn FC's finest.

Since our last update, our President Hugh McArthur has passed away. Hugh was a stalwart of the club for more years than anyone can remember, and his passion, support and loyalty for Killearn FC was incredible. He always had, or should we say took, great delight



The winning quiz team hard at work

up to the end of December and a four team double Round Robin from January to February. All matches take place on Thursday mornings at Stirling.

We had our usual bowling afternoon with Balfron Curling Club at the Balfron Bowling Club in July. Eight ends were played in dry weather, with refreshments afterwards in the clubhouse provided by Balfron.

We had a successful barbecue in early August at Walter and Ros Macgowan's. The weather was glorious and everyone enjoyed themselves.

We held a Texas Scramble on a very pleasant afternoon in September. The winners were Keith Hyam, John Anderson, Gail Pain and Bob Glass. This was followed by the annual quiz which was won by Rita Harris, Sandy Park, Bob Glass and Ella Hyam.

We are keen to recruit new members to the club to keep the competitions competitive. The club is very friendly and sociable, and ideally suited for those who are retired or working part-time. It's much better exercise than you expect and makes the winter pass very quickly.

If you would like to have a go at curling, contact Diana Jackson (550314) or Gill Smith (550726) or visit at our website at www.strathendrickcurling.org.uk.

in spending time talking all things Forth and Endrick to players and supporters, both young and old – a true gentleman.

We also said farewell to Hughie Russell. Hughie was a player, coach, manager, vice-chairman and chairman during his time with Killearn FC, and was part of a group of men who have been the heartbeat of the club for the past five decades. Never one for the limelight, Hughie worked tirelessly to ensure the club was a success, a man who always volunteered and helped in whatever way he could without the need for any major recognition. A tricky winger in his day, he enjoyed many highlights both on and off the pitch, and even wore the goalie gloves on occasion when the team was short, which sums up his commitment.

He was especially proud to see his son, Zander, follow in his footsteps and pull on the black and white jersey – even if that meant he had to sub him now and again as manager!

Both these wonderful gentlemen will be missed but not forgotten, and as we look forward to future seasons, their contribution, along with others, will be very much remembered.

KILLEARN FC COMMITTEE

Hugh Clark Campbell Russell 1959 – 2018



Hugh Russell was the eldest child of Alex and Isabel Russell, the family soon to be completed by the births of two sisters. He enjoyed an idyllic childhood, spending much of his time running free in the countryside and helping at his grandfather's market garden at the foot of Drumbeg Loan. He loved fishing and

playing football, but worked as well, helping with tattie picking and, while still at school, had three part-time jobs: helping the coalman, the milkman and doing a paper round. He received his education at Killearn Primary and Balfron High schools, but was not greatly enthusiastic about the classroom, preferring to be outdoors.

When he left school, he completed an electrical engineering apprenticeship with Bert Mearns and worked for a number of businesses and organisations.

He met Christine when she was on a weekend visit to Killearn, staying at the Black Bull. Their chance encounter was virtually love at first meeting and their courtship led to marriage in June 1996. Zander, their son, was born the following year. Hugh and Zander enjoyed a wonderfully close relationship. They shared a love of fishing, football and golf, and Hugh was proud and not a little envious when he watched his son's talent flourish to the point at which he won the football club golf trophy.

After some years, Hugh felt trapped in indoor work and decided to return to his love of gardening. He set up a small garden maintenance business and began to develop a local client base. Encouraged by Christine, who spotted an advert for a post with Findlay Clark Garden Centre, Hugh made a successful application and thus began what was for him a time of great fulfilment, nurturing the plants and enjoying a very positive rapport with the staff at the garden centre.

When the decision was made to sell the business, he happily joined Jean and David Clark at Drumore Farm where he was instrumental in helping to transform the gardens, surrounding land and buildings into a place of enormous charm and appeal. Hugh was very much a valued part of the Clark family – a dependable helper, who could turn his hand to any task and a cheerful and companionable friend. When Drumore Farm was sold, Hugh was retained part-time by the new owners and also worked at Little Carbeth assisting Ian and Agnes Bowie in the creation of a garden project at a centre in Govan for people with addictions.

Hugh was an engaging and sociable man and an active participant in the life of the village and surrounding area. He was a stalwart supporter of Killearn Football Club – very much the right-hand man to the late Donnie Beaton – and was also an active member of Aberfoyle Golf Club, where he was captain for two years, was a frequent player and a member of the working party maintaining the course. He was a Master Mason and took pleasure in the social occasions of his Lodge. He enjoyed a pint in the pub and relished performing in karaoke.

Hugh will be greatly missed in the village. His sense of humour, infectious laugh and twinkling eyes endeared him to all who knew him. Christine and Zander more than any, will mourn the loss of a good life cut short too soon. BP

Margaret Brown 1940 – 2018

Margaret Brown was born in Brookfield, spending her childhood there and in Bearsden, and was educated at Park School, Glasgow. In her teenage years she met Russell Brown, later to become her husband. They settled in Allan Road and here brought up their two daughters.

Always a sociable person, Margaret entered into the life of the village. She was an active member of the Young Wives Group and also played an important role in fundraising for Guide Dogs for the Blind, collecting old papers and cardboard in the days before Stirling Council promoted recycling. She enjoyed golf and curling, and played bridge and badminton at the Monday Club. She liked cooking and was

known as an excellent hostess. She loved reading, would swap and lend books with her friends, relished visiting bookshops and would gravitate to any book stalls and local sales, so that her house became a veritable library. She also adored sudoku or code-breaking puzzles and frequently had one of these on the go as she sat in her kitchen where she could see passing friends and neighbours.

Memories of Margaret all refer to her as being bright and fun loving, full of laughter and a good friend to many. After she and Russell moved to Balfron, Margaret often returned to Killearn.

In the two villages and beyond she will be remembered with



affection and will be greatly missed by her many friends, but most particularly by her own family. LJ/JB

Tibbie (Isabella McNee) Hutchison 1926 – 2018



Tibbie Hutchison was the second daughter born to Iza and Alec Drummond of Glasgow. She was brought up in Parliamentary Road and was educated at Whitehill Academy, where she captained the hockey team.

On leaving school, she followed her sister into teacher training, but soon decided this was not the career for her. She worked first for the railways and then for the Bank of Scotland until she retired. She met Tommy Hutchison through the Boys' Brigade where her father was a leader. With his blessing, their courtship developed and the pair were married in 1953.

Their marriage was a happy one and the couple enjoyed a full life together, living in a variety of places, including Canada, and enjoying travels abroad. Although there were no children, Tibbie's warm and caring nature fitted her to be a much loved 'aunty' to many.

When she and Tommy moved back from London to Scotland they chose Killearn for their home and established themselves in Napier Road. They soon became actively involved in Killearn Kirk and made many friends in the local community.

When, in later years, Tommy developed dementia, Tibbie cared for him at home for as long as she was able, but eventually the move to a care home became necessary. Tibbie, by now almost completely blind, moved into Mugdock House where she was looked after with great care and affection. She was a lady of great strength and positive outlook.

Despite the problems of later years, she never complained and her cheerful and fun-loving personality endeared her to family and friends alike, by whom she will be greatly missed.

THE HUTCHISON FAMILY/BP

Rene Cornacchia 1926 – 2018



Rene, whose parents were Italian, was one of four children, born to the Boni family in the Gallowgate, Glasgow. Early in her life the family moved to Dennistoun, where she grew up. She was educated at Our Lady of St Francis School, Glasgow and went on to secretarial college. Later she became secretary to her father, Emilio. She met her future husband, Vittorio, in a café on London Road and an eight-year courtship led to their marriage in 1958. The couple made their first home in Glasgow and then moved to Bearsden where they lived for 17 years with their two sons, Riccardo and Piero.

At this time Vittorio was building up a successful ice cream business. In 1982 he bought Auchenibert, the Charles Rennie Mackintosh-designed house, which he renovated for the new family home. Here Rene was in her element as a supreme homemaker, whilst Vittorio loved working in his garden. They settled readily into village life. Rene went to Murray's shop every day and enjoyed meeting people and having a good chat with them and soon became well known in the village. She was a straight talker and didn't suffer fools gladly, but she was warm hearted and a good friend. She developed an interest in oil painting, went to painting classes and visited art galleries and would enjoy making her own copies of the works of great masters.

She dressed smartly and always looked elegant. In the later years of her life she enjoyed her outings for coffee in the village, chauffeured by Piero.

Her family were everything to her. When Vittorio died, her sons and her three grandchildren remained the focus of her life. She adored them and they doted on her; to the end of her life she was the centre of the family. Her passing is greatly mourned by them.

BP

Dorothy Gladstone 1926 – 2018



Dorothy, or Dot as she was known to many, was born in Rutherglen to Archibald Aiton, an oatcake salesman from Strathaven, and Jean (née Fairlie) who came from Killearn. Sadly, her mother died when Dot was still a child, and her father moved to Killearn where Dot lived with her Aunt Ann at the Headrigg.

She loved her schooldays, enjoying sports and amateur dramatics, and was great friends with Flora (Pontin) Connell.

When she left school, her first job was with Johnston's Garage and from there she moved on to Killearn Hospital, where she was secretary to the matron. At weekends she went to dances in neighbouring villages and at one of these events she met Donald MacKinnon, who worked at the St Rollox railway works. They fell in love and were married in 1951. Their first son was born in 1952, followed by their second son in 1953. By this time they had moved to Nairn, as Donald had become a boiler inspector based at Inverness. Dot loved family life in Nairn, she cycled everywhere and took part in the Guild and in amateur dramatics. However, in 1962 cuts to the railways necessitated their move back to Glasgow.

In 1967, Donald was tragically killed in a railway accident. It was a catastrophic blow for Dot, from which she never fully recovered. Left with two young sons, she worked

as a bookkeeper and office manager, first in a restaurant and then in a printing works, to provide a secure life for the family.

In 1976, her friend Flora introduced her to Jimmy Gladstone, a widowed farmer from Gartachoil, whom Dot had known from her early years in Killearn. After a short courtship, the two married and set up home in Rowan Crescent, where they lived until Jimmy's death in 2012.

After this and now with failing sight, Dot moved into Abbeyfield, just round the corner. Here she settled happily, becoming a most popular member of the house, entering into all the social activities with enthusiasm, and in 2016 enjoying the celebrations for her 90th birthday. Despite the advancing years, she retained a keen interest in what was going on in the world and greatly enjoyed the weekly newspaper review discussions. She always gave visitors a warm welcome and so appreciated her life there. Unfortunately, as she grew frailer, a change was advisable and she moved to Eastwood Court Nursing Home, which gave her full nursing care and was closer to her family, allowing them to visit her daily. Here she accepted contentedly the need for a change of residence, quickly endearing herself to the nursing staff, and still showing interest in all going on around her.

Following her death she returned to Killearn Kirk, which was filled with family and many friends come to bid farewell to a lady who will be remembered with much affection by all who knew her as a most gentle, caring and loving person.

DMCK/BP



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William Junner 1928 – 2018

William Junner was born in Maryhill to James and Lena Junner, one of a family of three boys and two girls. His father was a tank driver in the First World War and the family was directly related to Colonel T.E. Lawrence.

A damaged arm necessitated his being off school for a year but, in 1942, aged 14, William ran away to sea. He was rejected because of the damaged arm and was told by the Medical Officer, 'Son, you need one arm for the boat and one arm for yourself.'

His first job was delivering wages to the watchmen on the Clyde docks. After this he worked for a private detective agency. In 1948, he joined Blacklock & MacArthur as a colour chemist and later worked for numerous paint companies, including John S. Craigs and ICI. He moved to Salford to be works controller with W.W. Hill, Son & Wallace, a Scottish-owned paint firm. He stayed with this company for the rest of his career, moving up the ladder as works manager, works director, managing director and, finally, as executive chairman. During this time he expanded the business considerably, setting up companies in Ireland and buying out companies in Scotland, Belgium and ICI's wood finishing business, until by the late 1980s, his company had increased in size to become the most profitable (pro rata) paint company in the UK.

William travelled widely throughout the world promoting his business, and in 1990 he became the president of the British Paintmakers Association.

In his youth, William was very involved with the Boys' Brigade. When his time with them ended he took up youth hostelling in his spare time and in his 20s travelled all over Scotland, staying in hostels. He became a competitive ballroom dancer, and also played badminton and enjoyed boxing, despite the damaged arm, and he was a strong middle distance runner. His real passion, however, was football at which he excelled, being scouted by both Hibs and Hearts and winning the Scottish Junior league with Glen Park in 1952.

A self-taught man, he was a voracious reader and a life-long lover of Robert Burns. He also had a fine singing voice.

William met Elizabeth at Strathclyde Paint Company; they married in 1956. Two years ago they received a telegram from the Queen to celebrate their diamond wedding. The family moved from Glasgow to England in 1964 and lived for many years in the Manchester area, returning to Scotland in 1990. Here they settled in Killearn,



where they transformed the old Police House into an attractive home. With his upright and imposing bearing he became a familiar figure walking through the village with his two large dogs, Snowy (a Newfoundland) and Bruno (a long-haired German Shepherd). In his later years, it was his Black Russian Terrier, Cally, who became his constant companion.

He was deeply loved and will be sorely missed by his family and all who knew him. MJ/BP

Bridge by Zorro – solution to the problem on page 17

Declarer needs two finesses to be right: ♥Q and ♦Q. Diamonds are the obvious 'work suit'.

At trick 3, declarer led ♦3 from table, East following with ♦10 and South with ♦A. The ♦7 was returned and declarer guessed the finesse correctly by playing the ♦8, but East's discard of a club was unwelcome as it meant that South now needed two entries to his hand, one to repeat the diamond finesse to capture West's still guarded ♦Q, and another to take the heart finesse. As ♥A is the only entry available without letting the opponents onto lead, the contract goes one down.

Now see the effect of leading ♦8 at trick 3. South takes the ♦10 with ♦A and returns ♦7, playing ♦3 when West plays low, keeping the lead in the South hand. It is now possible to capture West's ♦Q, and later finesse the hearts and make the contract.

(With acknowledgement to *The Daily Telegraph* and G.C.H. Fox for his choice of hand and notes.) Z

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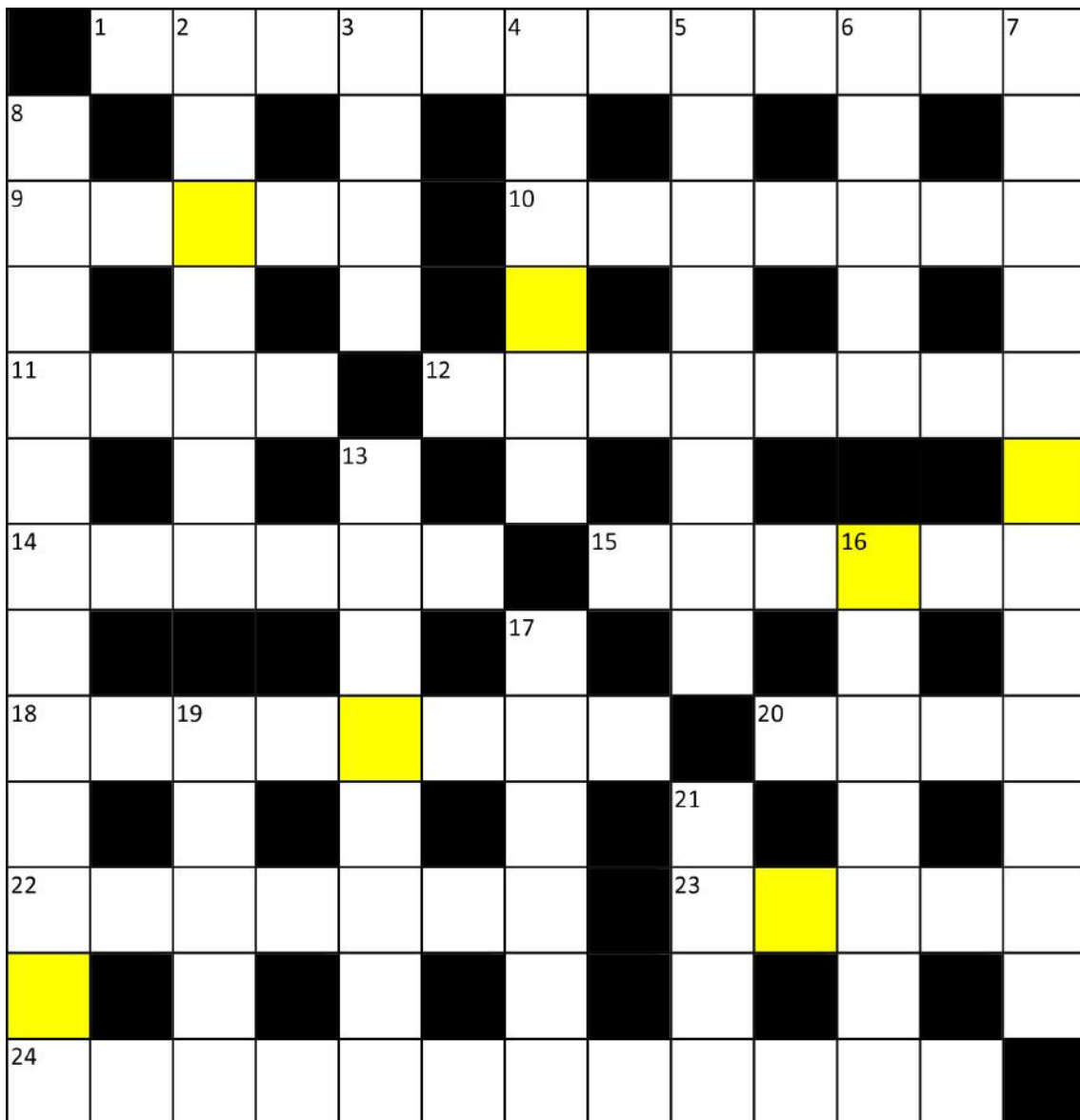


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PRIZE COURIER CROSSWORD set by Peewit

Our prize for the crossword is a family ticket to the Theatre Royal or the King's Theatre, Glasgow, subject to availability and restrictions on certain days. The *Courier* would like to thank the Ambassador Theatre Group for generously providing this prize for our crossword competition. You can find out what is on at www.atgtickets.com/venues/glasgow/



Winner of our last crossword: Sheila Ptolomey, Killlearn

ACROSS

- 1 Hasty cards I'm sending off for this occasion (9,3)
- 9 Nest unknown in lake (5)
- 10 Boy and a short girl in a Scottish chapel (7)
- 11 You'll sound like the season of 1 across (4)
- 12 He abstains to mark an occasion without the start of rehab (8)
- 14 Cars contain nothing but sound recordings (6)
- 15 Bringer of news in Glasgow (6)
- 18 Ancient Briton caught in the act is described (8)
- 20 Ban casting vote (4)
- 22 This gear is used to park new Renault (7)
- 23 Evil dwarf is right in charge (5)
- 24 Old boundary contains new researcher (12)

DOWN

- 2 Went fast after injury and was in the lead (7)
- 3 Dies out in March (4)
- 4 Bird cooked on 1 across (6)
- 5 Donkey sick when attacked (8)
- 6 In this deli a cook is found(9)
- 7 Okay do needlework for this American song (6,6)
- 8 Hop after the bells (3,4,5)
- 13 Wizard makes silly errors outside religion (8)
- 16 A doctor owes me – that's amazing! (7)
- 17 Wrongly blamed for the commotion (6)
- 19 Victoria, soft and overweight (5)
- 21 Upset one in school (4)

The letters in the light gold squares make up an anagram of something you might have with the 4 down. Solve the crossword and find the anagram. Email it or write the answer on a piece of paper and send to the *Courier* (see below).

Solution to the last crossword: Across: 1 Black Bull; 8 pool; 9 influence; 10 slot; 13 carnot; 16 phoney; 17 health; 20 sewer; 21 cyst; 25 ewer; 26 protester Down: 2 lone; 3 colt; 4 brexit; 5 lockup; 6 pollinate; 7 flat tyres; 11 ice hockey; 12 break step; 13 volts; 14 sheer; 18 heater; 19 cement; 22 Otis; 23 pare Anagram: Carnoustie

To email your entries to any of the competitions, just send your answer to competition@kfc.co.uk

To send a paper copy, post it in the box behind the counter in the Co-op (ask the assistant to put it in the *Courier* box), or put it in an envelope marked '*Courier* competition' in the postbox outside the Village Hall.

Christmas Wordsearch

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

Find the following 10 words in the grid, cross them out and a hidden message from us to you will be revealed.

ANGELS, CANDLES, CARDS, DECORATIONS, MISTLETOE,
 REINDEER, STOCKING, TINSEL, TURKEY, YULETIDE

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

Christmas Quiz

- In what year was the Queen's speech first televised?
 (a) 1953 (b) 1955 (c) 1957
- What is the basic ingredient of wassail?
 (a) Beer (b) Cider (c) Wine
- In what year was Christmas banned in England?
 (a) 1580 (b) 1644 (c) 1739
- How many swans went a-swimming?
 (a) 7 (b) 8 (c) 9
- Where is the service of Nine Lessons and Carols broadcast from on Christmas Eve
 (a) St Pauls Cathedral (b) Kings College (c) York Minster
- In what year was *Silent Night* first performed?
 (a) 1818 (b) 1828 (c) 1838
- In which country was it performed?
 (a) Germany (b) Austria (c) Poland
- Who wrote *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*?
 (a) Raymond Briggs (b) David Walliams (c) Dr Seuss
- In which ocean is Christmas Island situated?
 (a) Indian (b) Pacific (c) Atlantic
- The first Christmas card sold in 1843 cost how much?
 (a) Six pence (b) One shilling (c) Two shillings

Answers on page 34

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

Our prize for the Children's Spot the Difference is a £10 voucher from the Co-op. Entrants must be 12 years old or under. The *Courier* would like to thank Co-operative Food for generously providing the prize for our children's competition.



Find 10 differences in the picture on the right and ring them to win a £10 voucher. Write your name, address and age below, cut out the pictures and place in the box in the Co-op or the postbox outside the Village Hall. If you don't want to cut the pictures out then you can write down the difference, together with your name and contact details on a sheet of paper and post or email your descriptions to the *Courier* (instructions below the crossword).

Name Age.....
 Address Phone No.
 Congratulations to the winners of the £10 prize in our last competition: Lachlan and Malcolm McLean

Stirling backs up Alzheimer Scotland

Stirling Council has given a green light to an action plan to make the whole of Stirling 'dementia friendly'. As part of the Health and Social Care Partnership, the Council currently spends around £4.25 million on dementia. This includes £3 million on long-term care, a further third of a million on short-term or respite care, and over £850,000 on helping people diagnosed with or suspected of having dementia with care at home services.

With an estimated 1,650 people living with the condition in the Council area – a number that's expected to double in the next 20 years – fresh thinking was needed. The plan's aim is to ensure people with dementia and their families can continue to participate and engage in their neighbourhood, community and city by making key changes to the fabric of Stirling.

As part of the strategy, the Dementia Friendly Stirling Group will support communities across the Stirling Council area to become 'dementia friendly' with sustainable infrastructure to support individuals with dementia, their families and carers.

Stirling Council's Community Planning and Regeneration Committee pledged £100,000 to Dementia Friendly Stirling earlier this year.



Dementia Friends is an initiative led by Alzheimer Scotland, which raises awareness and reduces stigma associated with dementia by turning understanding into action. It promotes the message that through increased awareness, understanding and positive messages people can live well with dementia.

There are currently 1,016 Dementia Friends across Stirling

and Clackmannanshire. An increase in this figure will be used to gauge progress of 'dementia friendly communities' as they establish and develop.

Ways for Dementia Friendly accreditation to be achieved will be explored, with support provided to organisations and communities to achieve accreditation where this is available.

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Bowled Over by Bats

For my birthday, I received an unusual gift – something I'd asked for and had been hoping to acquire for some time – a bat detector!

This amazing piece of kit simply plugs into

my mobile phone and with the help of a free app allows me to hear and record the echolocation calls made by any nearby bats going about their business at night. These sounds, often inaudible to the human ear, allow the bats to find their way around in the dark, detecting prey (and each other) in the process. Impressively, the detector also identifies which species of bat it is recording, something very useful since bats are notoriously difficult to identify as anything other than 'bats' in flight.

About half of the 17 species of bats breeding in Britain occur in Scotland. Killearn provides good habitat and potential roost sites for a number of them, although some species are much more common than others. Despite having seen plenty of bats flying over the garden and surrounding countryside over the years, I could never



be absolutely sure which species I was seeing. So this autumn, armed with my bat detector, I ventured out at dusk to pin them down once and for all.

Bats have an annual cycle that includes a period of hibernation between late autumn and early spring. Emerging from this, the females soon form maternity roosts and young are born in June or July.

As most people know, it's an offence to harm bats or cause damage to their roosts even when the bats are not in situ at the time.

More information can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website (www.bats.org.uk), including advice on what to do if there is a roost within your property, or you find a sick or injured bat.

That first night my bat detector buzzed and clicked with the distinct sounds of three very different species over the house: Soprano pipistrelle, a tiny creature, perhaps the original 'black piper on an infinitesimal pipe' as D.H. Lawrence described in his famous poem; and Noctule, our largest species, often the first to fly in the evening; and Daubenton's bat, which characteristically flies low over rivers and ponds to catch insects.

I expect to add to that list over time but, now that they're back in hibernation, I can't be 'batman' again until the spring. Robins will just have to do for now...

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Anyone wishing to contribute to the *Courier* spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 16 March 2018.

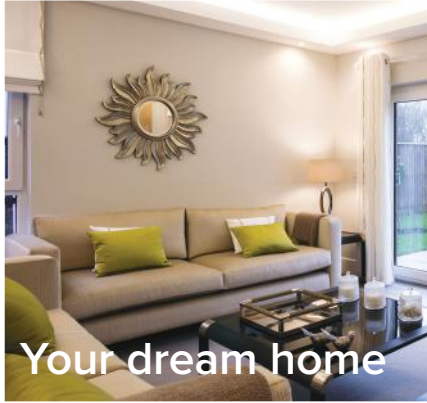
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Contact: Gwen Stewart (01360 550856).

Contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by 25 January 2019. Please send them to:

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