

DRYMEN REPORTER

December 2023 Issue No. 96

Deadline for next issue 15 February

Editor - John Cameron

drymenreporter2017@gmail.com



Weather article see page 6

Hall and Youth Café need help!

Twelve organisations sent articles for this edition and we're very grateful to them as, without them there would be no 'Reporter' but it's all too easy to forget they're all run by volunteers, and without them, there would be no organisations! So, if you or your family have benefitted from using the Hall (p8) or the Youth Café (p15) entertaining/ looking after your youngsters, why not do something in return and volunteer to help. Both are important to the village, and both need help so, read their articles and volunteer - you won't regret it.

Well done to the Community Council for taking on the time-consuming task of organising the Road Safety Trial survey (results in DCDT article p15). It's good news that they (with DCDT) have met with representatives of Springfield Developments (new owners of the Stirling Road site) who confirmed they want to work with the community as they move to developing the site (it's only taken 40 years to get to this stage!) See DCC article (p5), watch for a date for this meeting and go to the DCC meeting on 9th January.

Thanks again to all our advertisers, J Thomson Colour Printers, and the delivery crew and my personal thanks to Claire, Jakki, and Frances. Have a good festive season and a happy and healthy New Year.

John Cameron, Editor

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Paralympian Melanie aims for ‘Worlds’

Melanie Reid is still very busy with her wheelchair racing – having won the Great Scottish 10K run recently (see photo) she is competing soon in Dubai and then at the World Championships in Kobe, Japan in the spring. All eyes are on the Paralympics in Paris in August, and she said, “I’m looking forward to competing with a little more experience than I had in Tokyo”. She is enjoying the challenge that training every day is bringing and seeing lots of progress and excited to see where that will take her next year. We are all behind you Melanie.

Walter Hemfrey

We were unable to include a photo of the late Walter Hemfrey in the September issue, so, as it’s panto time, here is a reminder of one of his inimitable performances in panto which I’m sure will bring back happy memories for many.



School news - By Fergus, Jacob & Molly

Science Afternoon

The school organised a science open afternoon for families to come into school to see different science projects, which each class have been learning about.

P6 and P7 did joint experiments: each one to do with climate change and a different natural disaster. P4/5 made models of remote countries and made it sustainable by putting things like solar panels on the models and they used real fans to make mini wind turbines spin. P2/3 made oobleck (*a substance that can be a solid or a liquid Ed.*) and different habitats or biomes. P3/4 created lots of experiments about forces to do with their 'transport through the ages' topic. P1/2 had different experiments about the season autumn. Thank you to everyone who came along.

P7 Fundraising Project

P7 class has been doing a fundraising project in four different groups, raising money for different charities. Ms. Buchan has organised for four judges to come in to P7 to judge presentations and which group raised the most money and the winners will get a delicious prize! The four group's names are The Climate Kids, Just Donate, the Eco Warriors and The Taffy Team.



Scottish Dancing

P1-7 have been learning Scottish dancing in P.E. for the Christmas parties at the end of the term for all classes to take part in. The parties will take place on 19th and 20th of December.



Mandarin

P5-P7 have been learning Mandarin at levels 1, 2 and 3 and know all sorts of Mandarin words and phrases like family member names, greetings and sports.

Anti-Bullying Week

We had a 'Crazy Hair Day' for Anti-Bullying Week and all the pupils and staff had crazy hair and odd socks for a fun Friday. P7 joined the BBC live lesson on children's rights, P2/3 listened to a drama about bullying and P4/5 learned about one of our school values, kindness.

Sports Leaders

The Sports Leaders have learned and conducted P.E. lessons, including P4-P7

taking part in an Active Stirling sports competition against other schools but we don't know the results yet. The Sports Leaders got great feedback on their organisation, teamwork and leadership skills.



Christmas Doors

Our Christmas doors theme this year is Christmas stories. We are having great fun creating our themed doors together!

Patrick Robertson, Head Teacher: 01360 660410



Fabric Fun Group

This commemorative hanging was produced by Strathendrick Embroiderers' Guild, young people's 'Fabric Fun Group'. The leaves were embroidered by the young people, parents, helpers and visitors who attended an open 'Stitch Along' session at the library, with the tiny tots embellishing the leaves with glitter. The participants were invited to suggest a word that summed up the library for them and these were then stitched into the trunk of the tree. The dates were added in Stirling Libraries new corporate colours



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Let us know if you can help

If you have any interesting articles we would love to receive them. Please send emails or word documents to John Cameron at drymenreporter2017@gmail.com

The Team

- John Cameron - Editor
- Claire Pocock - Composer
- Frances Lander
- Jakki Sendall

The Reporter is now available to view online at www.drymen.org/drymen-reporter

Community groups, clubs, and societies are not charged for non commercial adverts.

Printing

J.Thomson Colour Printers.
Tel 0141 429 1094

Next issue March

If you would like to have your contribution included please send it before the deadline of

15th Feb

Community Council news

It has been great to welcome so many of you to our monthly meetings since we reconvened in September.

Your eight community councillors are here to benefit you, to communicate with external agencies such as Stirling Council, the National Park & the Police and represent your views and our community's interests.

Your councillors are David Mackie (Chair), Rebekah MacDonald Stewart (Vice-chair), Maja McTavish (Treasurer), Louise Macfarlane, Rhona Carmichael, Jakki Sendall, Fraser Robb, Simon Reid (Secretary) and we are ably supported by Rowan Higgins.

We are very grateful for the community's engagement and are listening to what you are saying. A few examples of areas we are in the process of addressing and/or supporting are:

Applying for a grant to support the Village in Bloom.

Trying to support the supply of two grit bins one for Charles Crescent and one for Balmaha Road.

Collaboratively working with other local Community Councils to give us a louder voice in Stirling Council's 'Big Conversation' to flag what is important to our community

as part of its discussions on budget cuts.

Setting up a working group looking at Community Transport made up of representatives of the Community Council, the Development Trust and we would also welcome members of the community to help try to find solutions to our lack of transport. Whilst the working group would decide on the areas of focus, potentially there are two aspects - the lack of services to Stirling/ Balfroon and hospital transport services.

Lastly, with the Development Trust, we recently attended a meeting with Springfield Developments which has taken over the Stirling Road development from MacTaggart and Mickel. They are looking to work with our community as they take the housing development forward and we have invited them to attend a Community Council meeting early in the New Year to provide an overview of their proposal to you, the community – we will keep you updated once we have a date. Our next open meeting is on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall and we look forward to seeing you there.

Drymen Community Council wishes you all a very happy and peaceful time over the festive season and we look forward to working with you again in the New Year. support@drymenc.org

Senior Citizens' Association

Here we are hurtling towards the festive season once again at a great rate of knots; it seems no time since we started back again in September!

We have a members Christmas Lunch in the Winnock Hotel on Tuesday 12th December followed by music and nativity songs from the children of Drymen Primary School. (Any member who would like to attend but does not yet have their name down please ring me, or if you have your name down but can no longer manage then please let me know as soon as possible.) Our first meeting of 2024 is on Tuesday 16th January when Munro Gauld is coming along to talk about and play the music from our local area.

February 20th sees us back at the Winnock for High Tea followed by songs from Paul Rybarczyk on his guitar, and our March meeting is on the 19th with a varied programme of songs by Lydia Kielbasiewicz.

The January and March meetings are in Drymen Village Hall; after the entertainment we have afternoon tea, a good catch-up and a raffle. Membership is £10, or if you just see a particular meeting that interests you we welcome visitors who can pay £4 at the door.

Wishing you and yours all the very best for the festive season and the coming New Year - if you're over 60 I hope we may see you at one or more of our meetings.

Linda (More), Secretary Tel:01360 660706

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Who said, ‘weather’s boring?’

There was plenty of meteorological variety though the autumn months.

Drymen 2023	Sept	Oct	Nov
Temp highest max	27.2	17.8	13.9
Temp lowest max	9.8	9.3	-1.6
Lowest min	5.5	-1.1	-5.8
Highest min	15.3	13.3	10.4
Mean maximum	18.2	13.0	8.6
Mean minimum	10.2	6.3	2.1
Mean temp	13.9	9.5	5.2
No. days <0	0	2	10
Monthly rain (mm)	156	185	95
Most in 24hrs (mm)	24.2	75.6	24.8
Days with >0.2mm	19	17	20
Days with >2mm	15	14	6
Days with >20mm	1	2	2
Annual rain so far	922	1107	1202

Temperature shown in degrees Celsius

Overall, September was a degree Celsius warmer than usual and daytime temperatures were up 2°C. The first week produced a heatwave during which the UK clocked its hottest day of the year and Drymen basked in 27.2°C on the 7th.

October was significant for a persistent spell of rain – 40 hours without stopping and, even then, only briefly. Saturday 7th saw 76mm of rain whilst the total accumulation over the rain event was 96mm or 3.8 inches in old money. An ‘atmospheric river’ – a narrow stream of moisture laden air sat over us, setting the record for the wettest 2-day period on record for Scotland in a series from 1891. When Storm Babet arrived two weeks later, we were fortunate to miss the worst whilst Tayside took the brunt of a similar deluge.

November was cold with a run of seven frosts toward the end of the month including -5.8°C on the 29th. The number of air frosts was double the expected with 10 altogether.

As the year-end approaches, the EU’s Copernicus Climate Change Service has just stated that 2023 is “virtually certain” to be the warmest in 125,000 years. Whilst their data goes back to 1940, the body also referenced longer-term data from UN climate science panel IPCC which includes readings from sources such as ice cores, tree rings and coral deposits.



LB

A Year with the Drymen walking group

It’s hard to believe 2023 is coming to an end, but what a year it has been for the ‘Walk in the Park’ Drymen weekly walking group. Grace Curtis, Health Walk Coordinator for the Countryside Trust, shares some seasonal highlights to make you want to stick on your walking boots and join in for 2024!

Spring

A new year meant new volunteers, and new training for our current volunteers. Volunteers were offered a range of training opportunities, including First Aid training, Samaritan’s listening Skills training and Wild Ways Well Training, a nature and mental health training delivered by The Conservation Volunteers.

Summer

Our walkers made the most of summer days and were undeterred by the occasional lack of sun. On top of regular walks around Drymen, the walkers joined away days in other areas of the national park, and themed walks such as the Big Fit Walk in Balloch.

Autumn

The annual Halloween event at Cashel Forest was a great success, with the barn transformed into a spooky gathering space. Members of other walking groups travelled from all over the national park to join the festivities.

We all enjoyed the group walk and benefitted from the extensive nature knowledge of our wonderful volunteer Bev.

Afterwards, spooky stories were told, marshmallows were toasted over the fire bowl, and there was an abundance of cake!

Still to come: Winter

Winter weather doesn’t stop our walkers! As long as it’s safe to do so, we’ll be walking weekly (with a short break over Christmas and New year) and enjoying the transformative health and social benefits of spending time together in nature.

The walking group will round off the year with a Christmas meal at The Winnock hotel, where we will look back on the year and plot new adventures for the year to come!

Why not get involved in the new year?

Walks take place every Thursday from 10.20am, meeting in the square in front of the Winnock hotel. Walks are free, volunteer led, gentle and sociable, ending with optional refreshments at a local café or bar.

To find out more, call the coordinators on 07784 240270 or email: fiona@trustinthepark.org or grace@trustinthepark.org



BITS AND PIECES

Bowlers (and the green!) enjoy a break

There's not a lot can be said about the Bowling Club at this time of the year - the autumn maintenance work has all been completed, and fingers crossed for a clement winter to give the green a chance to recover from the ravages of the summer weather. While most members are taking a break from bowling, a few are playing indoor bowls at Fintry.

Our next get together of club members will be at the Fintry indoor club on our Fun Outing on the afternoon of Sunday the 18th of February. I will be contacting all members about this day after the New Year, but if there is anyone who may be thinking about taking up bowling and would like a taster, they would be very welcome to join us on this occasion. May I take the opportunity of wishing all the readers of the Drymen Reporter a very happy Festive Season. As usual, anybody wishing information about the club please contact John McKenzie telephone number 07737859442 or e-mail mckenzie.john1943@gmail.com

Drymen Art Club

We have had a good start to the 2023/24 season - although some members have retired, we have recruited new members, who are enjoying the friendly and supportive atmosphere at the Club.

Our Club Tutor, Iain McAulay, led a fascinating 3D clay workshop which resulted in some interesting sculptures and determination to keep working with clay. We are looking forward to the next workshop based around still life / collage.

The annual Club Lunch in the Winnock Hotel was a great opportunity to meet socially and enjoy a tasty lunch together. This was followed by a successful 'One Day Sale,' also in the Winnock, with visitors commenting positively on the art works – and possibly buying Christmas presents.

We meet every Wednesday afternoon from the end of September to the end of March from 1 pm – 4 pm in the Village Hall. If you would like to join us, please drop in to see what we do, or contact the Club Secretary, Morag Findlay at morag.findlay87@gmail.com or 07868 540 488.

Don't miss renowned Burns speaker at the History Society!

We are delighted to be able to start our 2024 session on 25th of January with retired Glasgow lawyer, Len Murray, talking on 'The Legacy of Robert Burns'. This is a rare, not-to-be-missed opportunity to hear an internationally renowned speaker on Robert Burns, who is also one of the country's most entertaining after-dinner speakers.

22 February – 'The History Of Duntreath Castle and Estate' - illustrated talk from Eddie Edmonstone.

28 March – 'Ben Lomond: the history of the mountain and the surrounding area' - an illustrated talk from Alastair Eckersall, NTS Property Manager and Ranger/naturalist.

25 April - Members night and AGM. Short talks by members of the Society. Cheese and wine from 7pm.

All meetings are in the Village Hall at 7.30pm - membership is £10 per year (which covers all lectures) and visitors are welcome at all meetings at £3 per lecture.

Further details on our web site www.drymen-history.org.uk or follow us on Facebook @drymenhistorysociety.

Freemasons support charities and prostate patients

I'm happy to report that Lodge Loch Lomond No. 1483 is in good health at the moment. A few members who had not attended for a number of years, are, once again joining us at our meetings on the first Thursday of the month, (except January). We also have a good attendance of visitors (who are always welcome) - one new brother is now a full member of the Lodge, and another gentleman has applied for membership - things are looking up.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland have topped up the £1.125 million, which was raised last year for Prostate Scotland by another £30,000, which will go towards supplying PROSPACKS to sufferers of this terrible disease. Lodge Loch Lomond has made our usual Christmas donations to both Drymen and Gartocharn Senior Citizen associations, Strathcarron Hospice and Erskine hospital. We have also made a donation to the Memorial Hall at Milton of Buchanan. I would also take the opportunity of wishing all your readers and all Lodge members a very happy Festive Season. Finally if anyone would like more information about our great organisation, contact myself on telephone number 07737859442 or e-mail mckenzie.john1943@gmail.com (Ed - For info on PROSPACKS see <https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/raigmores-hospital-launches-packs-to-ease-prostate-cancer-tre-334269/>)

What's going on in the Hall

We need you!

The Village Hall Committee are looking for someone to be our treasurer - could this be you?

Being part the Village Hall team is a great way to get involved with the community, with so many different people and local groups coming through our doors each day!

If you are interested in volunteering, or would just like some information (with no commitment required), please send us an email to halltreasurer@drymen.org.

Repair Café

Our repair café will be up and running on the 22nd of January at 6.30pm. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for a list of items that you can bring along to be repaired.

We are also still looking for people to get involved, so if you are good with small electricals, or would be able to give some help and advice with IT issues, mend and restore any kind of items or would just like to come along to help out with the tea and cake please get in touch!

To contact us about the Repair Café, please send an email to halloffice@drymen.org, send us a message on Facebook, or come along to our Open Doors Sessions on a Friday from 10am - 2pm.

Christmas Crafts

Come along to our Christmas Craft Open Doors Session for the kids on the 19th of December from 2pm - 5pm. Have a mince pie and a hot chocolate while they are busy with the crafty activities!

Ceòl Agus Craic

2nd January 2024, 5pm-9pm Come and join us for some New Year cheer and great music! BYOB, glasses and a dish if you wish.

Tickets are required and these are free. Please contact halloffice@drymen.org or pop into the hall on a Friday 10am - 2pm

To see our calendar of weekly activities, visit www.drymen.org/village-hall. For queries please contact halloffice@drymen.org.



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Swimming for beavers



My name is Charlie Coleman, I am in S2 at Balforn High School, and I want to raise money for the RSPB, as they have recently introduced beavers to the Loch Lomond reserve at Gartocharn. A few years ago, I saw the beavers in Knapdale (the first place they were 'officially' reintroduced) and I am keen to see them in Loch Lomond. Although I haven't seen them at Gartocharn yet, I have seen signs, so keep a lookout for beaver chewed branches if you visit.

Sadly, beavers have been extinct in Scotland for over 400 years when they were killed for their fur and their castoreum (a secretion beavers use for scent marking) for perfume, medicine, and vanilla flavouring. As herbivores, they feed on tree bark, grasses and leaves and their teeth are adapted to chew on bark and to fell trees to construct their lodges and dams. I like how the RSPB introduced beavers because there are few in Scotland and they are a keystone species i.e. an animal or plant that will change the ecosystem in a way that will encourage lots of other species to survive and thrive.

To raise the money for the RSPB, I am going to swim (in a 25m swimming pool) the same distance from RSPB Loch Lomond reserve to RSPB Inversnaid reserve - I think will take me a few days to complete the 16 miles or 1030 lengths. I have been swimming with West Dunbartonshire Amateur Swimming Club since I was 8 and I recently completed a 1km open water swim race with my swimming club.

If you would like to sponsor me and support beavers then please go to **JustGiving** and search for 'Charlie RSPB'. Thank you.

Useful Info

Library

Monday 9.30am - 1.00pm. 2.00pm - 5.00pm
 Tuesday 9.30am - 1.00pm. 2.00pm - 7.00pm
 Wednesday - Closed
 Thursday 9.30am - 1.00pm. 2.00pm - 7.00pm
 Friday 9.30am - 1.00pm. 2.00pm - 5.00pm
 Saturday 9.00am - 1.00pm

Mobile Post Office service

The Mobile Post Office service is available at the bus stop in the Square on Tuesday from 3.30 – 4.30pm and on Thursday from 9 – 10.30am.

It will also be in Croftamie at the But and Ben car park on Wednesday 3.30pm-4.30pm

RBS

Monday 1.25-2.40pm Stirling Rd car park
 Friday 10.00 - 10.30am But and Ben car park

Drymen Pharmacy

Telephone: 01360 661285
 Monday to Friday 9am - 6pm
 Saturday 9am - 1pm

Balforn Recycling Centre opening hours

(Dunkeld Court, behind the Co-op)
 Monday to Friday 5pm - 8pm
 Saturday 10am - 2pm

Booking online is now essential. See Stirling Council website

Tidying up and planting for spring

The flower beds opposite the library have been pruned, cut back and generally made tidy by members of DCD Trust - what a difference this makes - thanks to Euan Mackay, Richard Bodington, Hilary Soanes and Simon Reid. The mixed colours Spring tulip bulbs have been planted in the tubs and troughs - thanks to our volunteers.

Drymen in Bloom

Shop local this Christmas

Moon of Drymen

GIFT VOUCHERS AVAILABLE

26th Drymen Scout Group

Our news is fun and varied as we approach the end of another year. 2023 has been a great year and we have welcomed many new Cubs and Scouts to our group. We have always welcomed both boys and girls and, a few weeks ago, our 22 Cubs were made up of 11 boys and 11 girls!

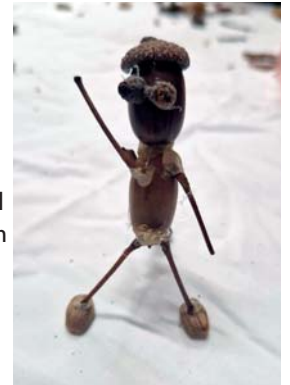


We have been getting creative and you can see some pictures of the acorn men and women that were created in October. Christmas cheer is around the corner, and we are looking forward to our annual Cub trip to the Panto at the start of December.

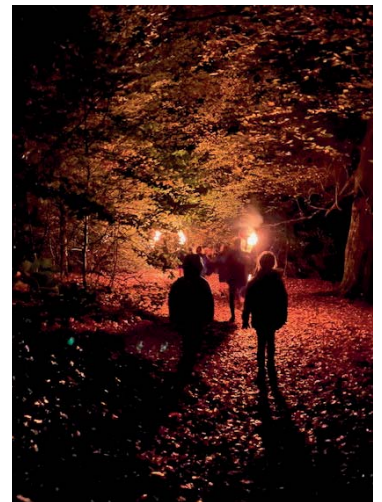
Scouts are a smaller group and have spent a few weeks learning to cook in camp conditions. They all made penny stoves from a couple of old drink cans (and some careful cutting) and the stoves were used to cook pasta one evening. They are getting as much practice as possible as they prepare to attend Highland Adventure - a three-night camp in May 2024 that requires

them to organise themselves and cook their own meals all weekend.

If you wish to join our busy group, we welcome 8 - 80-year-olds. We are still not sure if the adults enjoy themselves more than the young people, they certainly look like they might! Cubs are 8-11 and scouts are 11-15, leaders are 15-80!!



Gavin Rowley



Drymen

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Introducing Trossachs Tool Tech Ltd

It's always been my ambition to start up my own business and, with over 30 years' experience in the mechanical industry, and my understanding of the village and surrounding areas, I feel the time is right and there is nowhere better to launch my business.

Having been born and raised in Drymen and now living here with my own family, I am the third generation of 'Elders' to have lived and worked in the village. From the age of 17 I worked in the Parts department of a local company before moving on to my dream job in the mechanical side of the industry in Glasgow, where I served my time as a Technician.

I take great pride in my work and look forward to providing customers with a quality, reliable and trustworthy service.

David Elder

Creative crocheting brightening our community

The secrecy surrounding the identity of who was responsible for the toppers on the Gartmore Rd/ Charles Crescent post box has been uncovered for a while now and as many will already know the genius behind it is none other than Vicky Girvan, who started creating these masterpieces after the passing of Queen Elizabeth II last year. She believed it would be nice to remember The Queen in a different way but admits that she was extremely nervous putting the first one on as she was unsure of what people's reactions would be.

She knew that keeping it a secret forever wouldn't be easy, but she did manage to remain anonymous throughout 4 of her post box toppers. When looking back at when her identity was still unknown, Vicky reminisced about hearing others talking about her designs and admits she felt a bit naughty knowing it was her and not saying anything.

It is hard to believe that Vicky is self-taught, teaching herself how to crochet by watching online tutorials via YouTube.

A simple design takes her about 6 weeks to make, however it depends how detailed it is. The Remembrance Day design took the longest to make as there were 180 individual poppies to complete.

At the time of writing Vicky's favourite design was the one to commemorate The Queen as it was her first one and is special to her "but...watch this space. Surprises are coming!"

It is hard to believe but Vicky admits to feeling shy about her work and at times still struggles with the attention. She still chooses to put them up when it's dark, so she doesn't draw attention to herself, and it is still a surprise for everyone.

When asked why she does it, Vicky simply said that she does it to make people feel



happy and to put a smile on people's faces. Although Vicky does admit that she now feels "a wee bit of pressure to create them," she really enjoys making them and doesn't think she'll stop anytime soon.

Primary 7, Drymen Primary School

Church News

Drymen Church offers these activities to the wider community. You'll be very welcome to all of them! ! Perhaps I should say "Taste and see!" as food is frequently on offer!

Weekly "Drop-in" coffee mornings in the Winnock Hotel on Fridays from 10.30 to 12 noon.

OPEN DOORS - at the Church - 12 noon to 2 pm on Wednesdays (from beginning of January until the end of March) - a warm place for company, a coffee/tea and lunchtime snack - no charge.

Monthly "GOOD COMPANIONS LUNCHEs" (for those 60+) from 12 - 2pm in the Church Annexe on the second Monday of each month. No charge (donations welcome). Please phone Drymen 660361 to book a place.

As always, you would be very welcome to attend our Sunday Morning Worship @ 11.30am. Coffee is served before the service from 11am.

You will be especially welcome to join us for our Christmas services:

Christingle - Friday 22nd at 5pm in Drymen Church - interactive family service



Advent Services - Sunday 24th at 10am in Buchanan Church and 11:30am in Drymen Church

Watchnight Service Sunday 24th at 11:30pm in Drymen Church (with a collection for Glasgow City Mission)

Christmas Day - family service at 11am in Buchanan Church @ 11.30am.

Alison Brown

No traffic calming needed The Square 1968



Photo courtesy of Shirley Bracewell

The Youth Café needs your help

Our session started with a Fancy-Dress Disco which was lots of fun, and we have also had a Craft night and a Games night. We are looking forward to a Panto outing in December, partially funded by the Buchanan Community Hydro Society. We have our Annual Christmas Gift delivery to the elderly, the unwell and our supporters. This year the gift is a shopping bag, designed by the young people and printed by the local Unique Company, partially funded by a Community Grant from Stirling Council.

The Café started a little later this term as we are currently having a staffing crisis. We are now in the position that, without a volunteer Chairperson or Secretary, we are unable to provide this safe place for our young people after the Christmas holidays. We have volunteer parents willing to help at the Friday evening activities but we need a couple of people who can support with the behind the scenes preparation and form a Committee with the current Treasurer.

The Café has provided fun activities and outings for the young people of our local villages for over 17 years, during which time we have been supported by many parents and local businesses. It is a great facility for the Village, so we are hoping to resolve this crisis as soon as possible.

Lynn Armstrong



Drymen W.I. - looking forward

We still meet in the Winnock Hotel, still few in number, but enthusiastic.

At our Christmas meal in the Winnock we have a secret Santa and also make our annual Charity donation - the recipient this year is 'Mountainview School for the Deaf' in Malawi.

We are looking forward to a talk in the New Year about "The Pumpkin Experience" in Arnprior, and a demo and hands on session on Sashiko embroidery (*basically a decorative running stitch. Ed.*). Thereafter our thoughts turn to gardening and flowers, with a talk on planters and baskets, and finally our ABM in May.

Of course, we will be preparing our entries for the Drymen Show and Federation competitions too. People who are not members of the W.I. can still enter special classes - just look at the Drymen Show schedule!

There is always something of interest at institute level or nationally, at meetings or online.

If you would like to find out more, speak to me, Elspeth O'Brien, and I'll put you in touch with the right person.

On Parade

Girlguiding in Drymen take part in the Remembrance parade along with the Cubs and Scouts from Drymen, as part of Drymen Church annual procession to the War Memorial. This is an important part of the year for us in Guiding as it's not only a time of reflection on the cost to multitudes of families that was paid for us to live in our current society, but it is a time to recognise some of the founding ethics of guiding, which is that of 'service to others.'

During The Great War, Girl Guides did not take on military roles but instead became hospital volunteers, first aiders, entertained wounded soldiers, worked on the land, and even volunteered in soup kitchens.

A War Service badge was created in 1914 and to receive it they had to do one of the following: three hours of voluntary war service a day for 21 days, 100 hours of agricultural work or make 15 items of clothing including a pair of pyjamas, four pairs of socks and two shirts. Girl Guides were also asked to collect the stones from fruits like apricots, cherries, plums,



dates, and nutshells because it was believed when burnt, the charcoal left could absorb poisonous gas, making them a great resource for gas masks.

In 2022 the Guides were honoured by The Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome in Essex (from where No 37 Squadron transitioned from the Royal Flying Corps to the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918) in a new exhibition called 'Guiding The Empire' that aims to bring this rich and vibrant history to life.

Here's what Ian Flint, Chief Executive of the museum said about it: "What many people might not be aware of is the vital role Girl Guides played in getting the Treaty Of Versailles signed, officially ending the First World War. If it hadn't been for Girl Guides ... there would be no end to the Great War because they were the couriers and special messengers for the Versailles Treaty that no-one knows about. No-one realises that they were the ones securing and moving the secret messages around between all the countries negotiating the peace. Especially in Essex, especially when we think about [The Marconi Wireless Telegraph] and the top-secret work that was done at Stow Maries. It was Girl Guides who were confidential messengers and couriers for Marconi which led to the Admiralty which led to them being used by MI5."

Jonathan Evans, a former Director-General of MI5, gave a speech at Bristol



University in October 2009 in which he explained why Girl Guides were used instead of Boy Scouts, saying: "The initial plan had been to use Boy Scouts, but they proved feckless and noisy, and the Girl Guides were a more reliable alternative. The Guides were required to be between the ages of 14 and 16 ... of good standing, quick, cheerful, and willing".

Drymen Guiding would like to say a huge thank you to Drymen Community Council for their continued support with supplying the memorial wreath for the guides to lay. We would also like to thank Croftamie Coffee club for their generous donation to help support our ongoing activities.

All sections meet on Wednesdays 6.30pm -8.00pm in Drymen Church.

If you have a young person interested in Guiding, please contact Rebekah Merrick – Leckie District Commissioner on:

beccaemm@gmail.com or 07789634433

Karen Merrick
1st Endrick Ranger Leader

Drymen Community Development Trust activities

As always, we have been busy on a number of fronts over the last few months. The Community Council kindly undertook a community wide survey to decide the future of the Road Safety Trial and announced the results at the end of November. 460 surveys were completed, with 48.7% voting to continue with the trial and 51.3% voting to end the trial early. We are currently working to have the trial removed as soon as practicable, noting that the planters and lines need to be removed at the same time for safety reasons.

A public toilet feasibility study is currently underway, with a number of options being considered with some useful input from a number of local organisations and businesses. Hopefully, most of the community would agree that public toilets are needed in the village to meet the needs of both locals and visitors. The challenge, sadly, is to find a way of making them financially sustainable at a time when many local authorities are looking to close their public toilets to reduce costs. The results of the study will be shared with the community when it is completed.

Several members of the Trust spent some time in November tidying up the flower beds at the southern end of the square for the winter, as they had started to look a little wild. Thanks to Marina for providing guidance!

Hopefully many of you will have joined us for the Christmas Tree light switch-on on 10th December. You may also have noticed some of the advent windows popping up around the village. A map of the windows can be found on the Drymen website here <https://www.drymen.org/drymen-advent-windows>.

As always, we welcome new members to the Development Trust. It is £10 to join and can be done on our website page here: www.drymen.org/community-trust. We are also hoping to create a paths group to do some regular (monthly?) maintenance of local footpaths – if anyone would like to join and help out, please let us know at hello@drymen.org.

DCDT wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

An update on the National Park Partnership Plan

This summer, residents, businesses and community groups in Drymen were invited to share their views about the future of the National Park.

Contributions were sought as part of a consultation on the next National Park Partnership Plan - the five-year plan that guides how all of those with a role to play in looking after the National Park will work together to achieve a shared vision for the area.

Comments were received on key issues such as nature restoration, land use change, transport, jobs and housing.

All the feedback received is now being used to inform the final National Park Partnership Plan which will be presented to the National Park Authority Board in December for approval, before being submitted to Scottish Ministers.

Gordon Watson, Chief Executive at Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority, said: "The recent flood events that affected communities across the National Park were a stark reminder that climate change is already having an impact on people's lives and livelihoods.

"More than ever before, it is clear that collective action is required to reshape the Park as a climate-resilient place where people and nature thrive together.

"We look forward to sharing the final National Park Partnership Plan with communities and visitors in Spring 2024 – and to coming together to restore nature, tackle climate change and ensure greener economic growth for the National Park."

More information about the upcoming National Park Partnership Plan can be found online at lochlomond-trossachs.org/future.

Probus Club of Lomond

Christmas brings the first half of a season to a close, during which members have heard a diverse range of talks which has allowed them to look back at; the history of mountaineering in Scotland and the naval involvement in the Great War whilst debating the current crises in the NHS, Africa and more globally.

The Walks programme has taken in a visit to the RSPB reserve at Gartocharn followed by lunch at the Clachan and a meander along the old railway line from Croftamie to Gartness starting and finishing at the But & Ben.

The second half of the season begins with the Club's Annual Lunch in the Winnock Hotel on 11 January and continues with a further series of thought-provoking talks all followed up with lunch and discussion in the Clachan

If you would like more information on Probus, please contact the Secretary, Duncan Gilmour on 07717 477152.



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