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## Jim Fallas

Jim Fallas came to Killearn in early childhood when his father took up work as a shepherd here. After leaving school he entered an apprenticeship as a motor mechanic in Blane field. After National Service in the Malaysia campaign, he returned to his former trade. As he progressed through the motor industry he found a calling which suited both his practical abilities and his curiosity about the mechanics of machinery. He says he was always interested in how things worked.

Jim met Mary, from Stornoway, in Blane field; they courted and married 54 years ago. Settling in Killearn they raised their family of a daughter and two sons, and now have six grandchildren.

Jim has devoted himself to numerous organisations and groups in the area and on the Millennium Committee, in particular, he not only helped to drive forward plans for the village celebrations but engaged in much of the 'legwork' so necessary to achieving success. In small groups or at meetings Jim can be relied upon to put forward a common sense point of view with firmness but courtesy.

It is typical of Jim's energy that when he finally retired, he looked around to see what needed to be done near to home. It is not unusual to catch sight of Jim up a ladder or carrying a bag of tools as he sets off to lend a hand somewhere, or to repair something.

A devoted husband and family man, a tireless giver of his own time to the benefit of local causes, Jim has given freely of his talents to the benefit of Killearn.

BP

## Provost's Awards 2006

The Provost of Stirling Council holds a bi-annual celebration of service, marking the contributions made by individuals or by groups to life within the Stirling Council area. The awards are in these categories: Academic, Arts & Culture, Business, Community, International Relations, Special Achievement, Sport, Voluntary and Shop Safe. They were presented at a glittering evening function at Stirling Castle on Friday, 27 October.

Nominations for these awards were invited earlier in the year and after a careful selection 23 people were chosen. In the 'Community' category, Jim Fallas, described as a stalwart of community life in West Stirlingshire, was selected for his many years of service to the area. Jim has served both as an elder of Killearn Kirk and as a member of Killearn Trust for well over 40 years. He also led the Boy's Brigade for many years and is a trustee of the Strathblane and Strathendrick Welfare Fund. He has been a leading member of every committee set up to organise special events in the village, the most recent of which was the Buchanan 500 celebrations. He has a great knowledge of and respect for the village and is currently involved in updating *The Parish of Killearn*. A man of practical abilities, Jim has frequently used his skills to improve the local environment and, even in retirement, he continues to be tireless on behalf of the village.

Provost Colin O'Brien referred in his citation to these many years of community service when presenting Jim with a medal and framed certificate following a champagne reception and dinner in the



Great Hall of Stirling Castle in the presence of 250 guests.

Introducing the awards, Provost O'Brien spoke of how they acknowledge the many and varied achievements made in a number of fields which together contribute to the richness of life within the Stirling Council area. He referred also to the recent death in action in Afghanistan of Marine Gary Wright from Strathblane and spoke of the many tributes to the young soldier's character and abilities whose life had been given in service to his country. He spoke also about Stirling's connections with Malawi and of some of the work that is being done in this area to forge strong links between the Stirling Council area and Malawi, in particular the Dunblane-Likhubula Partnership. Finally he made it clear that the 'winners' of the Provost's Awards were not only the people to whom the awards were being made, but their communities which benefit from their high level of dedication and service.

The village is proud to congratulate him on receiving the Provost's Award 2006 for services to the community.



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*Killearn Courier* is published by



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Anyone wishing to contribute to the Spring edition is reminded that it will be distributed on 17 March 2007.

**Advertisements and Artwork.**

All adverts should be in the handed to one of our Advertising Executives by **Friday 2 February**. *Gwen Stewart* can be contacted on 01360 550856 and *Sara Hudson* on 01360 550806.

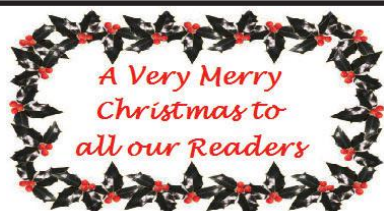
**Contributions**

All contributions and letters to the editor should be in the hands of the editorial team by **Friday 2 February**. Send them to:

**20 Station Road, Killearn**  
 or email to **courier@kfc.co.uk**.

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**C A R D S I N M A S P O S T**

The Guides and Boys Brigade are joining forces again this year to deal with the thousands of cards (4,800 last year) delivered around the village – all for a donation. We were able to send over £700 to the Children’s Hospice last year (about 15p a card).

**Boxes will be placed in the Chemist and Butchers as from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December with last pick up from those boxes on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 4.30pm. There will also be a box in the Kirk on Sundays 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December.**

**By each box will be a donation box.**

**Delivers will be made on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December only.**

Please remember to **put the full name and address on the envelope**. So far we have been able to deliver all cards posted only by pooling all our investigative skills.

**Please support CHAS and the local Youth Organisations.**

**Queries – contact Sue Beck (01360 550485 or sbeck89@aol.com)**

**Marion Brown Centennial or Happy Birthday, May**



Glasgow where she was employed by two accountant firms.

Married in 1935 to Donald, she lived in London for a few years before moving back to Scotland, first to Kilmarnock and then to Glasgow and Balfron, where her husband died. Her passion was bridge, where she met many friends, and it was a great disappointment to her when she had to stop because of blindness. May is a member of a long-living family. An aunt lived to 102, and her older sister, Nanny, reached 99.

Marion, or May as she is better known, has lived in the local area since 1965 – the first eight years in Balfron where she had a shop and the next thirty-one years in her cottage in Killearn.

She was born and brought up in Ayrshire on her father’s farm and trained as a book-keeper. She looked after the accounts of a number of farmers (not an easy job) in her younger days. Her first job was with the Saxone Shoe Company in Kilmarnock before moving to

May was 100 years old on 5 October 2006, and a celebration was held in the Strathallan Care Home, Stirling. Unfortunately due to a recent illness, the party was reduced to her close family. Messages of congratulation were received from the Queen, Lord Provost, Lord Lieutenant of Stirling and her MP and MSP, together with many cards from her numerous friends including the local Surgery, Pharmacy and Guild.

*Donald Brown*

**Tennis Club Update**

The attempted community buyout of the tennis courts and club using the ‘right-to-buy’ legislation was unsuccessful because the owner, The Wilson Trust, demonstrated to the Scottish Executive that they had a *option to buy* from an undeclared third party before our community buyout was successfully lodged. That is how the situation remains as, despite letters to the Wilson Trust, neither the club nor the Killearn Community Land Company have been told the intentions of the Trust. The Land Company has asked if it can talk directly to the holder of the *option to buy*, but has received no reply. So until we know the objective of either the Trust or the option holder, the situation is stalemate.

*PW*

# EDITORIAL

By the time this issue of *The Courier* drops through your letterbox, Christmas will be just round the corner with New Year hard on its heels. Where has the time gone? It seems like just a couple of weeks ago when I wrote in our first Christmas issue and here we are at our second!

Once again we've tried to give this issue a 'Christmassy' feel but with a 'green' touch to it. Inside we've got an article giving you a few ideas as well as a 'Green' Christmas Competition.

We at *The Courier* have had a pretty good year. We got two Awards detailed on page 11. We increased our team by one. Our first youth member, Siobhan, moved on but she recruited her replacement, Megan, who is just as active. Our advertisers continue to give us their support as does the Community Council and our delivery people. In fact, *The Courier* is well supported throughout the parish and seems to be well received. However, if you think we could do anything better, please let us know. In any event, many thanks for your support throughout 2006.

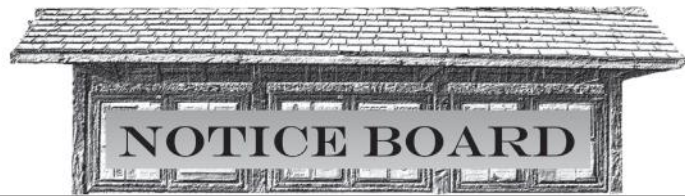
You may remember that in our last Christmas issue, we flagged up the situation facing the Tennis Club and continued to do so throughout the year. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the future of the Tennis Club does not look good and we await responses. It is possible that Killearn will lose this facility thus adding it to the seemingly ever-growing list of such losses – the Old School and the Scout Hut – to name a couple.

Obviously, those most affected by such losses are those who frequently use them. What should not be forgotten is that these losses nibble away at the quality of life for all of us in our community and we are all the poorer for that.

From all of us at the *Killearn Courier*, have a very Happy Christmas and a very Prosperous and Peaceful 2007.

Ian

Ian Dickie, Editor



- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 23 Nov    | <i>Drymen Historical Society</i> . Talk on 'The Stirling Heads' by J. Donaldson. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm.   |
| 24 Nov    | <i>Strathendrick Country Dance Club</i> . Village Hall, 7pm.   |
| 25 Nov    | <i>The Guild</i> , Sale of Work. Church Hall, 2 pm.  |
| 2 Dec     | <i>Killearn Primary School PTA</i> Christmas Fayre. Village Hall, 10.30 am – 1 pm.   |
| 5 Dec     | <i>The Guild</i> Christmas Evening. Church Hall, 7.30 pm.  |
| 5/9 Dec   | <i>Fintry Amateur Dramatics Society</i> show: "Santa in Space". Fintry Hall, evenings and Saturday matinee. Tickets, B. McLeod (860384).                             |
| 6 Dec     | <i>Get Reel</i> End of Term Sharing.   |
| 7 Dec     | Carols at Christmas. Village Hall, 7 pm.   |
| 8 Dec     | Annual Festive Whist Drive (Conservatives). Village Hall, 7 for 7.30. All Welcome.   |
| 9 Dec     | <i>Guides</i> Santa Coffee Morning. Village Hall, 10 am.   |
| 9 Dec     | <i>Ian Miller and Dominic Spencer (Jazz Duo)</i> . Village Hall, 8 pm.   |
| 14/15 Dec | <i>Strathendrick Singers</i> Christmas Concert. Village Hall, 7.30 pm.   |
| 22 Dec    | <i>Strathendrick Film Society</i> Free Children's Matinee showing <i>The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe</i> . Balfon Campus, 2 pm (children must be accompanied). |
| 12 Jan    | <i>Strathendrick Film Society</i> showing <i>Millions 2003</i> . Balfon Campus, 7.30 pm.   |
| 23 Jan    | <i>Get Reel</i> Classes start.   |
| 25 Jan    | <i>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</i> , Members' Night: short talks by members of the society. Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm.                            |
| 3 Feb     | <i>Killearn Primary PTA</i> Burns Coffee Morning. Village Hall, 10 am – 12 pm.   |
| 7 Feb     | <i>Horticultural Society</i> talk by D. Menzies, "New Zealand Plants and Gardens". Village Hall (Committee Room), 7.30 pm.   |
| 9 Feb     | <i>Strathendrick Film Society</i> showing <i>Tsotsi</i> . Balfon Campus, 7.30.   |
| 22 Feb    | <i>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</i> , talk by A. Muirhead: "From the Clyde to Philadelphia 1879–1887". Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm.                  |
| 23 Feb    | <i>Strathendrick Film Society: Seducing Dr. Lewis</i> . Balfon Campus, 7.30 pm.  |
| 2 Mar     | <i>Strathendrick Film Society: World's Fastest Indian</i> . Balfon Campus, 7.30pm.   |
| 2 Mar     | <i>Horticultural Society</i> Whist Drive. Village Hall, 7.30 pm.   |
| 3 Mar     | <i>Killearn Primary PTA</i> Nearly New Book & Toy Sale. Village Hall, 10 am – 12 pm.   |
| 7 Mar     | <i>Rotary</i> Old Folk's Concert. Village Hall, 7 pm.  |
| 18 Mar    | <i>Strathendrick Singers</i> Spring Concert. Killearn Kirk, 7.30 pm.   |
| 22 Mar    | <i>Drymen &amp; District Local History Society</i> , talk by N. Willis and R. Weddle, "The Glasgow Necropolis". Drymen Village Hall, 7.45 pm.                        |
| 23 Mar    | <i>Killearn Primary School PTA</i> Family Music Night. Village Hall, 7–10 pm.  |
| 23 Mar    | <i>Strathendrick Film Society</i> showing <i>Spring Summer Autumn Winter</i> . Balfon Campus, 7.30 pm.   |
| 27 Mar    | <i>Get Reel</i> Term ends  |
| 28 Mar    | <i>Rotary</i> Charity Bridge Drive. Village Hall, 7 for 7.30 pm.   |



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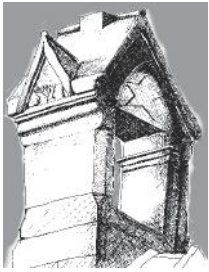
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## KCFC ANNUAL REPORT 2006

I am again pleased to report that the Killearn Community Futures Company has five fully operational working groups: the *Play Park*, the *Woodlands*, the *Killearn Courier*, the *Footpaths* and the *Buchanan 500*.

These individual groups constitute the backbone of KCFC allowing the company to operate across a wide variety of areas, all of which are benefiting our community. Each of our working groups has made significant progress throughout the last year and all are determined to build on last year's successes.

The Playpark project arose through concerns raised at a Community Council meeting in February 2004 by a group of parents who felt that the playpark had become run-down. Equipment, which had come to the end of its life, had been removed and maintenance of the area had fallen below an acceptable standard. Contact was made with Play Services of Stirling Council and a partnership inaugurated between Stirling Council, architect Mike Hyatt and the Playpark Group. A design costed at £75,000, was then subsequently agreed. This design incorporated the retention of some existing equipment, the re-shaping of the landscape, the installation of new play equipment and the planting of trees and bushes to encourage bio-diversity. Over the past two and half years the project has progressed through discussion, design, consultation and fund raising to tendering and the awarding of the contract to Landcare Solutions of Stirling. Work has now begun on the site and the landscaping is expected to be completed by December. Planting will continue through the winter and spring and it is anticipated that the new playpark will be fully operational by early next summer. The Playpark working group through its funding strategy and the dedicated members of this group

successfully had donated or pledged to it a fantastic £66,500. At present a final bid is being made to achieve the balance of £8,500 required for the total costs of the project. An appeal is being made to local businesses and at least three applications to major funders are in the pipeline.

The Woodlands working group's membership has now doubled to eight during the year following an on-site meeting at the Kingdom in early May. Prior to this meeting the advice of Stirling Council was obtained and trees for felling or coppicing were identified. Since this first meeting, three specialist contractors were invited to visit the Kingdom and the group has now identified potential sources of funding to pay for the major works. Work to clear light undergrowth and brambles is planned to begin very soon. The principal focus of the Woodlands group is to maintain the natural setting of the Kingdom for the enjoyment of the local community whether they are young children, responsible dog-owners or walkers. Ownership will remain with Stirling Council, with the management of the Kingdom being undertaken by KCFC.

Since the AGM of 2005, *The Courier* has produced three issues equating to some 3,300 copies and these have been delivered to all households within the Parish of Killearn. *The Courier* is still able to be produced and delivered free and this situation is due to the dedication of *The Courier* team and the tremendous support of our advertisers and the Community Council. This was recognised when the team were awarded runners-up for being the Best Editorial Team. *The Courier* was also awarded 'Community Involvement Award 2006'

*The Courier* is our local newspaper and is only as good as the contributions received from you, the members of our community. The editorial team does try to fit every contribution in each edition

but sometimes, because of the sheer volume, it is difficult to accommodate all these items. To do so, the number of pages per issue would need to be increased. However, to be blunt, unless a sponsor could be found, this would be financially impossible. Finally, 2005–2006 has been a good year for *The Courier*. It would seem that the newspaper is well received in the community and long may this continue.

*The Buchanan 500 celebration over the weekend of 15–17 September was a huge success, meeting all the objectives of the working group. Events were well attended with the involvement of all sections of the community. Awareness of the importance and significance of George Buchanan's heritage was suitably raised. Full details of the events are covered elsewhere in The Courier.*

The seven members of the Footpaths Working group met six times in 2006, and have had long, lively and useful discussions. Each member of the group has a specific responsibility, which has been conscientiously carried out. Apart from the main aim of the group – to produce a map of Killearn with various walks – there has been discussion and liaison with local landowners, co-operation with neighbouring communities, and much useful contact with Stirling Council staff. The group has also been involved in the consultation process for the Council's Core Paths Plan, including attending the meeting held in the village on 25 October.

Although the details are still under review, the walks decided on are: Kirkhouse Wood, Killearn Glen, West Highland Way and Gartness, the Pipeline track to Strathblane with possible links to the West Highland Way, a circular walk along the pipeline track and back by the Distillery and West Highland Way, a route up Garloch Hill in the Campsies, a loop walk around Drumtian, and along the Endrick water to Balfron. These are all walks well known to many villagers, but by producing a map, it is hoped that even more people will be tempted to get out and about and that it will be useful to

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visitors to the area. At the KCFC AGM in October, a display was set up to inform the community of the group's work and to invite discussion about its proposals.

KCFC's Old School working group, a group of like-minded Killearn residents has spent more than 4 years investigating and costing the options for developing the old school building into a modern, multi-purpose community centre to benefit everyone. During this time they have found it extremely difficult to get sufficient interest and involvement from the community. In March of this year they convened a public meeting to allow the village a final opportunity to get behind and support the project to convert the old school building into living in the village. As a result of the public meeting, the board of KCFC unfortunately had to accept that there was no future with this project due to the overall lack of interest and support from the village. Ian McCourt, who represented Stirling Council at the meeting, stated, "The building plan relied on volunteer support and Stirling Council had major concerns that the volunteer base was just not available from within the local community. It was quite clear that building of this size was going to need a substantial volunteer base to both get it going and to keep it going. Unfortunately it was evident that that volunteer base was not in place."

Reluctantly KCFC had to withdraw from the project, with the future of the building now lying once again with Stirling Council.

It is crucially important that KCFC attracts more members during the next year, as the success of KCFC and its working groups is totally dependant upon not only local support but also more importantly individual membership of the company. As a member of the company you would be eligible to stand as a director of KCFC, become involved with any of the existing working groups, start a new working group or attend and vote at the AGM.

Standing down this year after two years as convenor, I would like to express thanks to my fellow directors and the 100 plus members of the company for their support over the past year and wish the board and working groups every success in the year ahead.

*Neil McArthur, Convenor,  
Killearn Community Futures Company  
October 2006*

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### CAMPBELL – BEATON



The wedding of James Beaton, Killearn Football Club captain, to Gillian Campbell of Summerston, Glasgow, took place on 12 August 2006. The ceremony was conducted by Lynn Phillips of Balfour Registration Office, and the reception was held at the Duck Bay Hotel, on the shores of Loch Lomond.

### JOHN MAILER 1961 – 2006



Killearn lost a very popular figure in the farming and sporting world with the death of John Mailer on 29 July 2006.

John came to the village in 1965 to Westerton Farm where he helped his Mum and Dad with the livestock and was very active with the running of the Fruit and Veg shop. After the family gave up the farm in 1995, John acquired ground at Blaneswell, Drumore and Gartness where he farmed sheep and fat cattle to a very high standard. He also assisted many local farmers at busy times and was a founder member of the "A Team" shearing squad.

He was also a very keen and good all-round sportsman with football being at the top of the list. He started playing at a very young age with Killearn FC, but it was soon evident his skills were above village level, going on to play professionally with Hamilton Accies, Clyde, Dumbarton and Stirling Albion.

Way above farming and sport, John's first love was the family home at Birch Road with Helen and Eva, who gave him great courage to fight his illness for over five years with dignity and hope.

His popularity in many walks of life was clear to see with the large attendance at the church on the day of his funeral. His death at the young age of 45 is not only a great loss to all who knew him, but also to the community of Killearn. DB

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## One Bull – Two Tales by Hugh McArthur

The 38 Friesian dairy cows from the Big Byre spent the summer in the fields which ran from the Hospital to the Moss Road. The 18 cows from the Middle Byre and the 10 from the Wee Byre grazed in the fields which ran from the stack-yard to the bottom of Drumbeg Loan. The bull was running with them. Twice every day, at 6am and about 4pm, the cows were brought in to be milked. Recently, the bull had taken to coming to the gate and then turning and going back up the brae towards the march dyke which ran between Laigh Parks and Mr McGowan's fields. Dan suggested that the bull should be brought right in to keep him in the habit of being chained in his stall in the Wee Byre.

The following morning I set off with Bonzo, the collie, at my side. Now Bonzo was not one of your 'one man and his dog' kind of dogs. If you ran, Bonzo would run. If you shouted, Bonzo would bark. And in that way he did help to urge the cows into the farm. As usual, the 28 cows headed towards the gate and the bull headed back to the brae. Bonzo and I followed the bull up towards the dyke and as I got near him, he turned and watched me approaching. I got to within a few yards, but still he did not move. I wondered what to do next. He had no such doubts. Lowering his head, he rushed at me, hitting me in the middle of the body. As I lay on the ground, he put his head into my back and sent me rolling down the brae. By this time I think I was calling for help – heavenly, earthly, parental, somebody, anybody! And then he stopped, standing looking at me lying

there. I managed to get to my feet and run down the brae. I did not stop until I had put a fence between myself and him. I was sore – very sore – all over my body, with a gash on my forehead. As for Bonzo, I did not see him until much later. Dan and three colleagues eventually got the bull into his stall.



*Fast forward about 16 months...*

From about 8 o'clock on an autumn morning, the 'Big Mill' – Tommy Dykes' threshing mill powered by his large Case tractor – had been working in the stack-yard. All day, four tractors with trailers had been travelling between the farm and the field at Crosshead in the village. The 27 stacks of sheaves of oats had been built at harvest time at the area where the primary school now stands. Big Mill day demanded extra labour, so four farms – Laigh Parks, Blaneswell, Carston and the Home Farm – 'neighbour'd' at that time.

As the afternoon wore on, two of Laigh Parks' men were taken from the mill squad and sent to attend to the milking of the cows. As the last load was being fed into the mill, the passenger train from Glasgow on its way to Aberfoyle, drew into Killearn Station at about 4.45pm. Some of realised that we would need to work smartly, as we were hoping to get the 7 o'clock bus at the Hospital gates. We were going to the cinema in the McLintock Hall to see the double bill of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. Suddenly, one of the men came rushing to the stack-yard shouting that the bull had broken loose and was heading towards the main road. Quickly, three or four men were organized to follow the bull and bring him back. As we ran down the farm road, a large shape appeared in the failing light.

It was the bull heading back up *towards* the farm. As he drew near, we could see that the horn on the right side of his head was hanging off, and his face was bloody. Where had he been? What had happened? We only discovered the answers to these questions two days later.

The lorry from Watt's meal mill in Milngavie arrived at the farm with a load of cattle food. After unloading the bags of meal, the lorry driver told us this story. Two nights previously, he had been heading back to Milngavie. Passing the farm road-end, he could see a man on a bicycle, pedalling furiously, and swerving from side to side across the road. Slowing as he got nearer the cyclist, he saw the reason for the man's panic. A large bull was running along the road in pursuit. Suddenly the bull turned and, with a terrific bang, its head came into contact with the side of the lorry. He showed us the dent, and said that neither he nor the cyclist wasted any time in putting as much distance as possible between them and the injured animal.

Some weeks later the bull left the farm and was sold at the cattle market in Stirling.



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## Footpaths in Killearn



Footpath through Garteneaglis under threat from proposed development

The seven members of the Footpath Group have met six times in 2006, and have had long, lively and useful discussions. Each member of the group has a specific responsibility, which has been conscientiously carried out. Apart from the main aim of the group – to produce a map of Killearn with various walks – there has been discussion and liaison with local landowners, co-operation with neighbouring communities, and much useful contact with Stirling Council staff. The group has also been involved in the consultation

process for the Council's Core Paths Plan, including attending the meeting held in the village on 25 October.

Although the details are still under review, the walks decided on are: Kirkhouse Wood, Killearn Glen, West Highland Way and Gartness, the Pipeline track to Strathblane with possible links to the West Highland Way, a circular walk along the pipeline track and back by the Distillery and West Highland Way, a route up Garloch Hill in the Campsies, a loop walk around Drumtian, and along the Endrick water to Balfron. These are all walks well known to many villagers, but by producing a map, it is hoped that even more people will be tempted to get out and about, and that it will be useful to visitors to the area.

At the KCFC AGM in October, a display was set up to inform the community of the group's work and to invite discussion about its proposals.



Footpath through Kirkhouse Wood

## Balfron Road Closure



While many were inconvenienced by the closure of Balfron Road last month, local residents, young and not so young, took to the road to play. "The road is normally very busy and the traffic too fast that it is dangerous to cycle or play out on the road," said Jenny Stewart, 12, "so we've really enjoyed the road being closed and wish it could happen more often!"

## Use It or Lose It

Do we appreciate our bus service? It is vastly underused and yet we can access so many places, particularly senior citizens with a FREE bus pass. So what is holding you back!

A number 13 goes via Drymen and Gartocharn to Lomond Shores at Balloch. Have a day out by Loch Lomond, picnic in Balloch Park, visit the new aquarium or even indulge yourself shopping. A number 11, after the minor inconvenience of



a change at Balfron, goes to Stirling via Gartmore, Aberfoyle, Blair Drummond and stops right outside Kildean Hospital for anyone visiting there. Fantastic!

A bus trip opens up lovely countryside to enjoy. Why not organise a walk from one point on the route to another, or take the children or grandchildren for an outing with no problem parking or worrying if the booster seats are correct. You can also bask in the satisfaction that you have done your bit for the environment!

Leave your car in the garage and give it a try. OK, so you have to allow yourself more time, but that is no bad thing, it is better for your blood pressure to relax and let someone else do the driving.

See you on the top deck for a chat!

*Jenny Wilks*

# Heading to Malawi

I am a member of a group from Balfron High School who are hoping to be able to go to Malawi next year as the first of a series of exchange trips. The group consists of eight pupils from years five and six, accompanied by two teachers. The school has been keen to develop links with Malawi



as part of a national initiative to do the same, led by the Scottish Executive and inspired by historical links with the country that were forged principally by David Livingston.

We will be primarily visiting Robert Laws School in the northern half of the country, and it is from this school that pupils will come to visit Scotland in 2008 as part of the exchange. Nicola Jones, a physics teacher at Balfron High who has visited and worked in Malawi before, will be leading the group and has also organised for a group of teachers to visit Malawi following on directly after the pupils.

In our first week in Malawi, we will be finding out what life is like for a pupil there, and we will be based around Robert Laws. During this week we will also visit a primary school and a school for the deaf, as well as primary health care stations and shallow wells projects.

Our second week will be spent exploring more of Malawi. We will hopefully be going to a fair-trade cooperative, and either a safari in South Luangwa National Park or snorkelling in Lake Malawi itself.

We will hopefully establish a strong partnership with Robert Laws through this trip, and we are already keen to develop this, as is Scotland with the whole of Malawi. Although only 10 members of Balfron High are able to go on the trip, the entire school will be involved. For example, pen pal, fundraising and awareness schemes will involve all years of the school, as well as the wider community.

The trip will also, undoubtedly, be a life-changing experience for all involved. Malawi is a country deeply affected by poverty – the mean per capita income is less than 55p a day, and the life expectancy is as low as 36.5 years. Witnessing this first hand, combined

with the culture shock, will alter our outlooks radically.

This, for me, is both the most exciting and daunting thing about the trip. The shift from our extraordinarily materialistic society to one where material poverty is commonplace will be a difficult one, but it will, I hope, also be enlightening and have a real and lasting impact. I am

also looking forward to sharing my culture with the Robert Laws pupils – and vice versa – and teaching them how to play “Ultimate Frisbee”!

However, in order for this trip to be possible, we have to raise a significant amount of money – £15,000 in total for the whole group. As the sole pupil going on the Malawi trip who hails from Killearn, I will be responsible for organising fundraising in this area. I would therefore ask you to try and support this trip if you are able to, either directly or with ideas for fundraising. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who can help in any way.

*Calum S. Wright*

**Please contact:**  
 Calum Wright on 01360 550429  
 (email: calum.sw@hotmail.co.uk) or  
 Nicola Jones at Balfron High School  
 on 01360 440469.

## FAMILY COMING TO STAY – SHORT OF ACCOMMODATION CAN WE HELP ?



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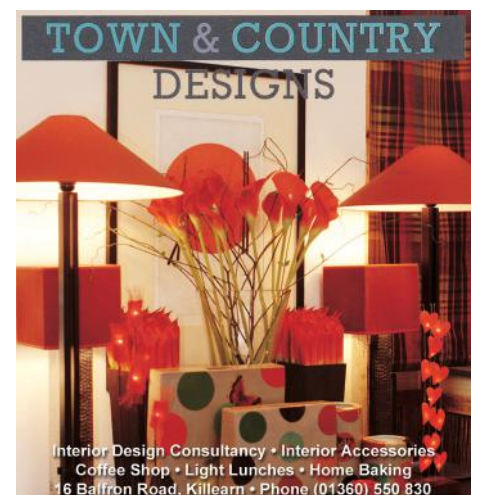
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## LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers. Please include a full name and address (not necessarily for publication). Contact addresses on the front page. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Dear Sir,

I have lived happily in Killearn for 31 years and always found it a friendly, kind and caring village. However, increasingly there seems to be a few people who have no thought and consideration for others. I visited the bank today and found a large 4x4 vehicle parked right in the middle of the space thoughtfully provided for disabled customers. I have difficulty walking and so appreciate this provision but was dismayed to see a young mum and her small daughter jump back into her car while I waited. What kind of message was she giving her child – that signs are to be completely ignored and that people with disabilities are not to be considered? Surely there should be a thankful joy in being able to walk with ease.

Similar thoughtless incidents have happened to me and others who need the convenience of being able to park close to the local Co-op. It is very frustrating having to live within physical limitations and greatly appreciated when acknowledgement and accommodation is made to ease the challenge. So it is deeply saddening when these facilities are abused.

Please, please be thankful if you have good health, and enjoy a little extra walk – leaving the spaces for those of us who don't want them, but need them. We will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Yours sincerely,  
Sheila McNab

*How right you are! I'm sure most of us have seen drivers mis-using these spaces which, as you say, are thoughtfully provided for disabled customers. This thoughtfulness extends to having these spaces placed as near as is practicable to the premises concerned thus minimizing the distance those entitled to park there have to walk. Unfortunately, some drivers pay scant regard to the signs and park where they shouldn't. Not only are they inconsiderate, they are lazy and would no doubt much prefer 'drive-in' facilities so that they need not get out their cars at all!*

*Don't these errant drivers realise that the people who use these spaces are invariably locals and therefore part of the community of Killearn? I was brought up to believe that people living in the same community looked out for each other and showed consideration for their fellow residents; something obviously alien to such inconsiderate drivers. Ed.*

Dear Sir,

I would just like to say thanks to the *Killearn Courier* for the crossword prize of four tickets to *Beauty and the Beast* at The King's Theatre. We made it a family outing and from my daughter aged four through to my mum in her 50s (she told me to put that), we all thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

Thanks again – it was well worth the effort of completing the crossword.

Wendy Denton



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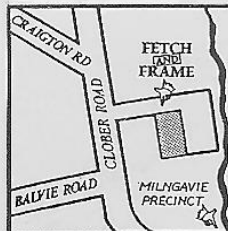
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## KILLEARN SHOW 2006

As the daylight gets shorter and the nights colder, it is time to start dismantling the planters and hanging baskets, tidy up the garden and fill these brown wheelie bins.

It is perhaps a time to look back at the flower show and reflect how well you did – or didn't do as the case might be – or even look forward to next year's show and say I could beat that or I've got better than that – be it art, craft, photo or something else.

This year's Show was again a success, attracting no fewer than 756 entries from Killearn and the surrounding area. We even had an octogenarian exhibiting for the first time and saying that she will be back next year – if only her spirit was infectious.

The committee would like to thank all the exhibitors young and old, everyone who bought schedules and anyone who contributed to making *your* Killearn Flower Show more than just a show of flowers.

So, ladies and gentlemen, get out the knitting needles and sewing kits, practice your baking skills and winter photography – now, there's a clue for a class for the show!

*Grant W. Farquharson, Show Convenor*



# Dreaming of a Green Christmas



Being green at Christmas sounds boringly worthy and pious, all lentils and no brandy butter. Whether you are decking the halls for Jesus's nativity or overjoyed to see the days lengthening again (or both), there are all manner of ways you can have a wonderful time and still save the planet.

The standard descriptive value of recyclable goods appears to be reckoned in trees (rather than London buses or Albert Halls). So, with that in mind, consider this. About 744 million cards are sent every year, and that works out to around 248,000 trees. An estimated 8,000 tonnes of wrapping paper accounts for another 50,000 trees or thereabouts. It all ended up in UK bins back in 2004.

So, are you single-handedly and maliciously ruining the planet if you send friends and family Christmas greetings or wrap their presents in gorgeous paper? Probably not, but there are easy ways to cut the impact and not the trees.

The simplest solution is to buy cards made from recycled paper. This is much easier to do these days and has the added benefit of making sure there is a market for all that paper you've been putting into your council blue bin. A greener solution is to make your own unique cards. Same goes for wrapping paper. There are whole ranges of lovely boxes and bags to choose from all made from recycled materials. Or you could, again, make your own. Child(ren) + A3-size paper + felt tips/paint/crayons = original artwork + fun. And if you feel guilty about the good time you're having, then give the money you've saved to your favourite charity.

Then there are the lights. Indoor Christmas lights don't actually use that much electricity. However, if you are in

the market for new lights, be sure to check out the new LED strings. They are a whopping 90% more efficient.

Trees have to be worked into the green equation, too. There are broadly two choices. Buying a living tree and replanting it or purchasing an artificial one and using it year after year are probably the most ecological answers. But buying a real tree needn't be a disaster. Source your tree locally, buy it fresh, and recycle it after Twelfth Night with Stirling Council's excellent service.

Presents can be a scramble to find something that will *just have to do*. An imaginative tack on this problem might be to get rid of most of the last-minute 'stuff' altogether. Who wouldn't be delighted to receive

concert or theatre tickets, the promise of lunch, pledges to keep in touch by letter or phone, homemade biscuits, chutney or spiced pears?

Virtual gifts are increasingly popular. Since Oxfam launched the scheme in 2004, 70,000 of us have bought someone in the developing world a goat! Energy-saving light bulbs, or battery rechargers might be going a bit far, but perhaps you might consider buying these for yourself? A single energy-saving light saves a whopping 1,000–1,250 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> during the lifetime of the bulb. And unless you enjoy being a walking billboard, take your own shopping bags into town: over the holiday period 125,000 tonnes of plastic packaging are thrown away.

Teenagers are caught in a terrible dilemma. Mostly they have a highly-developed sense of what's fair and are pretty eco-conscious. And mostly they want that new mp3 player, coolest new mobile or (and?!) a Playstation 3. And

don't forget the designer gear. That's probably a circle that's impossible to square, but some curves can be straightened out. Shops specializing in antique and quality second-hand goodies are popular. Don't junk your old technology! Recycle redundant phones – the Co-op has a scheme and so does envirofone ([www.envirofone.com](http://www.envirofone.com)). Or find a new home for it. Schools and charities are always needing computer equipment.

Last, but not least, Christmas food is almost the easiest thing to feel good about, although the notion of 4,000 million sprouts being eaten simultaneously nationwide is eye-watering. By definition, seasonal specialities are the order of the day so use local organic box schemes and farmers' markets in Stirling and Balloch to get in local produce. Buying fairly-traded products, like coffee and chocolate, is good for you, good for the producers, and uses food miles wisely. Make soup from the turkey bits, compost all those potato peelings, and remember to recycle that washed aluminium foil.

Jetting off to escape the holidays isn't, of course, a green option at all. But, there is a radical solution for those of you who are totally fed up and wanting to be magically whisked away from the craziness of a 21st-century Christmas. In 2001, Canadian Mennonites started the "Buy Nothing Christmas" initiative. Check it out on:

[www.buynothingchristmas.org/about](http://www.buynothingchristmas.org/about).

It's a different perspective altogether.



Making changes to time-honoured traditions always takes effort. We have called the tune for a long time on this little blue planet; let's make sure that paying the piper won't cost the Earth. So, here's hoping for a white – but green-tinted – Christmas. *NEMB*

## Didn't We Do Well!



Ian Dickie receiving the award from Janice Hewitt, Director of Community Services, Stirling Council

The Community Newspaper of the Year Awards 2006, a well-organised event planned by Stirling Council Community Services, took place in the Albert Halls in Stirling on the evening of 15 September.

There are 28 community newspapers in Stirling Council area with a combined circulation of over 33,000. Some newspapers started as far back as the early '80s so *The Courier* is a bit of a baby, having being going for less than two years.

As in any award ceremony, you have to be nominated, and we got six award nominations! Each award has a winner and a runner-up and, believe it or not, competition is fierce. The hall was packed with people representing the various community newspapers and the atmosphere was something akin to what must be experienced at other 'better known' award ceremonies.

A new award was created for this year, that of **Best Editorial Team** – which is intended to recognise a team's ability to show 'enthusiasm, motivation and the ability to bring out the best in others' as well as recognising 'the skills which many volunteers bring to their newspapers'.

### **The Killearn Courier was runner-up!**

Another award, regarded by many as the most prestigious, is the **Community Involvement Award**. This award 'is intended to recognise the great contribution that community newspapers make to the strength and character of their community' and it 'focuses on any special event or activity which the newspaper has been involved in over the last year.'

### **The Killearn Courier got the Award!**

As a result of gaining these two awards, we received certificates as well as two gift cards for *W H Smith*. One is for £30 and the other is for £10. The Editorial Team decided that the community should get the chance to share in our success. So, we have decided to give away our awards to the winners of our Christmas Competition. **See box on right.**

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## CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

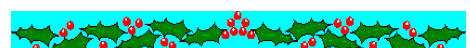
All you have to do is use your imagination and tell us how you intend to have a fun, festive and fantastically **GREEN** Christmas.

The TWO winners will be the ideas judged by *The Courier* board to be the most fun, imaginative, sensible, yummy and/or jolly but especially **GREEN** solutions for a grand holiday time.

Send your **Green Christmas** ideas, with your name, address and telephone number labelled *I'm Dreaming of a Green Christmas* to the Editor, Ian Dickie, c/o *The Courier* either by hand, post or email to the usual addresses (*see page 2*).

The closing date for the competition will be **Friday, 15th December 2006**.

The first prize is the *W H Smith* gift card for £30 and the runner-up will get the *W H Smith* gift card for £10. The winners will receive their prizes in time for Christmas.



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# BUCHANAN 500: TEA AT THE MOSS



In spite of intermittent rain, about 150 brave souls came to 'The Moss' for tea. Some historic items connected to George Buchanan were on display and people were able to look at the probable site of the original house where he was born. Splendid support from ladies of The Inner Wheel and many others ensured that there was a fine selection of eats. To match the photograph (*left*) taken in 1906, the group assembled for the historic photograph above, while a stalwart piper played despite the rain!

*Jamie Parker*





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# BUCHANAN 500 : THE CEILIDH

Saturday evening and 80 guests made their way to the Church Hall for a buffet supper, which was organised by Gail Pain. Flick Duff and her staff produced a lovely cold buffet, which was enjoyed by all.

After supper we all moved to the Village Hall for the ceilidh where we were found by some additional guests for dancing. The music was provided by Fergus Wood and the Kinlochard Ceilidh Band. During the interval Frances Wood sang a few songs and Joyce Begg read her poem, specially written for this weekend.

Di McLennan and Fiona Glass had been selling raffle tickets to us during the evening, for the prizes which had been donated by all the local businesses. The grand prize, the Buchanan 500 hamper, was won by Henrietta Simpson.

This very enjoyable evening ended at 11pm with the singing of *Auld Lang Syne*. We set out to have an evening for all – the young and not-so-young

– wherever they came from, and I feel that the evening achieved this.

Cleared and tidied the Hall – and so to bed!

*Helen London*



## class timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15 – 10:15 Sculptercise	09:30 – 10:30 Boxercise (Ladies only)	09:00 – 10:00 Sculptercise	09:30 – 10:30 Sculptercise	09:30 – 10:30 30/30
14:00 – 15:00 30/30	13:15 – 14:15 Sculptercise	10:00 – 11:00 Circuit	19:00 – 20:00 Spinning	13:15 – 14:15 Boxercise
19:00 – 20:00 Spinning	19:00 – 20:00 Spinning	18:45 – 19:45 Aerobics (Subject to demand)	20:00 – 21:00 Sculptercise	
20:00 – 21:00 Boxercise	19:30 – 20:30 Circuit Xtreme (Men only)	20:00 – 21:00 Boxercise		

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**SHAPE UP FOR CHRISTMAS AND KEEP FIT IN THE NEW YEAR**

## BUCHANAN 500 : THE PARADE



On Sunday, 17 September, the Buchanan 500 parade took place. The forming up of the parade took a rather casual manner, but everyone marched or walked with dignity behind the Saltire, carried by George Davison and the Milngavie Pipe Bank. It was gratifying to see the crowd at the monument gather as extra people came to swell the crowd. Our speakers, Rev. Philip Malloch and Dr Elspeth King, were very appropriate to the occasion. Our uniformed organisations were a credit to their leaders, parents and village. The planting of the Time Capsule and tree was carried out in an efficient manner.

The form up and return parade was a delight to watch. As marshall of the event, may I express my thanks to everyone who participated. The finale played by the pipe band was a treat to all who stayed to listen.

*Jim Fallas*

---

## DUNEDIN CONSORT AND MR MCFALL'S CHAMBER CONCERT

The final event of the weekend playing to a well filled Killearn Kirk on Sunday evening was the prestigious Quincentennial Concert. This turned out to be a highly accomplished performance of challenging and truly eclectic music and poetry from the time of Buchanan to the twenty-first century, with some pieces being heard for the first time in over 400 years.

It was an evening of two halves, sacred and profane separated by a glass of wine and birthday cake to celebrate the 87th birthday of our eminent Buchanan enthusiast from Edinburgh, Miss Muriel Buchanan-Kay.

Settings by sixteenth-century French composer Servin of Buchanan's psalm paraphrases written whilst incarcerated in Portugal by the Inquisition were faultlessly rendered by the ethereal *a capella* voices of the Dunedin Consort led by Susan Hamilton.

The Consort's virtuosity and versatility were further displayed with an entertaining 16th-century account of the Battle of Metz by Janequin ending the first half with *Pro Patria* from the 21st-century. In this they were joined by instrumentalists from Mr McFall's Chamber, directed by Professor John Butt of Glasgow University. *Pro Patria* is an impassioned work by Glasgow composer Bill Sweeney based on Buchanan's poetry; to quote the composer "Despite their antiquity, they



seemed to me to have resonance for events of the early twenty-first century". We were privileged to have the

composer present to receive his acclamation personally.

Throughout the evening, the music was punctuated by renditions of Buchanan's Latin verse declaimed from the pulpit by the ebullient Jamie Reid-Baxter. Fortunately we had the benefit of fulsome notes in the programme book by Warwick Edwards to guide us through the multi-lingual items and shine light on Buchanan's myriad facets.

In the second half we had a glimpse of the man behind the austere handed-down likeness. His pen-portraits of a female seductress, an alcoholic priest and uxorious lust revealed that George

*continued on p15*



## Killearn Past & Present

When Helen Loudon co-opted four friends to help in the production of a book of pictures as part of the Buchanan 500 celebrations, that was when Dorothy and Ian Dunkinson, Hugh Parsons and Hugh McArthur found themselves going along the road into The Quinloch on several occasions.

We discussed the size and number of pages that the book might contain. Our conclusions were that the size should be about A5 and the number of pages about 60: 30 of Killearn 'past' and 30 of Killearn 'present'.

It took a wee while to choose 30 views of old Killearn from more than 150 postcards of the parish, but once done it only remained to arrange for present-day pictures to correspond with our choices. We decided to ask Fiona Glass to take these, since her Millennium Calendar had been so successful.

The books were ready for sale on 29 July for the University of Glasgow conference lecture on Buchanan in the Kirk. Throughout the weekend of the Buchanan 500 in September the books were also on sale in the Village Hall. They created a great deal of interest as did a number of larger pictures which were displayed. Remarks were made and questions asked about the pictures. As well as village people, we had visitors from other places, some of whom had resided in

Killearn at one time, or whose ancestors had lived in our area.

One lady and gentleman, Mr and Mrs Dunn from Canada, were very interested in the house known as Lilybank in the Main Street. Mr Dunn informed us that one of his ancestors had that house built and lived in it for some time. He then moved to Edinburgh where he met a Mr Gray, with whom he started a biscuit-making business. Until recently, Gray Dunn biscuits were on sale in many places. One book went back to Canada with the Dunns. Older people in the village will remember Lilybank being the telephone exchange where Rena Lyon could put you through to your choice without you needing to tell her the number!

A family from America visiting Killearn one week after our celebrations purchased a book in the Old Mill to take home. And what was their name? Buchanan. Another copy is on its way to Australia.

Come on now! Have you got a copy of the book for yourself or for a friend or for a Christmas present? Just imagine the look on your friends' faces when you give them a copy and say to them "Ex Kyerinne salutem de praeterito ad praesens", and then translate, saying, "Greetings from Killearn from the past to the present".

We hope you enjoy our book.

*Hugh McArthur*

## JOHN MORELAND WRITES:

After the Buchanan 500 weekend we had scores of congratulatory letters, emails and phone calls. My own favourite is the poem in Scots from Jamie Reid-Baxter who was the Latin orator at the Concert.

Guid Jhone my deir an traistit fere,  
Thir wardis that ahm screivan here  
Cum juist tae say that thon braw day  
Yez organis'd wes sum display  
O quhat a wee Scots toun can be  
As a centre o activitie  
– alyve, nae dreich nor dowff, but skeigh,  
its cultural level geyan heich:  
a brilliant, braw model for aa  
quha think that oor Scotlan suld schaw  
Hir mynd an spreit tae be mair nor meit  
Tae lat hir staun on hir ain feet  
An garr the feck aa bou the neck  
An schaw oor hameland sum respect:  
Nae leist the Scots thaimsell, thae stots  
That on thair self-oppression dotes!

*Jamie Reid-Baxter*

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## Chamber Concert (continued)

recognised that there was more to life than the university and politics. (Portugal was further evoked by a breathtakingly beautiful performance of four fado songs of love and longing exquisitely interpreted by the lovely Tracey Wilson who had all the men's pulses racing, arousing emotions quite inappropriate to their surroundings.)

The weekend of celebration ended after the Concert with a reception for artistes, donors and helpers in the Village Hall generously hosted by Councillor Colin O'Brien, Provost of Stirling Council.

*John Moreland*



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## On the occasion of the five-hundredth birthday of George Buchanan

It could have been old Aberdeen, Pitlochry or Clackmannan,  
But Fate decreed Killearn should be the home of George Buchanan.  
That George was brainy none denied. He got a fine degree.  
He spoke in Latin half the time, so how smart can you be?  
He got about a bit, did George, he even got the chance  
To travel to the Continent, to Portugal and France.  
But George's one besetting sin threatened to burst his bubble.  
His tendency to speak his mind aye got him into trouble.  
If you're going to shoot your mouth off, choose a sane and safe position.  
Don't do it in the hearing of the Spanish Inquisition.  
George also had a contretemps with Mary Queen of Scots.  
As head of state she ruled the roost, and thought she called the shots.  
But she lost the moral high ground, and gave George a million fits,  
When she sanctioned Darnley's homicide and blew the man to bits.  
George went on being brainy. He was tutor to the king.  
He could speak a dozen languages, write poetry and sing.  
He was what you call a polymath, a lad o' many parts.  
And Scottish educationists keep George close to their hearts.  
If you'd like more information, surf the net or take a look  
At the fascinating tale of George's life in Catherine's book.  
Now George has reached five hundred, though not still hale and hearty,  
It seemed a good idea to mark his birthday with a party.  
It's lasting for the whole weekend, a torrent of events.  
Tours, lectures, walks, and concerts the committee now presents.  
You can walk to the distillery, see paintings on display,  
Go round historic old Killearn, and dance the night away.  
You can go to church, and help to plant the ceremonial tree  
Beside old George's monument, then to The Moss for tea.  
And in between these main events there runs a constant strand  
Of music – Scottish dancing, choral singing, the Pipe Band.  
Although he wrote in Latin George's poetry stands the test.  
Dunedin Consort lets you hear that music at its best.  
Some folk have done a stack of work to bring this all about.  
We'll try to list them, though we're feart of leaving someone out.  
It's thanks to every one of them, let's give them all their dues.  
There's Jim, and Phil, and Sheila, the two Parkers, the two Hughs,  
There's Ian, Iain, Alison, there's Aileen, Mike, two Janes.  
Iona, Graham, Annika, the Dunkinsons, Gail Pain.  
The Rotary and Inner Wheel, there's Molly, Peter Wilks,  
And Obergruppenfuhrer Helen Loudon of that ilk.  
It's been good fun, old pals united, and new friendships forged,  
All this, so we can say together, 'Happy Birthday, George!'

Joyce Begg 2006

## Buchanan 500: The Gathering

It was a beautiful sunny evening and our weekend of festivities began with a 'Gathering' in the Village Hall, which was decorated with floral arrangements by Jennifer Simmers and Vaughn Halliday.

Glengoyne Distillery donated whisky for the evening, while Bob and Fiona Glass poured 'a dram' for our guests.

Philip Malloch had put together a Buchanan presentation on his computer which attracted a lot of attention. Thank you, Phil.

Tables were set around the hall with all the different organizers promoting their own event, while Catherine Organ launched her book, *George Buchanan. The forgotten Scot.*

On arrival at the hall, Laura Burt was playing the bagpipes, while inside, Sara Bell and members of Get Reel were entertaining us all evening.

Helen Loudon

## Buchanan 500: Walk 'In the Footsteps of George Buchanan'

The distillery tour took place on time with seven participants, who all said the guide for the visit was excellent and they found the whole experience very interesting. They seemed to come away from the gift shop with enough samples of the product!

The walk took place in excellent weather with five completing the walk. Two had to return early for another engagement, and they returned in the bus. We had a lively discussion over a cream tea in the Beech Tree Inn, which continued for the remainder of the walk. All those completing the walk said it was both interesting and enjoyable.

The uptake was disappointing, but it did get the weekend off to a good start. The rest of the weekend continued in this way, with events running successfully and to schedule. PW

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## Buchanan 500: The Latin Workshop

The Latin Workshop was held in the small room of the Village Hall. Fifteen people had 'signed up' on the Friday night, but about thirty attended the event. There was a good mix of men and women; age groups and prior knowledge levels. This made for a lively group.

The main focus of the workshop was a study of the Latin inscription on the Buchanan memorial. Participants were taken through the Latin and with the support of a language worksheet, arrived at a literal translation of the inscription. It was essential that the workshop was pitched at a level which would appeal to both novices and those with some knowledge of Latin. The participative nature of the class allowed for all to make a contribution. All participants were presented with a laminated copy of the Latin text on the monument and a scroll containing the translation.

Feedback received both immediately after the workshop and by emails in the following days would indicate that the workshop was a success.

It was announced at the workshop that an 'evening class' in Latin was a possibility, depending on interest. Interested participants were asked to leave contact details. At present the list

has eight names.

It is intended to publicise the class with a view to a start date in January. For details contact *Aileen* on 01360 550333.

*Aileen May*



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## Buchanan 500: From the Top

When I joined Buchanan 500 as Chairperson, I quickly realised I had a very energetic and dedicated committee. It was suggested to me to 'delegate'; this I did and it worked well.

Suggestions came from everyone about what we should do. Finally our programme came together to bring Buchanan 500 to life.

Our very able treasurer, John Moreland, wrote to trusts, the Lottery and other individuals requesting financial assistance. Money came in and people signed up to become 'Friends', supervised by Graeme McLennan.

Rev. Philip Malloch, with skill and enthusiasm, put together the memorable Church service, with Jim Fallas organising the parade to the obelisk, led by the Milngavie Pipe Band. This was all very successful in spite of the rain and umbrellas.

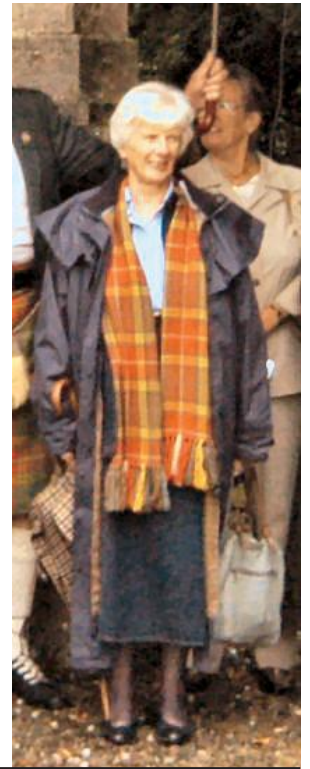
We had the help of others who all played their

part: Iona Hordern, Gail Pain and Jane Robertson. My personal thanks to Sheila Ptolomey, who kept all the minutes during the meetings and accomplished the many other duties a secretary does outside the meetings. Thank you. Everyone with their various talents and energy helped us to bring the Buchanan 500 celebrations to fruition. My sincere thanks to all.

The committee set out to make this a real village event, trying to have something for everyone, and bring people from all areas of the village together. Thank you all for supporting us in whatever way you did on this one special weekend.

I am sure George Buchanan would have been proud of everyone.

*Helen Loudon*



## Playpark Takes Shape



The new playpark is taking shape. Thanks to the success of the funding strategy of the Playpark Group, sufficient monies have been raised for the work to be put out to tender and a contract has been awarded to Landcare Solutions of Stirling. The first stages in the re-creation of this project have been to remove much of the equipment and to close the play area to the public. At present changes are being made to the landscape and new installations are being

sited. When this stage is complete trees and shrubs will be planted during the winter months and in the spring it is planned to hold 'Community Planting Days' when it is hoped that many local people of all ages will come and get involved in planting a selection of native species of plants that have been chosen to increase the bio-diversity of the area.

One of the ideals underlying the project is that the playpark should be accessible to children of all abilities. Thus there will be play equipment that is suitable for less able-bodied children and paths that will allow access to wheelchairs and buggies.

The Playpark Group, one of Killearn Community Futures working groups, has been working on this project for 2½ years, in partnership with Play Services of Stirling Council and landscape architect Mike Hyatt. There has also been liaison with Stirling Bio-Diversity and with Scottish Natural Heritage. Pursuing funding for a target sum of £75,000 has been a major focus for the past eighteen months and the Playpark Group is most grateful to all, including a number of local organisations, businesses and individuals who have supported the project. A full list of all funders will be published at the completion of the work.

By the time the next *Courier* is published it is hoped that the project will be nearing completion and there can be a celebration of a new amenity for the village.

*Brenda Pell*

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Every three years elections are held for Community Councils. We are now at the end of the term of office for the present council and this has been disbanded. Publicity has been circulated asking for nominations of residents interested in serving on the new Community Council. It is expected that a number of the members of the previous Council will stand again but we did not achieve our full quota of members at the last election and new members will be welcome. If there are more nominations than places (11) then voting will take place. The results will be made public and a new Council formed. The first meeting of the new Council will take place late in November or early in December.

Brenda Pell



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## New Online Housing & Council Tax Benefits Calculator

Stirling Council's web site ([www.stirling.gov.uk](http://www.stirling.gov.uk)) has an important new feature that will help many of Stirling citizens – a questionnaire that automatically calculates whether you may be eligible for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

This new facility has been introduced as part of the Council's action plan to address feedback in the Residents' Survey and also its Customer First Stirling Strategy – which promotes technology to deliver customer's needs. The calculator complements the increasing number of useful online services that the Council has introduced recently, including making payments and checking your outstanding council tax balance online.

The Scottish Executive recently published a report on 'Improving

Council Tax Collection Rates in Scotland' and this emphasised the need to ensure as many people as possible who could qualify for Housing and Council benefits were encouraged to apply. This new online calculator will make it very easy for people to check if they are eligible and it can also be used by welfare rights workers and other advocates to boost applications.

To access the questionnaire, customers simply need to type the words "Benefits Calculator" into the search facility on the Stirling Council website and this will take them to it. If the calculation shows they may be eligible for one or both of the benefits there is another link to a downloadable application form.

The calculator only takes ten minutes or so to complete and it might be worth a lot to some people!

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## Voter Registration

It's important for a number of reasons that you return your Voter Registration form promptly to the Electoral Registration Officer.

It will save you money as the ERO has new duties which means he must try to maximise registration by contacting non-registered electors by all necessary means including sending reminders, telephoning, e-mailing and visiting addresses where no one responds.

It is a legal requirement that forms are returned, failure can result in a £1000 fine if prosecuted.

You won't be able to vote in any future elections including 3 May 2007 Scottish Parliament elections or participate in the new voting system (STV) for local government councillors.

You could avoid credit reference difficulties now and in the future, as all major credit reference firms use the register to confirm residence. (It can also be costly if you need to register quickly later in the year as, dependent on when you apply, it can take up to six weeks for any new registration to be effective, and written proof of your registration during that time would cost £15 per search).

If you have not yet returned your voter registration form please complete it and post it back in the pre-paid envelope immediately or if no changes to the information on the form is necessary then you can telephone, fax or e-mail confirming no changes.

## Killearn Football Club

The local team have just completed a very successful season in the Forth and Endrick League, retaining five of the seven trophies won in 2005.

In total the club played 29 games, winning 24 and drawing 3. They were defeated only in the final of the Margaret White Cup, and semi-final of the Telfer Cup. The five trophies won were the Leslie Cup – league winners on 60 points; Salmon Leap Shield – league top goal scorers with 126 goals; Cameron Cup – association's major cup; Stirling Observer Shield – League Player of the Year was Richard McColl; and the William Gordon Shield – Cameron Cup "Man of the Match" was Andrew Mac Coll.

The committee would like to thank all who came along and supported the team during the season, especially those who braved the elements of the weather and encouraged the players to winning the Cameron Cup 2–1 against Blanefield Thistle.

The club will be holding a Presentation Dance in the Village Hall on Saturday, 25 November. Friends, supporters and anyone wishing a good night, will be made very welcome.

Tickets and details from usual sources, or club chairman, Donald Beaton (550679).

DB

## Rainbow Colours

The 2nd Killearn Rainbow held a sponsored "Colour for Africa" in May of this year. The girls coloured in maps of Africa, encircled by outlines of their hands. Thanks to the generosity of family and friends, we raised over £400 for Oxfam. The Rainbows decided to use the money to employ a teacher in an African village school for four months. The Rainbows were very proud of themselves and of their achievement, and we would like to thank all of those involved for their kind sponsorship and support.

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## CHRISTMAS GAMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

Does it always bring good cheer? Take *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, for example. Older readers may remember a black-and-white TV programme showing just what it would be like if your true love really sent you all those things – total chaos! Let's look at some of these presents from the natural world.

*A partridge in a pear tree?* Poor old *Perdix perdix* has been having a terrible time lately, its winter feeding grounds are no longer available (very few stubbles), no juicy insects and grubs to feed its young (too many pesticides), it's now getting so rare that it is on the Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern – in other words, it is among the most highly-endangered species in the UK. And how did it get stuck up that pear tree? Its feet are really not adapted for perching so maybe – like Monty Python's parrot – it had to be nailed on.

*Two turtle doves* – no longer is the 'voice of the turtle heard throughout the land'. Once a common

countryside bird, it is a quarry species in several European countries and now found only rarely in the UK, its summer home. So if you are being given them in the winter, your true love must have trapped them illegally.

*Three French hens* – do you really want to support the French Rugby team? (alright I know that's a cockerel).

*Four calling birds* – that, of course, should be 'colly birds' and believe it or not they are blackbirds, common enough after all, so not much of a present unless they are in a pie.

*Six geese a laying?* – in December? There are lots of geese about then: barnacles, bean geese, pink feet, greylags, Greenland whitefronts – they all come here for Christmas from Iceland and Scandinavia and there are lots of them – so maybe that is permissible, but just don't expect any eggs.

And as for the *swans*, let's hope they are not carrying bird flu, and they're not caught in the ice swimming about like that (unlikely since climate change), but are they our native mute swans. Or are they, too, visitors from the North, Bewick's and Whooper swans with their yellow and black bills?

Just think of the mess – and remember you are getting them all, repeatedly, for several days. How are you going to feed them? So, if your true love is that way inclined, why not just slaughter them, eat what you can and put the rest in the freezer?

But take care, none of this would be legal!



Fay Pascoe

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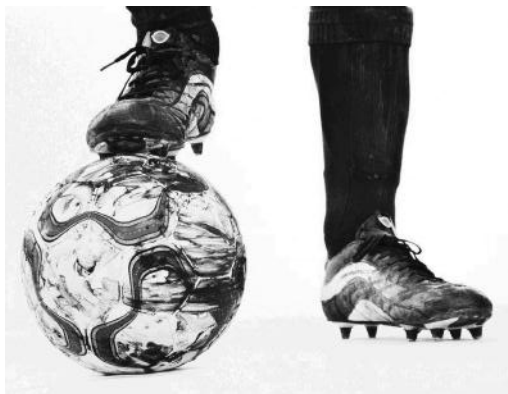
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## The Perfect Shot

My third memorable football match took place during my pilot training which took place in Canada. The training schools were spread across Canada and the ones concerning me were Early Flying Training and Senior Flying Training schools in Saskatchewan, where the twin-engine training plane was the Oxford. The alternative to this at other schools was the Anson. The flying characteristics of these two planes could not have been more different. When one closed the throttles on an Oxford it dropped like a brick, whereas the Anson it seemed to float on forever with its large 'floppy' wing span. Although the days and nights at the S.F.T. School were fully utilised for training requirement, football matches were played between the various training schools.

Our Swift Current Oxford school played an away match against our nearest Anson school. ('Nearest' in Canada could be 50 or more miles away.) In our away match we were totally outplayed by the



'Ansons', a very good team indeed, and they won 4-1. (It could easily have been twice that, and was only prevented by the efforts of our centre-half and goalkeeper.)

Two weeks after our away defeat the 'Ansons' fleet of planes arrived full of ground crew and other supporters. They were brimming with confidence, and we were very much the underdogs before the game. The people of Swift Current were very supportive of us and they came 'en masse' to ensure a full house for the match. The game began where the previous one left off: with the Ansons attacking our goal and continued with very limited attacking response from our side.

During one of our few attacks I was chasing after the ball when I was beaten to it by their large and very powerful right back. His hefty clearance ball struck me with tremendous force on my solar plexus. I was completely unconscious for the first and only time in my life. I came to with people massaging my chest and

body and pumping my arms to help me breathe. It was several minutes before I was up on my feet, vertical but shattered, and barely able to move. I did not leave the field because players were not replaced then and the team would have

been reduced to ten men from then on.

I was just a passenger, left standing inside the opposing penalty box to recover. In a rare attack by us, there was a melée in their top right corner, when the

ball suddenly was lofted out, and landed just in front of me. It was so close I only had to take one step forward and with my left foot shot the ball into the virtually open goal. 1-0, most undeservedly, to us. It was half-time soon afterwards, and I progressively recovered. There was a slight slope on our pitch, and we had it in our favour for the second half.

The second half was a repeat of the first, with the 'Ansons' having the bulk of the attacking. Our defence was very good at repulsing, but providing not much support for the forward line. With little to do, I had edged close to the centre of the field when a rare clearance from the defence passed over me and ran ahead of me. I took off immediately and added a further kick to keep the ball straight downfield in front of me. With the slope in my favour, I reached top speed and caught up with the ball about 25 yards out from the Anson goal. I could see their centre half and right back closing in on me, and I had no recourse but to kick the ball. At that point it had to be with my right leg and foot, so I swung it

with maximum power and achieved a "perfect shot".

Like other popular sports, football has been closely studied from every possible angle. Thus the 'manual' for football states that to achieve a 'perfect shot' the head must be over and aligned with the ball. The base of the boot should just brush the ground at the maximum arc of the leg swing full speed, and power should be imparted just as contact is made with the ball, at this point the ball should be fitted into the circular area formed by the top of the boot, instep, the ankle and the lowest portion of the leg. Miraculously all these happened just when my right boot met the ball, for the first and only time in my life. The ball travelled like a rocket straight inside the left-hand post to make the score 2-0. The game ended at that score, to great cheers from the home crowd. The station Flight Sergeant shook my hand and told me, "I have watched football all my life and I have never seen a better goal than that." "Just lucky, Flight Sergeant," I replied. He didn't know how exceptionally true that statement was.

A memorable game, indeed.

*Alan Geekie*



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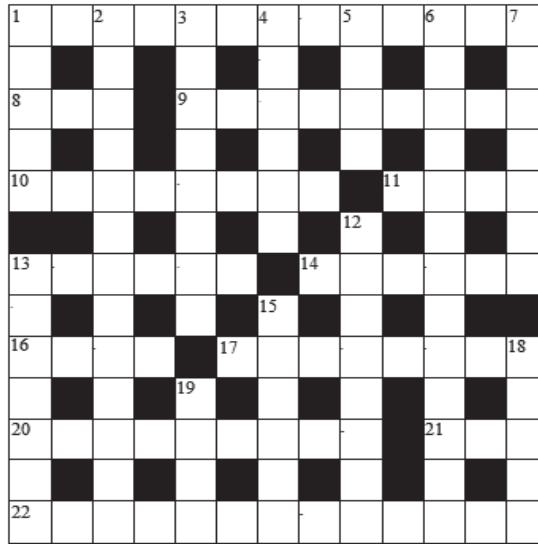
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**ACROSS**

- 1. A seasonal joker is sent at this time (9,4)
- 8. A small seasonal sweet (3)
- 9. Enlarge on a late bore (9)
- 10. Met onion in the middle of the day (8)
- 11. O friend, you're a jewel! (4)
- 13. Schools transport (6)
- 14. Demand to be condemned (6)
- 16. A llama backs into a shopping centre (4)
- 17. Remove fast food (4)
- 20. A cab in a pileup gets deposited on a crystal (9)
- 21. Hear with this but only with the top off (3)
- 22. They sing without the help of men (1,5,2,5)

**DOWN**

- 1. Hat on for an alternative to turkey (6)
- 2. How the presents get delivered by Santa? (4,2,1,6)
- 3. Adds sugar to a measure in confectionary (8)
- 4. Sam and Mia succumb to bad air (6)
- 5. Oxford on foot (4)
- 6. Yeah, repay pawn, that's our wish to you! (1,5,3,4)
- 7. Sounds as if two in front fought (7)
- 12. End of battle changed when you make it very wet (8)
- 13. Tantrum followed by a painting (7)
- 15. Gambling here, accountant is followed by vice, then nothing (6)
- 18. Lengths of American gardens (5)
- 19. Wise men do not finish sorcery (4)

Name .....

Address ..... Phone No. ....

**Congratulations to the winner of our last Crossword Competition: Mr E D Goold, who tells us he is taking his family to see Coppelia at The King's Theatre.**

**Solution to the last Prize Crossword** Across 1 Buchanan Road; 9 tidal; 10 nestegg; 11 axis; 12 sturgeon; 14 gaggle; 15 uglier; 18 explicit; 20 diet; 22 obelisk; 22 djinn; 24 disagreeable Down 2 undoing; 3 halt; 4 nonets; 5 noserags; 6 obese; 7 degenerating; 8 stranglehold; 13 sluicing; 16 initial; 17 dickie; 19 press; 21 idea.



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*The first correct entry pulled out of the box will win a £10 voucher which may be spent on anything in your local SPAR.*

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

*This wordsearch is a Christmas Special. Complete the words associated with Christmas and then circle those words in the wordsearch grid.*

*Enter your name, address and age, and place your completed word grid in the box in Spar by 21st January for a chance to win the £10 prize.*

- 1. At Christmas we sing Christmas C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 2. J \_ \_ \_ \_ Bells
- 3. Santa got stuck up the C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 4. O come all ye F \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 5. D \_ \_ \_ Dong Merrily on High
- 6. O Little Town of B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 7. R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ the Red-Nosed Reindeer
- 8. I'm Dreaming of a White C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 9. Killearn's Christmas Tree is outside the K \_ \_ \_
- 10. At Christmas you can go to see a P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- 11. At Christmas we send and receive Christmas C \_ \_ \_ \_
- 12. We hang up the Christmas D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Name ..... Address ..... Age ..... Phone No. ....

**Congratulations to the winner of the £10 Spar voucher in our last Wordsearch: Elizabeth Cowden**

**Closing Date for both competitions – 21st January 2007. Place your entries in the box in Spar.**

# Ballet Brilliant

Local girl, Jasmine Leung, has earned a place at Elmhurst School for Dance in Birmingham this year.

Jasmine, who is eleven, attended Killearn Primary School before taking up her place at the UK's second-ranked school of dance back in September. It was a long and arduous process to be accepted starting with a detailed application which required photos of the candidate performing each ballet position, body measurements and even parents' measurements (although mum Caroline was relieved that they have now dispensed with the need for parents' weight!). There then followed auditions at the three top ballet schools: Royal Ballet in London, Arts Education in Tring and Elmhurst. Thereafter there were second auditions for DFES scholarship places. Of the 125 who auditioned for Elmhurst, only 10 boys and 10 girls were successful – so well done Jasmine! No one can afford to become complacent, however, as each pupil will have to pass an assessment in April next year in order to continue at Elmhurst the following year.

Life as a first year (P7) pupil at Elmhurst involves living in a two-bed dorm, having two house mums, putting your hair in a flat bun every day and doing 2½ hours of ballet after breakfast. Normal



academic school work starts after mid-morning break and is interspersed with other types of dance classes: jazz, dance styles, intermediate foundation and Irish. Jasmine has *five* different types of dance shoes (not good when your feet grow!). Weekends are spent with house mums going to the cinema, shopping and on special outings, and Jasmine is looking forward to a forthcoming visit to Cadbury's World – yum.

Ballet has been a big part of Jasmine's life starting in Hong Kong when she was

4 years old at a school affiliated to the Hong Kong Royal Ballet. On moving to Killearn she attended the Linda Lowry dance school in Glasgow where she achieved the Royal Academy of Dance Grade 5. Elmhurst School is working on readjusting Jasmine's postural alignment which she says is a bit of a shock to the system but already visible improvements are evident. There are a few opportunities for pupils to perform with the Birmingham Royal Ballet, but mainly the children work towards their year-end performance. However a surprise performance took place only two days after the term started with a visit from Prince Charles and Camilla, HRH the Duchess of Cornwall. The Prince was astounded that Jasmine's class had made such a polished performance in only two days. The Duchess has recently been made Patron of the school.

Jasmine's family – Caroline, Leo and sisters Holly, Zoe and Sophia – are all very proud of her for getting into Elmhurst School and for coping so well with living away from home. Jasmine says she likes the school but does get a bit homesick. When asked what she misses most about Killearn Primary School, she says, "finishing at 3.15" instead of 6.30pm. Jasmine says, "Hi to P7".

GS

## Local Artists' Exhibition at the Panik Gallery

Panik Gallery, in conjunction with the Buchanan 500 celebrations, hosted a two-week Local Artists' Exhibition, a first for the gallery since opening in June 2004.

Having exhibited work from a number of local artists in previous exhibitions, including, Anne Anderson, Connie Simmers and June Todd, we were keen to gather new talent and start an annual group exhibition of work from the local area's amateur and professional artists.

We received a fantastic response to our 'call for local artists', which revealed the abundance of talent and creativity the



area boasts. Amazingly, we were able to hang over 100 works of art on the walls of our small gallery space on Main Street, from more than 40 different local artists.

Works included painting, sculpture, photography, textiles and ceramics.

The response from the public was very encouraging with an overwhelming turnout of local residents and those from further afield eager to see the work on show, all of whom were very impressed with the quality of work and the diverse subject matter on display.

The gallery was delighted to be involved with the George Buchanan celebrations and honoured to provide a box office service for the weekend's events which were a great success.

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(All bookings must include catering for a minimum of 75 persons)



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