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Volume 6 No 4

gartorag

KILMARONOCK NEWSPAPER

APRIL/MAY 2020

Elaine Ellen

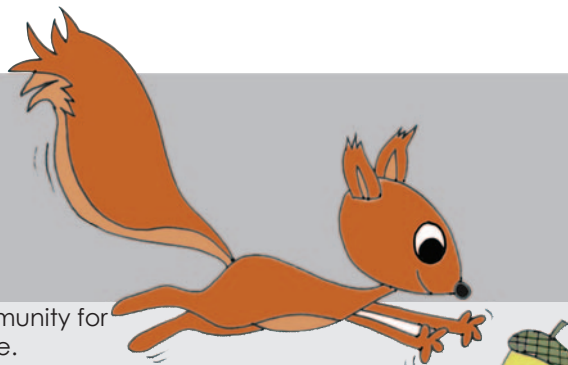
Mellow Yellow

Our front cover for this issue is designed to lift your spirits. Daffodils have appeared early this year thanks to the mild weather and, even though it has been very wet, our favourite spring flower has popped through the rain drenched soil to give a spectacular display.

We need this cheerful colour more than ever this year as we all have to deal with the coronavirus crisis. It has been compared to

living through a war situation with the restrictions placed on us historically similar and, for some, lifechanging. However as we hear daily reports of the support given to the most vulnerable in our society we know that community spirit is alive and well when offers of help abound to those who need it most. This virus will pass in time but we will always remember how our spirits were lifted by those helping hands.

Village SHOW 2020



Following last year's very busy and successful Village Show, the 2020 Village Show will be upon us before we know it – Saturday, 29th August to be precise.

This year we have produced the schedule a little earlier than usual so that everyone has sufficient advanced warning of the classes, particularly for those wishing to take part in the Art and Craft sections.

For a bit of fun, we have included a class for growing the biggest or longest marrow and will be handing

out seedlings in the community for those up to the challenge.

Obviously the weather will have a huge influence on the plants, but at least we'll all be in the same boat on the day. There will be special prizes, so let's see how many we can get together. The plants will be available from committee members and can be requested through our new email address villageshow@gartocharn.org which has kindly been set up for us through the community website.

The Schedule will be available in the shop and online at www.gartocharn.org and on our new Facebook page – Kilmaronock Village Show, which we ask you to like and share with all your friends in the community.

As for themes, this is our year of the Red Squirrel.



HEATHER JACKSON



Saturday, 29 August

Kilmaronock Millennium Hall

Our year of the Red Squirrel

Doors Open 8.30 - 10.00am
Show Opens at 2.00pm

SCHOOL SPORTS RELIEF



On Friday 13th March Gartocharn Primary decided to hold an activity day to raise money for Sports Relief. Everyone came to school in their own sporting clothes and with a small donation for Sports Relief.

In the morning the Primary 1-4 children took part in a warm up and a range of sporting activities from hockey to football. The Primary 7 children planned and hosted the activities and did their best to make sure the children had lots of fun. In the afternoon the Primary 5-7 children played five-a-side games of hockey, football and basketball against each other.

The school managed to raise over £240.00 for homeless families and families living in emergency hostels. The day was a huge success and everyone had lots of fun.

LOGAN NICOLSON and CAITLIN MCCARTHY



Dearg keeping dry in the tractor at Portnellan Farm.



Great MUSIC & FUN

Irene Mitchell and I would like to thank everyone who attended the dance in aid of Cancer Research on 6th March in the Millennium Hall. We also would like to thank Fiona, James and Bar Staff, Willie Gallagher for his delicious Sandwiches and all who donated money and raffle prizes. Hughie and his band This and That, what can we say!! Great music and great fun, which made the night such a great success.

Cancer Research is a charity which is close to all our hearts. Irene and I would like to let everyone know that we raised £1,451. Thank you again to everyone involved.

IRENE YOUNG

NO STRINGS ATTACHED!

On Friday 6th March we competed in Clyde and Central's annual Talent Spot competition in the Albert Halls, Stirling. This year we had a scene of puppets and puppet masters called 'No Strings Attached' produced by Fiona Bell and Iain Dick, choreographed by Lorna Filshie.

Our cast worked so hard and had so much dedication and commitment to succeeding and it certainly pulled through as we came away with an array of prizes. 2020 Talent Spot winners, Best Act Overall in Talent Spot – Zoe Clarke, Sam Penrice and Ben Brown, as well as Best Act Overall for concert – Zoe Clarke and Sam Penrice.

This was an exciting night for Loch Lomond YFC and we are thrilled to now be competing in the West Area Regional Talent Spot.

A fantastic way to round off the 76th year of LLYFC.

LORNA FILSHIE



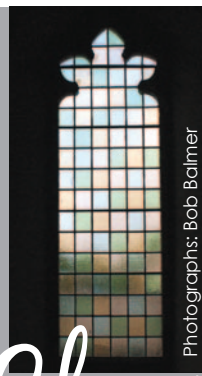
Elaine Elen

Catkins

Sheep, on a mission!



Elaine Elen



Photographs: Bob Balmer



GARTOCHARN Church

One of the first friends I made when moving to this area was Rev Walter Lyall. If ever a man was made for a country parish it surely was Walter: big, amiable, approachable and amenable. It was through listening to Walter that I realised villages are different. But I should have known that.

I grew up in a village and spent an inordinate amount of my summer holidays on a farm – jumping in the hay loft, travelling on the horse-drawn flat-bedded trailer which brought the hay-stacks back to the farm, chasing the mice that scurried from under it, watching with awe the big black ominous eye of the bull safely tethered in the byre. I hope the young folk of the village realise the benefits of living in a rural community.

Kilbarchan, like Gartocharn, was a good place to grow up. Like any other community, the village had its

legends. One related to 'Wallace's Cave', which was situated just over the wall which bordered the public park. As children we were warned not to go over there. That was tantamount to an invitation!! The legend was that an underground passage linked the cave to a similar opening in Elderslie (the birthplace of William Wallace). Within the school community of Kilbarchan many claimed to have made that journey. It was all hokum of course, there was a small opening and perhaps Houdini in his younger years might just have made it. But we believed it legends have always been part of growing up. Yes, villages are different. After 44 years in the Vale the memories and legends of my home village remain.

Perhaps in some small way in Gartocharn, a village, I am in a sense back where I started. Maybe in time I will learn some of your legends.

REV IAN MILLER t: 01389 753039 e: revianmiller@btinternet.com

RagTIMES

As this issue of Gartorag went to press we were just learning about the various cancellations for just about everything. We have still included articles submitted before the current measures came into force just so you can all look forward to what will be available when life returns to normal.

At this point we do not know whether we will be able to publish the next issue of Gartorag but we will make every effort to do so. We thought this issue would be late due to holidays but the holidays had to be cancelled and we aren't late after all!

We already know there is a true community spirit in our village. No-one needs to feel alone, there is plenty of help out there so if you need it just shout. Remember, we can still wave to each other from a distance and smile!



Lindsay Stanley

Gartocharn from the Seaplane

**Lomond View
Stores**

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Post Office • Newspapers
General Stores • Fuel

gartorag

**Copy for next issue by
15th MAY 2020**

Please email contributions to:
rag@gartocharn.org or leave copy
in the box at the village shop.

Published by **Gartorag**, Gartocharn. The publishers have the sole right to omit, edit or condense any article submitted for inclusion in Gartorag. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publishers.

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GARTOCHARN GARDEN CLUB

SYLLABUS FOR 2020/2021

Thursday 19 th March	7.30pm	SALLIE SILLARS: "Horatio's Garden at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital"
Thursday 16 th April	7.30pm	NANCY STEVENS "A Thing of Beauty is a Joy for Ever" Gardens in Japan
Date TBA	10.00am	Spring tidy up around the Hall.
Thursday 28 th May	10.30am 2.00pm	Visit to REDCROFT, EDINBURGH and in the afternoon The ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, EDINBURGH.
Thursday 11 th June	2.00pm	Visit to HORATIO'S GARDEN, GLASGOW Note: Date to be confirmed.
Thursday 30 th July	10.30am 2.00pm	Visit to THE TORRS, FALKIRK and in the afternoon 43 THORNTON AVENUE, BONNYBRIDGE
Thursday 17 th September	7.30pm	PETER SEMPLE "The First 11 Years"
Thursday 15 th October	7.30pm	PETRA PALKOVA "From Slovakia to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh".
Date TBA	10.00am	Autumn tidy up around Hall
Thursday 19 th November	7.30pm	DAVID RANKINE "The Road to Chelsea" There will be plants for sale.
2021 Thursday 21 st January	7.30pm	MIKE THORNLEY "A Gardening Debt"
Thursday 18 th February	7.30pm	AGM

Non-members welcome at indoor meetings. Admission £3.00. Refreshments 50p.

Please note that all attending Garden Club functions are liable for their own safety.

Secretary: Kathleen Cartwright t: 01389 830485 e: arcturus@btinternet.com



Bob Balmer

RAIN DROPS ...

Kilmarnock COMMUNITY TRUST

Our AGM on 19th February was well attended and the business of the evening was followed by an informative talk, given by Willie Roxburgh, Chair of Kilmarnock Old Kirk Trust, about the progress KOKT are making.

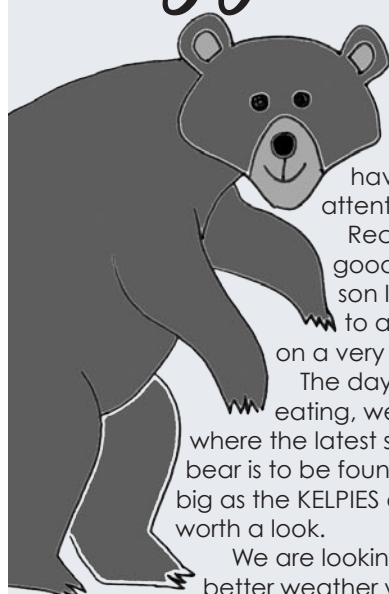
KCT will be converting from a

Company Limited by Guarantee to a Scottish Incorporated Charitable Organisation and this will happen over the next few months. Our charitable purposes remain unaltered.

The football pitch will be ready for the first match of the season whenever that may be!

BOB SHAND: 01389 830458 kct@gartocharn.org

Suzy's BLOG



Hello Folks, Suzy here once more.

Winter is still with us, a fact which will not

have escaped your attention ... no doubts!

Recently Master and good wife were treated by son Ian and his good wife to a run to Haddington on a very cold and breezy day.

The day meant that after eating, we visited DUNBAR where the latest sculpture of a large bear is to be found. The bear is not as big as the KELPIES at Falkirk but well worth a look.

We are looking forward to better weather when visits will

be paid to my favourite beaches at St Andrews, Largs and Troon. All places where I get let loose and have lots of fun.

Nice to be back in activity again.



WOOF FROM SUZY@FERNIECLEUGH



BIRTHDAY Party

Plans for the Hall birthday party celebrations are going ahead just now. We will continue to review the situation and follow government guidelines. Any updates will be posted on hall notice board and Gartocharn Community Facebook page.

Anyone wanting to help please contact me on 01389 830361. Or 07806 935496.

FIONA WYLLIE

Kilmaronock COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Abbreviated Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 2nd March 2020 in KMH.

The full Minutes can be found on the KCC website and on the noticeboard at KMH.

SEDERUNT

Committee: Gavin MacLellan (GM), Andrew Sinnott (AS), Ivan Mavor (IM), Jim Morrison (JM) and David Scott-Park (DSP);

Cllr Sally Page (SP); Willie Nisbet (WN); RSPB (x2); Police Scotland (x2); 20 members of the public.

Apologies: Sarah Guy

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING No matters arising

TREASURER'S REPORT Current account balance: £848.94;
Benevolent fund balance: £620.81

POLICE REPORT

PC Glen Roberts introduced himself and explained the reporting system (STORM). In the last period, there were 19 calls placed of which three led to crime reports: Theft of fuel from the local petrol station; Road Traffic offence – reckless driving on A811 (by driver from out-with our area); Suspicious behaviour by person seen on premises without good reason. A Q&A session followed the briefing.

PLANNING MATTERS

Representation – WN clarified that although he is elected by the community, he does not represent the community on the NP board and cannot comment on specific cases. Also, he cannot be involved with appeals relating to applications in the area in which he resides.

Updates on historic applications

The Wards: JM informed us that there has been no response from the reporter. • The McKenzie farm applications: The local review body upheld the decision to refuse. A statement on behalf of the applicant was made about the technical reason for refusal and the review body's positive comments despite the refusal. The case officer, having left the planning authority, was not able to attend the review. A new application will be made under the free 'second go' principle.

Recent notifications

2019/0358/DET - High Wards Farm - Construction of footpath/boardwalk etc. The RSPB's site manager gave a thorough presentation to outline the work done to design the path. Copies of a non-technical summary were issued to the room. A Q&A session followed. A show of hands of community members present came out 12 in favour of support for the project and nine against with three non-eligible voters abstaining. The application is to be determined on a delegated basis and it was discussed whether it is appropriate to elevate it to committee level. Discussion also on confidence in robustness of impact assessments during the assessment of the application by the planning department.

KILMARONOCK COMMUNITY TRUST

At the KCT AGM the members agreed unanimously to convert KCT from a Company Limited by Guarantee to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, this is in line with most similar Scottish charities and is more straightforward for reporting.

• There is still no update on the FTFP project. It appears that the awarding of the R100 contract for this area could be causing the delay. KCT's contact in Openreach is trying to get an official

response and Jackie Baillie MSP is trying to get more information from the Scottish Government about the R100 contract. Those who are involved have been informed. • KCT supports the RSPB path planning application as it contributes to fulfilling aspirations for improved access in our Community Action Plan. • Football Pitch and Playground - All project work is now complete and paid for. The Football Club are making plans for an event to mark the first game. Alan McMullen was thanked for his influential part in the project.

NATIONAL PARK AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

Community Empowerment Act – Members of the KCC met today with LLTNPA Communities Manager and Legal Adviser. A list of Operations Managers for the various services was given to us. The idea is that we invite Operations Managers of relevant services e.g. litter prevention management, development and implementation, visitor experience etc to attend KCC meetings to describe their remit and engage with the community in general. These are to be constructive informational meetings with a clear brief or agenda in advance. At a more strategic level we suggested regular e.g. annual or bi-annual meetings with relevant executive level staff.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

A811 pavement – KCC & WDC met on 31st January to follow up on the meeting held last November. We brought up the additional matters raised at the January KCC meeting. They informed us that the surface of the pavement between Milton Grove and Ashfield Farm will be scraped back and levelled this year. The whole route will be surveyed by their inhouse team. Work on the C roads will continue with Old School Road and Duncryne Road next to be done. This work started recently. Church Road will be inspected soon. Blocked gullies leading to flooding on the A811 at Ashfield Farm, Tulloch bend and Duncryne Terrace were noted for attention. "Quiet Roads" were raised again and will be kept on the agenda for future meetings.

General/Cllr Sally Page: There is some unused funding of £116k for roads which is being chased. There is a meeting on 12th March at and regarding Ross Priory Woods path for anyone interested. Updates on the ambition for a Nature Hub in Balloch Castle Country Park, housing in WDC and nursery care provision were mailed to us after the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

75th anniversary of VE day. There was no response to our call out at the last meeting. Currently nothing is planned so we will advertise any neighbouring events so people can mark the occasion their own way. • Dumbarton Festival 4th – 7th June • Reducing Loneliness and Isolation Event at various locations including St Kessog's, Balloch on 29th April.

AOB

Smartocharn 2020 – Peter Page is once again coordinating this year's litter pick. Event planned for 08:30-11:00 Sunday 22nd March 2020.

NEXT MEETING: AGM followed by Ordinary meeting Monday 18th May 2020 at 19:30 in KMH.

Please send in any agenda items in good time to the secretary.

rspb LOCH LOMOND

Here at RSPB Scotland Loch Lomond we have some pretty hardy volunteers. The recent storms have left much of the reserve under water. However the volunteers have been out in rain or ... well rain, litter picking along the Ward's Ponds and running the on-site Nature Hub, getting everything nice and ready for the fast-approaching bird breeding season.

We're pleased to announce the arrival of spring here at the reserve with the very special news that Emma, our Community Engagement Officer, has given birth to her first child – a baby boy named Luca. Congratulations Emma!

We are sad to be saying goodbye to two of our residential volunteers – April and Nicci. April has spent the winter assisting Luke, our Assistant Warden, with a variety of practical tasks including our fen restoration work and the control of non-native invasive species. You can read April's blog 'A Day in February' on the RSPB community page online. Nicci has spent her time here helping with all aspects of visitor operations and is now moving on to a job counting sea birds in the North West of Scotland. We wish them both the very best of luck!

Meanwhile we're excited to announce that Scottish visual artist Hannah Imlach will be coming to the reserve to work on the first ever RSPB supported Arts-Humanities PhD, in partnership with the University of Glasgow. Her project looks at how people interact with nature reserves and the potential for site-specific artwork to encourage new audiences and novel forms of human-nature interaction. You can read more about Hannah and her amazing work up in the Flow Country on her website www.hannahimlach.com.

At this time of year, we wait in anticipation for the geese to begin their epic migration north. Greenland white-fronted geese were once numerous and widespread, however land-use changes and hunting dramatically reduced their numbers in the late 20th century.

The global population now stands at just over 20,000 individuals, with roughly 2% of these choosing to roost on and around the reserve here in winter. They've spent this time improving their body condition to help them survive



their perilous journey back across the North Sea, Iceland and a 3km high ice cap, to reach their breeding grounds in West Greenland.

As the geese begin to disappear, we'll be watching closely for other signs of spring such as bluebells and the arrival of some of our summer migrants: osprey, tree pipits, willow warblers and chiffchaffs, as well as a range of other fabulous wildlife!

ASH-LYNN TAVENER 01389 830670

WAITING GAME



Three dogs patiently waiting for their owners who were enjoying coffee and cakes at the Friday Coffee morning.

Jane Lumsden

THE HALL – temporary closure

Due to the daily changes of information and government guidelines regarding the closure of public buildings and social contact etc the board of directors have taken the decision to close the Kilmarnock Millennium Hall until the end of June 2020.

We will review any changes in circumstances and make any new decisions as and when needed.

Any updates will be posted on the village Facebook page and on the hall notice board to the left of the main door and the village shop.

We wish all users, friends and volunteers of the hall a safe few months and will hopefully see you all in the summer.

FIONA WYLLIE

CAULDERS LOCH LOMOND

You may have noticed some changes at Loch Lomond Homes and Gardens on Stirling Road recently – well, that is because it has been bought over by Caulders and will now be known as Caulders Loch Lomond.

Caulders, an award winning, family owned, independent business owned by Colin and Mandy Barrie, already have another seven centres in Scotland: Mugdock (in Milngavie), Kirkintilloch, Newton Mearns, Erskine, Cupar, Cumbernauld and Kinross.

The new owners have kept on all existing staff and in less than a month have already managed to refurbish the coffee shop and gift shop area. They hope it will become a great visitor attraction and shopping experience for the area.

Caulders Managing Director, Colin Barrie, told us "We are delighted to have moved in to the area and look forward to welcoming new and old customers alike. We believe strongly in supplying our customers with quality plants, quality food, quality service and quality locations – and what better location than here! We aim to create another 15-20 new jobs in the garden centre and coffee shop and hope that locals will make it their regular haunt."

Mandy Barrie added "All our baking is homemade and our food is all made from scratch. We have a great reputation for our catering. Added to that, I believe our



plant areas and the quality of our plants are second to none."

When things get back to normal Caulders, Loch Lomond, will be open from 9.00am - 5.30pm daily, with last orders in the coffee shop at 4.30pm.

caulderson.co.uk



Stirling Road, Balloch, Alexandria, G83 8NB

EVERYTHING FOR THE GARDENS AND MORE AT CAULDERS LOCH LOMOND

We are a local, independent family run group of garden centres. We have 8 garden centres which are located in: Milngavie, Kirkintilloch, Newton Mearns, Erskine, Cupar, Cumbernauld, Kinross and Loch Lomond. Everything for the garden and more at Caulders Garden Centres

 MUGDOCK Mugdock Country Park, Milngavie, Glasgow, G62 9EL Tel: 0141 955 0011	 KIRKINTILLOCH 63 Kilgirth Road Kirkintilloch, Glasgow, G86 1BF Tel: 0141 776 2001	 NEWTON MEARNES Mearns Road South, Mearns Kirk, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G17 6RS Tel: 0141 639 9777	
 ERSKINE Erskine Bishopton, Renfrewshire, PA7 5PU TEL: 0141 814 4626	 CUPAR Eden Valley Business Park Cupar Fife KY15 4BB TEL: 01334 855 766	 CUMBERNAULD Westerwood Roundabout Cumbernauld Glasgow G68 0ES	 KINROSS Turfhill, Kinross KY13 0NQ

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Buchanan Arms BOWLING CLUB

On 23rd of February 28 members of the club and four guests enjoyed an afternoon of bowling at Fintry indoor sports club, a challenging time for the non indoor bowlers, but the wholesome fare supplied by Brenda and her team more than made up for the trials of the bowling. Our thanks go to all at Fintry for making the day a success. I would also thank all who came along and participated. Without the members, the Club is nothing.

Summer, hopefully, beckons and as the days lengthen our thoughts turn to the opening of the Green for 2020 on Saturday 18th of April at 2.00pm for 2.30pm – Coronavirus permitting. We look forward to seeing all our current members and possibly some new ones, along with our usual guests. With positive thinking, the sun will be shining and thereafter we will adjourn to the Church Hall for the usual sandwiches and home baking.

The club had six new members last year, balanced out by five moving out of the district, a gain of one! We would warmly welcome anyone who may like to try bowls, it is a social game, gentle exercise and good company, so come and join us.

Speak to myself or any member.



JOHN MCKENZIE: 07737 859442 or jockmckenzie@hotmail.co.uk

The gift of the Ardoch Estate

Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) has announced that it has been gifted the Ardoch Estate by the Ardoch Foundation. Coupled with a cash gift of one million pounds, the total gift to the charity, which cares for children with life-shortening conditions, will make a deep impact on CHAS's goal to reach more families across Scotland.

As a place of calm and inspiration for young people over the last 10 years, the charity wants to build on that while extending its services. The initial vision for the estate is that it could provide respite holidays for the siblings of those children visiting its hospices elsewhere, as well as supporting events for CHAS families, where they can breathe and draw in the calmness and beauty of the environment.

Peter Armitage and his family bought the estate in 2006 and set up the Ardoch Foundation as a social enterprise, mainly to benefit children's charities. Peter Armitage explained why CHAS was the preferred charity for the Ardoch Estate:

"When I first visited Ardoch in 2006 it took my breath away and lifted my spirits, it still does. I want as many



CHAS CEO Rami Okasha and former CHAS CEO Maria McGill at Ardoch

people as possible to have the same experience, especially those who are at turning points in their lives. Ardoch has a canny way of putting everything in perspective, it generates hope, joy, laughter and friendships. Our neighbours, CHAS, can leverage this magic and share it much more widely than I can. Ardoch has very exciting future ahead." Rami Okasha, CEO of CHAS said:

"This is momentous for CHAS, the children and the families we support. We will not use Ardoch as

a hospice because we have set ourselves challenging strategic goals, including reaching more people in innovative and diverse ways. We are also developing our palliative services in collaboration with others, supporting staff and volunteers and increasing fundraising activity. The gift of Ardoch gives CHAS an unparalleled opportunity to do all of this in a timescale we could never have dreamed of."

CHAS will take over the operational responsibilities in 2021.

FORKS & KNIVES Station Cafe, Aberfoyle

One of the latest ventures of the Fraser family from Balmaha is the Station Cafe on the Main Street in Aberfoyle. This spacious cafe is based on the original station waiting room and has a 'Brief Encounter' feel about it though the steam trains or any trains at all have long since gone.

It is very minimalist with no pictures on the wall other than the occasional railway sign and map and a subdued decor with wood panelled dado rail. A couple of bookcases support a selection of books, provided by the Wee Free Trossachs Library, the idea being that you can help yourself to a book as long as you return a book next time you come. It doesn't have to be the same one!

It is a self service menu but there is a good selection of filled rolls, pizzas and toasties all of which can be heated up for you. The food is surprisingly good for a "railway station" cafe. We had the softest brioche hot rolls stuffed full of bacon followed by Portuguese custard tarts, a sure fire winner with us. Their cappuccinos were as good as I



Photographs: Paul Saunders



have had anywhere with an artistic addition of chocolate on top.

This cafe should do well. Aberfoyle is a busy little place in the summer when sheep dog demonstrations take place in the field next to the car park and if we ever do see the sun again they also serve their home made St Mocha ice cream.

If they keep stocking those Portuguese tarts we will be back often.



SANDRA AKHURST

FLOWER POTS

On Thursday 20th February we held our AGM and had a good turn out in spite of the weather.

After official business and a raffle Kathleen showed us some images of past visits, including a picture of Finella in the Herald with Walter Gilmour from our first diary. We also saw an image of some members from the Classic FM Gardeners' Question Time held at the club.

Moving to more recent times she showed us pictures of the children from the school planting up the troughs they had made at one meeting and the visit to the Japanese Garden at Cowden. We also saw new planting in Bette Turnbull Scott's garden on the day when Margaret and Colin were hosts to a splendid lunch. The evening finished with the usual wine and nibbles.



Photographs: Kathleen Cartwright



SANDRA AKHURST



PATE AND THE PETROL PUMPS

Pate McGregor photographed in the late 50s having a well earned rest next to the Shell petrol pumps outside the village shop. Pate drove lorries for Stewart Cameron and lived at Church Road.

Allan Methven tells us that in those days the shop sold Shell 4 star and Shell Mex 2 star petrol – four gallons of petrol cost £1.00!



@Gartocharn Community

Keep in touch and share local news and information

KILMARONOCK OLD KIRK TRUST

Based on the professional valuations received from our appointed surveyors, KOKT made a formal offer to Church of Scotland General Trustees for the purchase of the Kilmaronock Church, car park and glebe on 27th January 2020. We received a qualified acceptance on 6th March 2020. Dialogue with Church of Scotland is ongoing in respect of this.

Applications to various funding bodies continue but local funding from individuals and businesses would be most welcome to help with matched funding requirements, and to fund urgent roof leak repairs. Due to the ongoing national predicament the date of the AGM will be advised whenever possible.

Anyone interested in assisting the trustees as the project input intensifies please contact via the email below or by phone to 01389 830380.



WILLIE ROXBURGH e: kilmaronock@gmail.com

VICTORY DAY PARTY 1946

Having recently been lucky enough to have been given the opportunity to have a look at the Log Books which recorded details of education in Ardoch Bridge School then Gartocharn Primary School from 1876 until 1990, I have been engrossed in looking at any photos which would pertain to any period within that time scale.

At one point, in one of the books, there was an account of a Sports Day which had been held in the field beside the Old Schoolhouse. This event was held to celebrate Victory Day in 1946 and had been organised by the members of the School Board of Ardoch Bridge School. I remember attending it with my mother and brothers and wee sister, but of course, had very little idea of what it was all about!

However, while reading that account, it occurred to me that I also remembered attending a party in the Old

Schoolhouse Hall and this time, I had a photograph which shows most of the people who attended! Indeed, it was a blast from the past!!

I am sure that this party must have been organised by the Church who owned the Old Schoolhouse. It certainly fits in with the same time scale as that of the Victory Sports Day, judging by the ages of my family members.

I remember my wee brother Bill, who would have been under three years of age, sitting on my mother's knee, trying on the white top hat which was part of the costume worn by my older brother Ian!

I am sure that several readers of Gartorag will have memories of this party. Maybe they will share their memories of it and possibly be able to fill in the blanks in the list of names!!



LEFT TO RIGHT: Back Row: Gregor Rankin, May Caldwell, Agnes Gordon, Nancy Walker, Elizabeth Rankin, ? Robertson, Anne Bennie, Elizabeth Kennedy, Andrew Rankin. **Next Row:** James Howe, ?, ?, ?, Donald MacLean, Margaret Bennie, Gilbert Lawson, Isobel Sharp, Bobby Seith, ? McMaster, Jimmy Wilson, Richard Crawford. **Third Row:** ? McKenzie, Barbara Gordon, Helen Cochrane, Bethia Grice, Nancy Wright, Grace McKechnie, Edwin Hutcheson, Bob McKechnie, Ian Maxwell, Patricia Price, Bobby Cochrane, Sheena Maxwell, Willie Wilson. **Front Row:** Alistair? McKinnon, Freda Wright, Margaret Maxwell, ? McKenzie, Margaret McKechnie, Margaret Hutcheson, Anna Brown, Doreen Fleming, Morag Bennie, Catherine McKechnie, Lena McKinnon, Bobby Walker, John Bennie, Angus Kennedy, Willie Crawford.

SHEENA BRENNAN



Freda Scott-Park

ATMOSPHERIC VIEW

The Ben, viewed from Portnellan, floating above the fog.

RIISING TO THE Challenge

Peter and I went to Campbells of Crieff for a bread baking course. We learnt how to make Morning Rolls and Granary bread. Since we are all going to be spending more time at home people may like to hone their breadmaking skills! If you have a mixer with a dough hook that helps but of course mixing by hand does also work.

MORNING ROLLS (makes 18-20 rolls)

Bake at 240 °C or as hot as your oven will go.

1kg strong bread flour (13-14% protein)
20g salt
20g sugar
20g malt extract (from the chemist)
20g vegetable fat (such as TREX)
7g dried yeast
600g tepid water

Weigh all the ingredients into either a large mixing bowl or the mixer then add the water.

Mix for 10 minutes to combine thoroughly until you have a very

pliable lump. Cover with a damp tea towel and sit in a warm place for at least one hour.

Then remove the dough from the bowl onto a floured work surface and 'knock back' the dough, removing the air by kneading it back in on itself several times. Divide the dough into 60g pieces, shape into rounds, cover with cling film and rest for 20 minutes on the floured surface.

Then flatten the rolls slightly and place close together onto a floured baking tray (you may need two trays). Cover with cling film and return to a warm place for at least two hours.

Bake at 240 °C for 14-15 minutes. Cool on a rack.

GRANARY BREAD (makes 3 loaves)

Bake at 220 °C

1kg granary flour
20g salt
20g vegetable fat (such as TREX)
14g dried yeast
600g tepid water



Weigh all the ingredients (apart from the water) into a bowl and mix. Make a well in the centre and slowly add the water mixing into the flour. When all the flour is incorporated, keep mixing by hand until a well developed dough is formed, this will take about 10 minutes.

Cover loosely with a damp tea towel. Rest for 30 minutes in a warm place. Then 'knock-back' the dough to remove all the air and shape into loaves or into bread tins.

Cover again and set aside for a further 45 minutes in a warm place. Bake for 30-40 minutes at 220 ° C.

SALLY PAGE

COVID19 – caring for our community

We are all struggling to adapt to the constraints placed on us by the fight against COVID19 pandemic. We are an elderly community, with many living on their own, with family at a distance who are facing being confined to their homes for several months. With everything closed down, apart from food shops and pharmacies, we need to have a special care for those in our community who may be feeling

isolated, needing help and not knowing where to turn.

As neighbours please make regular contact with anyone you know, best by phone, and if any help is needed, there is a large facebook group with lots of volunteers who will pick up shopping and medicines.

If you are on-line you can also access help via Facebook "Vale of Leven Coronavirus support and assistance".

MARY SWEETLAND 07785 385342

LODGE LOCH LOMOND No. 1483

By the time the Gartorag is on sale, Lodge Loch Lomond will be into the summer recess. Our meetings during the season have been reasonably well attended, averaging around 38 Brethren, mainly consisting of visitors, all made most welcome and their attendance greatly appreciated.

I will give an update on what is happening among Freemasons in Stirlingshire and beyond: the Reigning Masters degree will take place in Lodge Polmont no. 793 on Friday 24th April, the guest of honour will be Past Grand Master, Canon Joseph Morrow, Q.C. Right Honourable the Lord Lyon King of Arms, a Brother well known in Stirlingshire. The money raised on that occasion will be distributed to local charities in the Polmont area. The Strathcarron Challenge, put forward by a Brother from Lodge Slamannan to the Province, raised money for the Hospice, the total to date being over £17,000. Well done to all concerned.

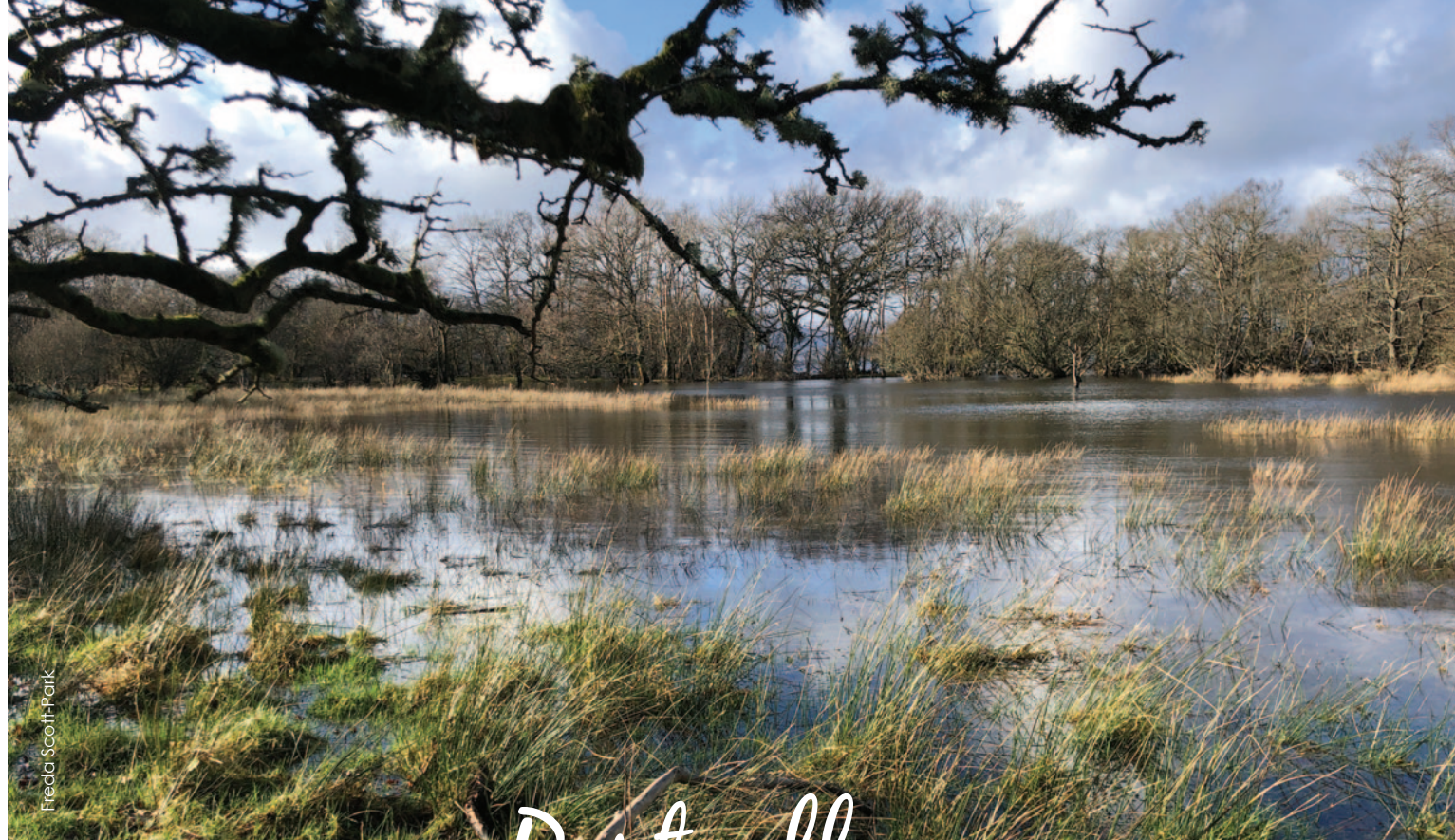
News from Grand Lodge: The Grand Master Mason Bro. Ramsay McGhee announced that a new classroom at a

school in Malawi has been completed with monies entirely donated by Scottish Freemasons. Freemasons' charitable giving knows no bounds.

I should by now have had a good response to our Easter Draw and I would, in anticipation, thank all who took part. The draw will take place at committee meeting on 6th April, held for that sole purpose, and winners will be notified thereafter.

The Grand Master Mason and Grand Lodge in an effort to address the situation of non attending members have decreed that for this year only, one year's annual subscription will bring you into good standing in "your" Lodge (normally three years). This does not apply to life members as they are always in good standing. Everything is not doom and gloom however, and my pleading has had some success as we had two of those absent Members attending our last two meetings. Once again, anyone wanting information about Freemasonry, I will be only too willing to listen and help if I can.

JOHN McKENZIE 07737859442 or jockmckenzie@hotmail.co.uk



Freda Scott-Park

Portnellan WEATHER & WELLIES

No prizes for guessing what the headline is for this column: the weather has been rubbish! Wet, cold and stormy describes the last few months. January had some notable deluges and only two dry days but it was February that delivered three storms one after the other.

Ciara was first (around 9th Feb) but it wasn't centred over Scotland and the Portnellan Farm weather station (PFWS) was quite protected from the south-westerly winds. Dennis rocketed in on the 15th and 16th Feb; again concentrated on England and Wales, but it delivered relentless high winds to Scotland – the Met Office noted that it was the persistence of the winds over a number of days that made it a notable storm. Then Jorge (or Hor-hey as one learned to pronounce it) arrived at the beginning of March – this was chosen by the Spanish Met Office equivalent hence the 'furrin' name. The PFWS didn't really register Jorge as a wind risk, but the two deluges on the 28th and 29th were no doubt delivered by the blighter.

Loch levels have been very high for months; I think I'm correct in saying the highest recorded level (this winter to date) was 9.58m on 21st Feb, but it's been around 9m for most of February and all of March to date. Many have asked what the highest level was; it was 14.

In December 2006 the level

recorded was 10.374m after a very wet Nov and Dec. However, in 2015, Nov recorded 301.9mm/12.3" and Dec 341.9mm/14.0" and the pier disappeared under a metre of water. Unfortunately, just as levels were at max, the SEPA gauge at Ross Priory developed a fault but it was well over 9.5m and heading for 10m when the fault developed, and flooding was only avoided by some drier weather around Hogmanay.

All the farmers have been saying it's not been a cold winter, but I disagree. Although we've not had a dump of snow, there have been plenty of wintry showers – a term not encouraged by the Met Office; they want exact recording of snow, sleet, freezing rain, hail (in exact sizes), snow pellets, snow grains, ice pellets etc – I could have a great conversation with the Inuit.

There were notably cold grass temps as early as October (average 2.8°C). November's grass temps averaged -1.3°C with several night-time temps of -8°C. In December, the average was 0.9°C and January was 1.4°C. The soil temps have been consistently low, around 5°C for a couple of months and are still there in the middle of March, which doesn't bode well for the Holy Grail of an early Spring. The fields desperately need some drouth and warmth. The lack of sunshine is quite depressing.

Our young stirks are still outside and

looking rather good. However, we've just run out of fresh fields for them and we may need to bring them inside, which is disappointing and another consequence of the lack of warmth. Fortunately, we have a good amount of silage left in the pit, because the fields are much too wet to contemplate putting beasts outside.

Calving is in full swing and we cheered ourselves up asking people to send us a name for the first wee calf, born a bit early. The results are in (out of a hat since there were 34 suggestions) and the wee chap is now called Shug. We were quite pleased that 'Corona' wasn't first out of the hat



Ginny Scott-Park

FREDA SCOTT-PARK

JACK BE NIMBLE . . . AT HOME!

Do you struggle with general stiffness and just need to "nimble" up? Try these five super simple great stretches. Aim to do ten repetitions of each stretch once a day.

OVERHEAD SQUAT: Stand with legs around hip width apart. Hold on to a stick or a rope, such as a walking stick, umbrella, resistance band or house-coat cord. If you don't have these items just make sure to keep your arms up. Raise your arms above your head so your body makes an X shape. And when you are ready, squat down until your thighs are parallel with the floor (legs should be bent at a 90° angle), or at a level which feels achievable, and then back up.

HAMSTRINGS: Take one step forward with the leg you want to work first. Keep your feet facing forwards. Start to sink your bum down, keeping the forward leg straight, allow the other leg to bend. Gently reach your

hands to your forward foot for five seconds. Raise back to the top and reach down.

CALF: Place both hands on a wall at shoulder height and straighten your arms. Plant the leg you want to stretch behind you so you feel a gentle pull along the calf muscle. Allow your front leg to bend freely. Now keep your back heel glued to the floor and let your body lean forwards. Use your arms for support. Bob for five seconds.

CHEST: Find a doorway that is easily accessible. Stand in the middle of the doorway and place both arms outwards holding frame or wall while keeping your elbows straight. Keeping your hands glued to the

wall, step forwards. You should feel your chest and front shoulders stretch. You can place your arms at different levels to stretch the lower, mid and upper parts of the pectoral, coracobrachialis and anterior deltoid. Bob for five seconds and return to rest position.

SPINE: Get yourself on the floor lying on your back. Bring left leg up off the floor and cross it over the right leg as far as you can, keeping your shoulders glued to the floor. You should start to feel a twist at your lower back. To get a bigger stretch, extend your left arm in the opposite direction to your crossed leg. Aim to hold and extend for five seconds then return to the middle. Repeat on the opposite side.

JASON ELLIS 07557 882631 jasonellisphysiotherapy@gmail.com

gart baby



This is our new granddaughter Bobby Shand Betts born 27th February at Homerton Hospital, Hackney.

She was 7lb 10oz and both she and her parents, Katy and Olly, are well.

We are delighted as are new Aunts Alison and Laura.

BOB AND JEAN SHAND



REFLECTIONS AT PORTNELLAN



Ross Priory Gartocharn

Front of House, Housekeeping, Cook/Chef
Staff Positions Available



Applicants should be time-efficient, flexible, reliable & well-presented with good customer service skills.

Experience preferred in a customer facing role but training will be provided.

18+ years old in order to comply with alcohol service.

Generous rate of pay (living wage employer) £9.30 p/h plus £1.59 p/h holiday entitlement paid as worked

Own transport preferred but not essential as transport may be available

Call **01389 830398** for an application form or email your CV to us ross.priory@strath.ac.uk

Our February speakers were from the RSBP and we enjoyed hearing all about not only birds but their habitat and also other local wildlife.

On 11th March, Marie-Claire from Quality Meat Scotland (ably assisted by her son Angus) demonstrated how to use less popular cuts of meat. We tucked into flatbreads stuffed with lamb and tzatziki or salsa verde and a delicious dish of Korean beef with rice.

It was a fabulous demonstration and we hardly had any room for our supper which must be a first.

TESTING, TESTING 1-2-3

Recently several of our members faced the critique of our National Judge, Mrs Jennifer Durno, as they sat tests ranging from preserves, baking, pastry, sugarcraft, cold meal, hostess buffet meal and celebration meal. I'm pleased to say that everyone passed and I'm sure we all learned a lot from Mrs Durno's vast experience.

Elizabeth McAulay and I also sat our Judges Test but we won't get the results for a few nailbiting weeks so fingers crossed that we pass.



CANCELLED

Due to the dreaded Covid-19 our annual show has been cancelled and we wait to hear if it can be re-scheduled to later in the year. The 8th April meeting and the Soup and Sweet lunch are, also cancelled as members and public health is paramount.

WHY NOT JOIN US?

If you are interested in joining the SWI, or just want to find out a bit more about what we do check out our Facebook page Gartocharn SWI. Do pop along to a meeting when normality returns. Visitors are always welcome and we can promise a good old blether and a lovely supper.

FIONA EADIE 07812 575510



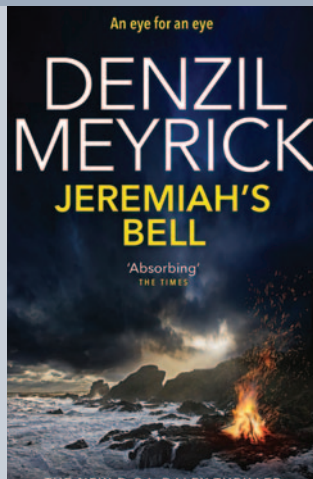
CAN'T SEE THE WATER FOR THE TREES

Freda's RAINFALL FIGURES



2020	Temperature range °C	Max °C Min °C (average)	Rainfall mm (inches)	Greatest fall(s) (mm) DRY DAYS
January	Highest max: 13.4 Lowest max: 3.0 Lowest min: -1.0 Highest min: 7.8	8.4 3.5	204.9 (8.1)	41.1 (on 29 th) 26.5 (on 10 th) 18.2 (on 11 th) 2 Dry Days
February	Highest max: 10.0 Lowest max: 4.9 Lowest min: -0.9 Highest min: 7.5	7.3 2.0	309.8 (12.2)	42.2 (on 21 st) 27.0 (on 19 th) 20.5 (on 29 th) 18.3 (on 17 th) 34.0 (on 8 th) 22.5 (on 28 th) 19.5 (on 15 th) 2 Dry Days
March (to 17 th Mar)	Highest max: 11.0 Lowest max: 5.9 Lowest min: -0.7 Highest min: 5.0	8.1 2.2	103.9 (4.1)	29.3 (on 9 th) 0 Dry Days

DCI DALEY RETURNS



forward to many more years of DCI Daley and his cohorts.'

Denzil's most recent instalment in his globally successful DCI Daley series, *Jeremiah's Bell*, will be published in June this year and will make Denzil the bestselling writer published in Scotland.

As regular readers of these books know, the series is set in fictional Kinloch, on Kintyre in Argyll, and has won acclaim for its authenticity in accurate police procedural, gritty humour and ingenious plotting. DCI Jim Daley first arrived in rural Kinloch from the mean streets of Glasgow in *Whisky from Small Glasses* (2012), and he found a community packed with strong characters and buried secrets. Since then, characters such as DS Brian Scott and the inscrutable old fisherman Hamish have become firm favourites with readers and listeners across the globe.

Denzil Meyrick, our local best selling author, is delighted to hear that his agent has sold English language rights in the UK and the Commonwealth (excluding Canada and Europe) for six new titles to Scotland's largest independent publisher Polygon! This six figure deal will lead to the publication

of three novels and three novellas between Christmas 2020 and 2023. Alison Rae, Managing Editor at Polygon said:

'We are thrilled with this signing. It signals a real commitment to Denzil and his exceptional crime writing – and we're all looking

ELAINE ELLEN



Elaine Ellen

CHERRY BLOSSOM



Bob Shand

Flooding at Net Bay



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Bob Shand

RING WOOD MOSS