

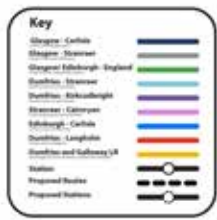
# GLENKENS GAZETTE

June/July 2026

ISSUE 154

FREE

## Reopening the Stranraer to Dumfries railway line?



The Dumfries to Stranraer line once served as a crucial link between southern Scotland and England, playing a significant role in the region's connectivity and economic vitality.

However, the unfortunate cuts in the 1960s had a profound impact, leaving communities isolated and creating one of the largest stretches in the country without a rail link.

Fast forward to today, and there is a renewed sense of optimism surrounding the potential restoration of this vital route, running directly through the Glenkens.

The British Regional Transport Association is actively considering the Dumfries to Stranraer line as a means to promote more environmentally friendly travel between these two towns.

Recently, they held a meeting in Dumfries to present their ideas and gather valuable public feedback.

*Continued on p2...*

## A wooden figure with a story to tell...

A life size wooden figure has been crafted to sit on the picnic bench which has been installed at the top of Waterside Hill, Dalry.

A Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands project, the sculpture is part artistic installation and part heritage engagement opportunity, with the aim of encouraging visitors to enjoy the view and consider the Glenkens, both past and present.

Before her unveiling, the wooden sculpture was touring the Glenkens. The tour was partly for the sheer joy of it but also to introduce the project to the wider public, including those that might not be able to meet her in due course at the top of Waterside Hill.

Several of these travelling appearances have been accompanied by Anne Errington, local storyteller, giving a new way to engage with our heritage. *Continued on p3...*



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# A rail link for the Glenkens

## Continued from front page...

The meeting was overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees expressing strong support for the railway project over the alternative A75 road improvements.

Among those present was Laura Moody, a representative from the Scottish Greens. Her party is a staunch advocate for the restoration of the railway, believing it would significantly reduce the number of goods transported on roads, thereby decreasing traffic congestion and pollution.

Additionally, they argue that the railway would strengthen local communities by improving access to jobs, education, and healthcare, while also facilitating easier travel from Ireland to the rest of the UK.

The successful reintroduction of railways in other parts of Scotland, such as the Borders Railway and the Levenmouth rail

link in Fife, serves as a testament to the economic growth and development that such projects can bring.

These lines have not only connected isolated areas but have also spurred job creation, increased housing availability, and led to substantial improvements in infrastructure.

The Dumfries to Stranraer line, however, promises to offer even greater benefits by linking Dumfries and Galloway not only to each other but also to Ireland and the European continent.

Historically, this route has been a major artery, yet it has been largely overlooked over the years. The sheer volume of lorries transporting goods between the UK and Ireland through this channel is evident on the roads, highlighting the urgent need for a more sustainable and efficient transport solution.

The proposed railway would provide a much-needed alternative, reducing the reliance on road transport and easing the pressure on existing infrastructure.

One concern raised by the public was the number of homes built on the old railway track. To address this, the British Regional Transport Association has assured everyone that they will explore all possible options to prevent these homes from being demolished.

They emphasised that a modern railway does not necessarily have to be built on

the same route, and alternative solutions will be considered to accommodate both the railway and existing communities.

The proposed route envisions stations at key locations including Dalbeattie, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbright, Crossmichael, New Galloway, Gatehouse of Fleet, Creetown, Newton Stewart, Kirkcowan, Glenluce, and finally, Stranraer.

Additionally, there is a plan for a branch to the ferry terminals at Cairnryan, which could be achieved via a single straight line or with a branch off from the main route.

This comprehensive network would ensure that a wide range of communities benefit from the railway, including New Galloway, Balmclellan, St John's town of Dalry, and Mossdale, the site of the original station now a private residence.

The restoration of the railway would be a fantastic asset to the Glenkens region, offering a safer, quicker, and more sustainable way to travel. It would also boost tourism by making the area more accessible to visitors and create new jobs in construction, maintenance, and related industries.

Overall, the Dumfries to Stranraer line represents a promising opportunity to revitalise the region, enhance connectivity, paving the way for a brighter future.

Scott Borthwick

See p25 for information on a talk on the Port Road Line...



## School sponsored walk

On Thursday 21 May pupils from Dalry Primary School walked five miles up and around Waterside Hill.

Parent Amy Clark Kennedy said: "The children are so pleased to have been able to take part and be 'Climbing our challenges and soaring to a new future', just like our fantastic school vision!"

Funds raised will go towards our end of year school trip and Scottish Action for Mental Health. "We have been walking alongside Craig Ferguson in his Tartan Trek across America and the children want to donate to his cause (SAMH) too."

If you would like to donate you can visit [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/dalryprimary](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/dalryprimary) or scan the QR code here.



## The Optimistic Environmentalist

It is with sadness that the Gazette would like to inform readers of the passing of our Optimistic Environmentalist columnist, Denise MacDonald-Kiernan, in March this year.

For many years Denise has contributed insightful, interesting and useful content to the *Gazette*, and her input will be missed. Denise's husband Richard has kindly offered to continue the current series on which Denise was working.

A very moving service was held at Roucan Loch Crematorium, led by Reverend David Bartholomew. Our thoughts and wishes go to Richard, and also to their son, Arran.

# Community spirit powers Arctic swim

A Crossmichael mum is preparing to take on one of the world's coldest swimming challenges after overcoming thyroid cancer and finding strength in her local community.

Suzy Rook, 37, who featured in the recent Our Glenkens series of video shorts ([www.glenkens.scot/our-glenkens](http://www.glenkens.scot/our-glenkens) - turn to p16 for more on this project) will travel to Svalbard in Norway in June to attempt a one-kilometre Arctic swim in waters close to the North Pole. The fundraiser will support the Butterfly Thyroid Cancer Trust and mental health charity Back Onside.

A former Scotland rugby international with 13 caps between 2011 and 2013, Suzy says cold water swimming became a lifeline during some of the toughest years of her life.

Last year, she underwent major surgery to remove a 10cm mass from her neck after years of monitoring. Weeks later, she was told the growth was cancerous.

"The recovery was grim," she said. "But once I was able to, I got back into the cold water and back training again. It's helped both my physical and mental wellbeing hugely."

Suzy, who is also a mum-of-three, has continued playing club rugby and recently returned to the pitch after receiving the all-clear. She credits rugby, wild swimming and the support of family and friends for helping

her through periods of grief, trauma and anxiety.

She says the strength of the local community has been overwhelming.

"I love the lovely Gallovidians, we are a rare bunch, heart of gold and support folk doing well," she said. "It makes going to the supermarket tricky doing these out-there challenges, but how humbling to have such epic support and from local businesses throughout Stewartry."

Suzy is hoping to raise £7,000 for her two chosen charities.

"It would be amazing to get the total of the two charities to £7,000," she said. "Back Onside is a mental health charity, in memory of my lovely Glenkens pal who died of suicide in 2018."

Since November, Suzy has completed daily cold-water dips and swims as part of her training for the Arctic challenge, often braving Scotland's lochs, seas and waterfalls in near-freezing temperatures.

She believes rural life brings people together in a unique way, with neighbours, sports clubs and local groups rallying round during difficult times.

"Being part of a team and



community matters," she said. "Cold water and rugby have been a huge support to me. I want people to know it's okay not to be okay and that there's always support out there."

Now focused on recovery and raising awareness of cancer and mental health in younger people, Suzy hopes her story will encourage others to seek support, stay active and make the most of life.

You can support Suzy's inspiring endeavours via one, or both, of her Just Giving pages: [www.justgiving.com/page/suzanne-rook-9](http://www.justgiving.com/page/suzanne-rook-9) or [www.justgiving.com/page/suzanne-rook-8](http://www.justgiving.com/page/suzanne-rook-8)



## The journey of the lady of Waterside Hill

**Continued from front page...**

Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands has been working with a wide range of partners on the 'Woodlands Plus' project - adding value to woodlands in the region.

This has included work at Glaisters Bridge near Corsock, support of an apprentice at Carsphairn's Muirdrochwood and recreational improvements to Waterside Hill, a local landmark.

Waterside Hill hosted a woodland creation scheme which is now planted and this gave the opportunity to work with Earlstoun Estate and Scottish Woodlands to add recreational value to the Southern Upland Way as it traverses the hill.

Last year new interpretation panels were installed at each end of the path on the hill which lifted the lid on some of the local heritage and history. A picnic bench was also installed near the summit for passing travellers to enjoy a break with an

amazing view. But there was an ambition for something a bit...unique...

"We have been on such a journey with this project," said McNabb Laurie of D&G Woodlands. "Waterside Hill has a witchcraft connection, hosting The Score, a circular scratch in the ground which Adam Forrester is alleged to have carved with his sword to protect against a horde of chasing witches.

"This has brought a complexity to the sculpture design - what is her name? Has she also escaped the witches? Or is she a witch? And what even was a witch? Were they better described as herbalists and storytellers who were held in high esteem until one of their cures didn't work and they were hounded?"

It is so tempting to specify a name and assign a story, but the best part of this project has been how everyone has made their own connection with her.

"In many ways, she has already met our aims through the tour and how this has turned into an opportunity to consider stories in the

Glenkens today and through history."

It is hoped that a pause at the bench will prove a highlight of a long day walking the Southern Upland Way, encouraging passersby to pause and consider the stories all around us, those forgotten and those still to be made...

Anne Errington sets the scene by saying: "As Cormac mac Cuilennáin may have said of her, 'She is the listener in the woods, she is the gazer at the stars .....as described by name of pet and fate!'"

The sculpture has been made by Robert Lawrence ([www.ingrainedculture.co.uk](http://www.ingrainedculture.co.uk)), funded by the Glenkens & District Trust. The tour of the Glenkens is made possible thanks to the support of GCAT's Cultural Glenkens project and a range of partners.

The install on Waterside Hill has been made possible thanks to the support of Earlstoun Estate, the landowner, and the ongoing support of the Southern Upland Way Rangers.

## New chair for Glenkens & District Trust

After a thorough recruitment process, Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) has announced the appointment of Helen Keron as a Trustee, taking on the role of chair later in the year. Well known within the wider Glenkens, Helen brings a wealth of experience in community development and funding. She has been involved in numerous organisations across the region in both a voluntary and employed capacity, and understands the challenges and

benefits of living and working in a rural community. Helen will take over as Chair of GDT in November, succeeding Fiona Smith, who will step down after eight successful years in the position. Helen's appointment marks an exciting new chapter for GDT and is an important step in achieving a seamless handover for the organisation. Speaking about the appointment, Steve Connelly, deputy chair, who led the process on behalf of GDT, said: "The trustees are delighted to appoint Helen as a trustee and to be the chair when Fiona steps down later this year...We are confident that she will bring significant experience and insight to support GDT. "This will enable us to achieve our goal of ensuring that

community benefit funds have long term positive impacts locally, through good stewardship and partnership working." Helen commented: "I am excited to be joining Glenkens & District Trust at such an important time. GDT plays a vital role in supporting communities across the Glenkens and District, and I look forward to working with my fellow Trustees, Foundation Scotland and developers to build on the strong foundations already in place. "It's so important to keep local voices at the heart of the decision-making on how these transformational community benefit monies can be utilised." The Glenkens & District Trust embraces the fact that community benefit funding



provides long-term monies for the area, and the need for consistent and strategic planning. This planned transition reflects GDT's commitment to continuity, strong governance and to earning the ongoing support of the communities it serves.

## Glenkens youth group news



In early February, the Glenkens Youth Group enjoyed an evening at the Bouldover Climbing Centre in Dumfries, thanks to generous funding from the Glenkens Community Shop. Sixteen young people took part, with several trying climbing for the first time. The group showed great enthusiasm, skill and courage and received compliments on both their behaviour and climbing ability,

with many being keen to return. The visit also led to an exciting creative opportunity. The group was invited to help design and paint a mural for the entrance corridor at the climbing centre. Working with local artist Emma, the youngsters sketched out ideas which were incorporated into the final design. In April, a smaller group returned to paint the mural, creating a bright and colourful welcome for visitors to the centre. March brought another new experience, with local yoga teacher Amy Fowler leading a yoga session for the group. For many, it was their first introduction to yoga, and the young people impressed with their balance and flexibility. The group has also been enjoying

regular art and craft activities with local artist Ness Johnson, alongside games evenings featuring Dungeons and Dragons and Catan, supported by Stewartry Youth Practitioner Vicky. In May the Loch Ken Trust provided a water safety and 'paddle safe' session at the Galloway Activity Centre, while over summer New Galloway Golf Course is offering free golf lessons for children aged eight and over. The group is also beginning to plan for the summer holidays, with young people already sharing ideas for future outings and activities.



Thanks go to everyone who continues to support the youth group, especially the Glenkens Community and Arts Trust. For more information, contact [glenkensyouth@gmail.com](mailto:glenkensyouth@gmail.com)

*Sue Curtis, Glenkens Youth Group Lead*

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# Bairn Banter's Easter eggstravaganza

Local children's group Bairn Banter welcomed a total of 25 children to their annual Easter egg hunt held at the Lagwyne Hall in Carsphairn.

Families from across the Glenkens came along to join in with the range of egg-citing Easter-themed activities on offer ranging from arts and crafts, bunny hoopla, bingo, bunny sack race, egg relay race, and the all-important egg hunting!

Children of all ages took part in the fun day and the presence of some older children in the group

meant there were plenty of helpers to hide the eggs for each group of egg-hunters. When all the eggs were successfully found, an exhilarating egg and spoon race then took place.

As per our annual tradition, we encourage the parents to get involved with the activities, which does tend to mean things can become slightly competitive at times! Perhaps it's a kick start into training for the parents' races at school Sports Day?

Well done to all the willing participants and their sporting achievements.

Alongside the fun activities taking place within the main hall and in the children's garden, the group extended a warm welcome to Carol Kane from Vattenfall as she attended the event for another

year, providing an additional windsock craft activity and virtual reality equipment.

With all the egg-citement and fun filling the Lagwyne Hall, volunteers provided families with delicious refreshments of hot cross buns and a selection of fruit. As the organisers drew the event to a close, we all sat in a circle, perking our ears up as we listened to the Bad Hare Day Easter story that incorporates pass-the-parcel with listening for 'left' and 'right' instruction throughout the story.



Organisers of Bairn Banter would like to thank all those families who came along to get involved with the fun-filled, annual event, as well as to Vattenfall, who very kindly offered a donation of little and large eggs for the attendees.

*Melissa, Lead Coordinator, Bairn Banter*

# Carsphairn village shop to open soon

The voluntary committee of Carsphairn Village Shop Limited (CVSL) has been working hard to prepare for the shop's upcoming opening.

The garden has taken longer than expected (over 600 volunteer hours and counting), as there was more to clear and tidy than first thought.

Alongside this, work has continued on refreshing the building, including repainting and giving the exterior a lift with a new colour for the window surrounds.

Flat-pack benches have now started to arrive, and assembly will begin shortly. Progress on finishing the house has occasionally been challenging, particularly with decorators in short supply in such a remote rural area and some deliveries taking longer than anticipated. Even so, steady progress continues.

Although the project has taken longer than originally planned, the full refresh of the shop and adjoining house has breathed new life into this long-established, community-owned property.

Recruitment for staff has now closed, and we are delighted with the quality of applications received. We look forward to being fully staffed very soon.

We would also like to recognise that without the dedication of volunteers, this project to re-establish a shop in Carsphairn simply would not be possible.

Community groups like ours are truly valued across the Glenkens, and we are very grateful for the continued support and goodwill. To all volunteers across the area, your time and effort does not go unnoticed.

We are also thrilled with the beautifully restored lamp,



lovingly repaired by the Glenkens Men Shed, which has now been returned to its rightful place and looks fantastic.

*Emily Wall, on behalf of the CVSL Committee*

# An update from the Glenkens Cub Scouts

The Cubs held a bake sale recently; they were challenged to make six small cakes, bring them into our meeting and instead of money being exchanged, they received tokens and could choose a variety of cakes to purchase and take home.

Our Easter egg competition never ceases to amaze. We had a garage with cars, an egg gym, T-rex eggs, bee scene, Easter morning, chick-in-a-house, golden goose, bank robbery, police for the bank robbery, Easter basket with chicks, and city with superman. Well done all!

We would like to thank Christine Rankin, Nigel Scott and David Shepherd, who are members of the New Galloway District Trustee Board, and are retiring at the AGM in May. Christine was the chairperson during a difficult time with all the changes happening in Scouting,

and she did a great job of keeping us on track.

She has been involved in Scouting for many years, as has Nigel Scott, who is support team lead and trustee, and goes back many years, always there to help and give valuable advice.

Thank you both, you will be missed, David is also standing down, and has been treasurer for three years. Enjoy your retirement.

Finally, please come and visit the Cub stall at the Alternative Games in August.

*Yours in Scouting, Heather and Hannah*

# Cultural bridge: from Dalry to Cologne

This summer, a new international exchange will link the Glenkens with Sülz in Cologne, Germany, exploring what keeps volunteers showing up - and how shared spaces shape community life.

At first glance, Sülz and Dalry do not seem obvious partners. Sülz, a leafy and affluent neighbourhood in Cologne, is full of cafés, organic markets and toy shops.

Dalry, by contrast, is a small Glenkens village where most people know one another by name. Yet both places share something quietly important; community spaces that belong to everyone, and volunteers who keep them alive.

Launching in Dalry this summer, the exchange is funded by the Cultural Bridge Fund, which supports non-profit organisations in the UK and

Germany to connect, share knowledge and exchange practical approaches. The project will explore volunteering, civic participation and belonging across rural and urban settings.

in Dalry, public life centres around places such as the Glenkens Community Shop, Dalry Town Hall and the Glenkens Community Centre. In Sülz, it centres on Sternplatz - 'Star Square' - a neighbourhood meeting place transformed from a neglected crossroads into a welcoming square with seating, flowers and a shared bookcase.

That transformation was supported by Agora Köln, which works alongside cultural groups, activists and social organisations to strengthen citizen-led projects.

For this exchange, Agora Köln is partnering with UK charity People's Voice Media, whose community reporting approach trains people to gather and share stories ethically and collaboratively.

Participants will learn practical skills including interviewing fellow

volunteers, recording audio and video, taking photographs and working with contributors to tell stories from the inside out. The project will compare urban and rural experiences to explore what motivates people to get involved, what helps them stay involved and what barriers they face.

As Agora Köln's Gabi Linde explains: "It will give us a fabulous opportunity to continue our research into volunteering and dig deep into why civic participation matters to people."

Alongside online meetings, three delegates from each community will visit the other in person, touring key sites and



**Neighbours enjoying a shared meal at Sternplatz - 'Star Square' - in Cologne**

reflecting on how volunteering and civic participation appear in everyday life. The Dalry strand will be based at the Glenkens Community Centre and begins with community reporting training sessions on 24 June and 26 August, and drop-in sessions will also run throughout the summer.

Anyone interested in taking part can contact Kath Peters at [kath@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk](mailto:kath@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk) or 07811 957 578.



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## Plant & bake sale

The St Margaret's Church Plant & Bake Sale has become a popular annual fixture in the Glenkens.

The weather this year held out; despite some threatening clouds, it didn't rain until after the sale was finished and the gazebo taken down.

From the moment the sale opened there was a steady stream of people stocking up on flowers, herbaceous plants, tomato plants and seedlings, before heading for the baking section inside the church.

A huge array of delicious cakes, tarts, biscuits and tablet, including scones and pancakes still warm from the oven, proved as popular as always. And many folk stayed to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a selection of traybakes.

Christine Rankin, president of the St Margaret's Guild, said: "Many thanks to all who provided plants and baking, as well as those who helped set up the sale. We were particularly grateful to the Dalbeattie Garden Centre donation of colourful bedding plants was a great boost.

"We are delighted to have raised over £700 for the Castle Douglas Hospital League of Friends".



## Dalry Secondary School

Dalry Secondary pupils have been having an action-packed summer term with all kinds of exciting local partnership working...

There was an excellent trip to the Galloway Activity Centre on Loch Ken, supported by Carsphairn Renewable Energy Fund and Dalry Community Council.

Students have been working on an English project with Jo Jackson from the CatStrand.

They have been reading Ros Ollin's book *Restoring Elspeth*, which contains poems about a historical character from the Glenkens, Elspeth McEwan, who is famously the last person in Scotland to have

been executed for witchcraft. They have done a poetry reading on the top of the Mulloch, and created displays which can be seen in the CatStrand from 31 May to align with Ros Ollin's talk at the CatStrand entitled *Restoring Elspeth*.

Mary Acheson



## Working on my Saltire Award by Piri Whitty

What I expected when I started work towards the Saltire Award was sitting at one of the tables deep in a book, and beautifully organised shelves and perhaps a cat in the window.

The reality was that I spent 10 hours stacking heavy novels and trying to organise the

library from a-z, which took longer than you might think because you forget that books weigh roughly the same as small planets.

As for assuming every library comes with a wise sleepy old cat... if only! Apart from lifting heavy books I also enjoyed making poster and sorting new books that had been requested.

However, my favourite part of the job was definitely making displays for an example the chalk board that I set up to vote for book of the month.

Being in the library also proved a helpful distraction for classmates doing maths work, who got sidetracked into helping me by enthusiastically recommending all the wrong books.

If I want to achieve the next award, for 25 hours, I am going to have to spend nights in the library as well as days.

They say success requires sacrifice. I just hope that doesn't mean sacrificing my bed and moving into the library.



## Pamela Young Trust Balmaclellan update

As previously reported in the Gazette, planning permission has been granted for the Pamela Young Trust's (PYT) development of two flats and one house at the old filling station site in Balmaclellan.

Unfortunately, after putting the plans out to tender, the responses received were considerably over budget (an increase of £100k per property). The PYT Trustees have therefore paused the development while

the design team undertake a full analysis of the proposals to identify any areas for reducing costs, including looking at a different approach to construction.

Alan Smith, chairman of PYT, said: "We are all aware of the difficult economic environment we are in the at the moment but we were still surprised by the considerable increase in costs.

"We know there is a strong demand for low-cost rental properties locally but we cannot allow the costs for the new development to jeopardise the overall financial strength of PYT which is so important for maintaining our existing housing stock, albeit we intend to help

fund the development with the support of outside bodies."

The rural nature and topography of the site have always meant that it was going to be fairly expensive to develop, and in addition, a recent study pointed to Dumfries and Galloway as being an area with one of the highest build costs in Scotland.

But the Trustees remain committed to the development and Alan Smith continues: "We are hopeful that an alternative model can be found to

enable us to proceed but this is likely to be at a slower pace than originally envisaged".

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# Janet Ibbotson designs

Janet Ibbotson is a clothing designer and maker based in Auchencairn, who has a stall at the annual Corsock Craft Fair and also participated in Spring Fling for many years.

It was suggested by Pia, from Dalry, after seeing Janet's work at the Corsock fair, that *Gazette* readers might enjoy finding out about Janet and her work as she is in the process of selling off her stock ahead of retiring. Pia was very impressed by Janet's creations and felt it would be an excellent opportunity for Glenkens residents to own a Janet Ibbotson original. So, without further ado, here is Janet's story in her own words...

*The truth is that I started professionally as a designer by mistake in 1966. I had always made my own clothes - not very well, but stylish - and was asked to go for an interview with John*

*Stevens up in Carnaby Street, London.*

*I was working in a shop in Brighton at the time. In my innocence I assumed he wanted me to work in one of his shops. The next day he left for the USA and the factory boss turned up asking where the patterns she had been promised were. I said I didn't know how to cut patterns, and her reply was that I'd better bloody well learn. Never one to admit failure - and mini skirts were not that complicated - I set about learning.*

*I worked there for a year and became designer, pattern cutter, sample maker and house model. I*

*For themes and colours, who knows where they come from. I might see a painting, a landscape... I find inspiration anywhere...*

*was earning twelve pounds a week, and when I asked for a pay rise the answer was no; I left that day and they had to employ three people to replace me.*

*I never quite understand where a design comes from. It's a bit like having a fruit machine in your brain with details and colours flashing by, then one by one they settle into place.*

*Quite often I make a pattern, roughly put the design together, then when I'm happy with the balance, shape and fit, I finally make a drawing. All the wrong way around apparently, but it works for me. I always have the type of client it might suit in my head, along with the raw material and colour.*

*For forty-two years I ran a small company making clothes in fine leather and suede. We sold in America, Germany and several other countries, but when we started selling to Japan it was all hands to the mill, and they bought sixty percent of everything we were able to make for six years. They were wonderful to deal with. I also had a shop in South Kensington.*

*For themes and colours, who knows where they come from. I might see a painting, a landscape, or an accidental combination of colours. I find inspiration anywhere, but funnily enough I never look at clothes for ideas.*

*In all the years that I have designed I have striven to improve the quality of everything we produced.*



*When I retired for the first time, leaving London and moving to Scotland, I thought I was done. But I couldn't stop. By then I realised I needed to work with something lighter than leather or suede.*

*I built a studio at the end of my garden and carried on, this time working alone. With patience, I learnt how to sew the beautiful tweeds and cashmeres available up here. I always knew how things should be done to look good, and I take pride in the quality I produce. Each stitch is done by me.*

*Sadly age has caught up with me and last year I decided to hang up the tape measure. Now, at eighty-two, I can look back on an extremely full and adventurous life. I have always enjoyed photography and blessed the day I met the lovely Sarah Ade (your Gazette editor, dear readers) who was patient enough to model for me.*

*For fourteen years I have taken part in Spring Fling and truly enjoyed exhibiting at the Corsock Christmas Fair.*

*During the last fifteen years I have had the privilege of making clothes to measure for many clients, several of whom have become dear friends. I still take the occasional order and enjoy doing so. I also have unsold samples in my studio and would be happy to see interested clients.*

*The samples are stock sizes, which means they are available at advantageous prices. However, if you would like something made to fit or in a special colour, please ask - though I can't make a new garment at a sale price.*

To see more of Janet's work, visit [www.janetibbotson.co.uk](http://www.janetibbotson.co.uk) or call or email to arrange a visit - 01556 640552 or [janetibbotson80@gmail.com](mailto:janetibbotson80@gmail.com)



**Top: Janet Ibbotson in her garden at home in Auchencairn  
Left: two of Janet's jackets being modelled by Sarah**

## Glenkens Youth Correspondent

Joshua Wells, aged 16, is our *Gazette* youth correspondent and in each edition he will be writing about topics which interest him. In this issue Joshua talks about Balmaclellan Parish Church.



**B**uilt in 1753, Balmaclellan Parish Church has been the centre-point of village life for centuries.

Yet, following its long, faithful history as a Presbyterian church, church-goers will no longer visit, as the building is now being

sold. With this significant news, a specific, memorable piece of the church's heritage is being moved to ensure its preservation. Adorning a poignant quotation from Malachi 3:17: "And they shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts in that day when I make up my jewels", the Webster stained glass window has observed all events at the church with great honour for nearly a century.

The stained glass window was designed and built by the celebrated artist Gordon Webster and installed in 1928. Gordon, the son of the renowned stained-glass artist Alfred (Alf) Webster, created windows for many Scottish churches with a vibrant style.

The Balmaclellan window is dedicated to the memory of John Murray, who died in Flanders during the First World War, and it specifically honours his father, the Reverend George

Murray, whose name also appears on a neighbouring tablet within the church.

The stunning window depicts Jesus in a heavenly position among his followers and two angels above him, offering a message of comfort and hope. Its colourful depiction casts

beyond its 1753 construction; it is believed a church has stood on this site since the 15th century. Furthermore, the churchyard is a significant historical site.

The church features an early 18th-century table-stone commemorating the

## Balmaclellan Parish Church has a rich history that stretches back beyond its 1753 construction...

beautiful light across the church floor, making the church feel warmer and more welcoming to visitors. It can be argued to be a stand-out piece for that era; upon looking closely, the imagery is of incredible detail and holds a large impact on the room.

As the church faces its future in private hands, this precious piece of art is being relocated to the church in Dalry, where it will continue to be displayed for public viewing.

This relocation ensures that the memory of the Covenanters, the Reverend Murray, and the community's war dead will be preserved.

Balmaclellan Parish Church has a rich history that stretches back

covenanting martyr Robert Grierson, who was executed in 1683 and the supposed unmarked grave of Elspeth McEwan, the last woman to be burned as a witch in Dumfries and Galloway.

The area is also deeply connected to Sir Walter Scott's novel *Old Mortality*; a statue relating to the book lies outside.

While the building itself is transitioning to new ownership, the removal of the Gordon Webster window serves as a lasting tribute to the community's devotion. It guarantees that the "jewels" of Balmaclellan, the art and memories of the church, continue to shine in their new home.



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## Spring into life, health and wellbeing

Spring Into Life, held in April, followed on from the success of the Healthy Harvests event last September

The gathering celebrated spring and the positive effect the changing season can have on our bodies and wellbeing.

The event gave people an opportunity to dedicate time to self-care and explore ways to improve physical and mental health through nutrition, gentle exercise, creativity and complementary therapy.

Activities began with yoga led by Amy Paterson, giving everyone a chance to stretch and focus on what they hoped to gain

from the day. Participants could also try reflexology with local practitioners Kath Peters and Susan Furnish.

Nutritionist Lorna Willock gave an informative talk on maximising nutrition for brains and bones.

This was followed by a healthy lunch of homemade soups, sourdough bread from Earth's Crust bakery in Castle Douglas, and a refined sugar-free sweet treat prepared by Lorna.

Abi Mordin from Propagate Scotland led a spring seed-sowing session, encouraging people to reflect

on new life and the benefits of gardening and growing. Participants shared memories of childhood gardens, rhubarb crumbles and blackberry-picking, celebrating the power of plants and shared experience.

At the close of the day, Kirstie Templeton facilitated a guided meditation session, allowing people to unwind and reflect.

The event aimed to give people the opportunity to try wellbeing activities at an affordable price, help local practitioners build connections, and offer participants a full day of self-care.

Supported by the Glenkens Community Shop, funds raised through ticket sales will be donated to the Glenkens Community Centre to support its ongoing renovation.

*Kath Peters*



## Aerial yoga with Dr Maria Papavergos

The art of aerial yoga; freedom, fluidity and fitness in flight.

A practice to exhilarate, energise and entertain you. It is fun and feel-good, whilst reaping rewards for your fitness. Delivering on strength training and flexibility improvement, aerial yoga will challenge you physically and mentally, whilst doing wonders for your wellbeing.

An established, friendly class that welcomes beginners runs for 45 minutes on Monday evenings at Barwhillanty Estate at 7.30pm.

Maria Yerburch (Dr Maria Papavergos) set up her studio in the former disused squash court on the Estate, to offer a different experience of yoga to the community and welcome the curious, keen to try something new.

Following the launch of her classes over five years ago, she has delighted in coaching many a budding aerial yogi to experience the magic of the aerial hammock and watched many grow into competent aerialists.

"I love sharing the moment when students surprise themselves by what they can do and the joy they experience in doing so."

With Maria's background as a dentist and wellness advocate, also known as The Lifestyle Dentist @thelifestyledentist, she is passionate about health and takes a whole-body approach to oral health.

She views movement, mobility and grip strength as important aspects of keeping well as we age. Aerial yoga is a physical practice that incorporates strength training, which is linked to improved health outcomes,

including heart health, bone health and immune health.

Grip strength has been proposed as a biomarker for overall health status, with aerial yoga being a great grip strength building practice; building strength in the hands and forearms.

Grip strength has been associated with a longer healthspan, with poor grip strength linking to cognitive decline, increased mortality from inflammatory disorders as well as fragility fractures as we age.

Practices, like aerial yoga, that use your own body weight, also help maintain muscle mass, keep bones strong and help protect against osteoporosis.

Inversions form another part of aerial practice, offering accessible entries that allow you to experience the numerous health benefits from being upside down.

From improved circulation through stimulation of venous blood flow to increased energy from the surge in oxygen that releases endorphins such as dopamine, inverting makes you feel good too!

The aerial hammock is a delightful prop that supports you to stretch deeply, facilitate inversions and allows you to access movement in flight.

The class is a community of mixed levels, welcoming and supporting all at every stage of their aerial journey.

Beginners are welcome alongside more experienced yogis and classes offer progressions, so you can find your own level.

So if you are curious to experience something new and looking for a fun way to keep fit, whilst improving your strength and flexibility, perhaps it's worth giving aerial yoga a go...

To find out more visit [www.barwhillantystate.co.uk/discover](http://www.barwhillantystate.co.uk/discover)



## Reading the Land *a seasonal column by Paul Clarke*

This is the first in a regular column on permaculture, biodynamics, and reading the rhythms of the land in Galloway. Paul Clarke is the founding director of with Naturally Smart CIC at Hensol Wood, outside Mossdale.

### The art of patience...

The planting calendar says we are deep into spring. Step outside on a clear morning here in Glenkens at five am and the sun is already nudging above the horizon signalling the day ahead which is long and bright, the birds are in full voice, and everything above ground is moving fast.

But put your hand on the soil and it tells a different story.

This year has felt like a long springtime, and at the time of writing, we are still waking up to early morning frosts. That is not unusual here, and it is not a problem. It is information. The land is simply on its own schedule, and that schedule does not match the one on your planting calendar.

This gap between the generic world of a printed calendar and the specific knowledge of your own ground is one of the most important things to understand if you want to grow anything, or work with the land in any meaningful way.

The air warms quickly. Soil takes weeks longer. Scientists call it thermal lag, the soil's sheer

physical mass means it absorbs heat slowly in spring and holds it slowly in autumn. A warm week in May can feel like summer in the air while the ground at two or three inches deep is still barely above the temperature that stopped roots growing in February.

In practical terms this means that even now, in mid-May, the soil may not yet have reached the 7-10°C that most vegetable seeds need to germinate reliably. Rush it, and seeds rot in cold wet ground. Wait for the land rather than the date, and everything goes in at the right moment. We have to learn patience.

This is exactly what biodynamic and permaculture practice asks of us: not to impose our timetable on the land, but to read what the land is actually doing.

In biodynamic farming developed from Rudolf Steiner's agricultural lectures a century ago the grower works with natural rhythms at every scale.

The phase of the moon, the position of the moon against the constellations, the ascending and descending arc of the lunar cycle; all are read as influences on the behaviour of plants, soil moisture, and root activity.

It sounds complex, but the underlying instinct is simple: the farm is part of a larger living

system, and the job of the farmer is to listen and observe that system rather than override and attempt (rather foolishly) to control it.

Permaculture shares that instinct, through careful observation, pattern recognition, and design that works with natural energy flows rather than against them.

Both traditions would say the same thing about this chilly period in May: use the frosts. Use this in-between time. It is ideal for building up compost, for buying us time to prepare planting beds, for observing where the wet patches are in the land, find where the frost sits longest and make note of it for



future years, identify which part of the south-facing slopes warm first.

During the descending moon period when biodynamic practice says forces are drawing back into the soil is a good time for exactly this kind of ground preparation work.

The summer solstice is not far away. The soil will get there. Let it take its time and it will give back in abundance.

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# Land and living in the Glenkens

*A series of articles by Nikky Wilson*

This article continues the series in the *Gazette* exploring, through interviews, some of the issues facing the people who work in agriculture and forestry in the Glenkens.

These are the people who shape the landscape so many of us love. They have a big influence on our lives as the producers of the food and materials we need to survive and thrive.

We want to give them a voice and learn from them directly what matters to

them, what they love about their work and how they deal with some of the problems they have faced.

**Some articles in this series have extended versions available on the Glenkens Hub at [www.glenkens.scot](http://www.glenkens.scot)**

## *An career in forestry: Kevin Peace*

From an early and accidental encounter with the world of forestry in 1965, Dalry resident Kevin Peace has made a successful career in this field of work, taking jobs in many other parts of the UK and gaining qualifications along the way.

His introduction to forestry was as a teenager; to escape from hated weeding duties in his mother's garden in Glenlee, he took a holiday job as a labourer for head forester Bob Watson on Fred Olsen's estate. Kevin says:

*It was very demanding work weeding bracken with a 'heuk' (sickle) and not many could stick it. Some of my school classmates only lasted a day but I liked it and it paid well. And it gave me a taste for work as a forester as I loved being outdoors and close to nature.*

*When I left school I never thought of forestry as a career and went on to do other jobs, including a stint as a trainee clerk in the bank in Dalry and a brick maker in Staffordshire. However, after a few years I realised I had a hankering for it; it gave me a purpose, producing something useful. So I came back to Galloway to work with the Forestry Commission at Bennan Forest.*

*In those days there was a labour shortage and they needed people; I asked about a job at the end of one week and started on the Monday of the following week! They trained me in felling trees and within a month I was doing piecework, paid by the volume of timber I felled.*

*That meant I had to work fast to earn a living.*

*But I stuck with it and moved to Inverness with the Forestry Commission, where I did a short City and Guilds course in forestry and then a longer three year course in 1981. I loved that; it covered all aspects of forestry and had a practical year in the middle."*

*Working with the Forestry Commission meant you had to be willing to travel. After I finished the course, I moved south to a job in the New Forest in Hampshire. My poor wife Evelyn and our two girls got dragged all over the place during my career as I changed jobs!*

*But the work was interesting and gave me a chance to progress. So my next job was as Lochaber District Forest Manager, based in Fort William. This was a huge area to cover with some novel management challenges. One of the changes I oversaw was the opening up to the public of forests that had previously been closed for conservation reasons.*

*I was pleased about this; I've always seen forests as multipurpose, not just for commercial timber production, and an asset that everyone should be able to enjoy. Another interesting project was using conservation grazing to manage the ancient pine woodlands at Glengarry where a herd of Highland cattle was allowed to graze the land to keep the heather short and let the trees get above it.*

*Working collaboratively with other organisations was also part of the job; we jointly managed one site with the Butterfly Conservation Society to maintain the right conditions for rare Chequered Skipper butterflies at a time when Lochaber was the*



*only place in the UK where these butterflies were found.*

*One of my biggest achievements was persuading the Chief Executive to buy some private woodlands in Lochaber at a time when this wasn't popular. That was going against the grain but I felt these enhanced the whole estate of the Commission and those sites are still within public ownership today.*

*Looking back on my working history, I'd happily recommend forestry as a career for a young person. There are a huge variety of jobs within the sector and many different specialisms to pursue, ranging from managing native woodlands, nursery work and harvesting, to research, conservation and recreation.*

*Returning to his much loved childhood home of Dalry with Evelyn (also a Glenkens native) on his retirement, Kevin still spends much of his time walking outdoors with a pair of binoculars round his neck. He continues:*

*I still love going outside and keeping active so being an observer of wildlife is perfect for me. When I was in my first year at Dalry Secondary School, I told a careers advisor that I wanted to be a wildlife ranger and he responded that this was a stupid idea! But things have changed since then and being aware of nature and its importance is much more highly regarded.*

*So I'm happy to fulfil that wish in my later years. And I'm very happy to be back in the Glenkens, where I grew up. Although the landscape here used to be more open when I was a boy, with peewits and whaups all over, it's still a beautiful place to live in.*

**Top: Kevin out bird watching near Moss Roddoch, Dalry**

**Left: Students of the 1981 intake at the Scottish School of Forestry; Kevin is in the middle at the back, with a beard**



## Galloway Food Hub seasonal recipe

This is a great side dish for lamb, with ingredients available on the Galloway Food Hub! See ad on p9 for info on how to shop on the Hub...

### ASPARAGUS, LETTUCE, PEAS AND MINT

Serves 4  
Prep: 30 mins  
Cook: 10 mins

**Ingredients:**

*for the dressing...*

- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp white wine vinegar
- ½ lemon, juice only
- 1 small banana shallot, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 tsp caster sugar

*for the vegetables...*

- 8-10 asparagus spears, trimmed
- 4 tbsp frozen peas
- 2 heads Little Gem lettuce, trimmed and halved lengthways
- handful fresh mint leaves
- handful fresh flatleaf parsley, roughly

- chopped
- handful fresh chives, finely chopped
  - salt and freshly ground black pepper

**Method:**

- To make the dressing, mix all of the ingredients together in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper and set aside at room temperature.
- For the vegetables, blanch the asparagus and peas in a saucepan of heavily salted boiling water for 3 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the vegetables to a bowl of iced water to refresh.
- Remove the vegetables from the water, drain and pat dry. Set aside.
- To char the lettuce, either preheat a griddle pan to smoking hot or place a wire rack over a ring on a gas hob.



- Cook the lettuce halves, cut-side down, for 1-2 minutes, or until charred.
- Combine the asparagus, peas, lettuce, mint, parsley and chives in a large bowl. Pour in the dressing and season with lots of pepper.
- Serve as a side dish.

*Lucy Smithies, Galloway Food Hub recipe courtesy of BBC Good Food*



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# Eco Feature

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## Marking the turn: spring equinox at Kennels Barn

There is a moment at the spring equinox when the year seems to quietly hold its breath.

Day and night sit in perfect balance, neither winning, neither losing, and then, gently with a little help with an afternoon breeze the light begins to take over and we tip towards summertime.

On a clear warm morning in March, twelve people gathered at Hensol Wood to meet that moment together. The day was hosted by Naturally Smart Group CIC and was generously supported by Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands and Dark Skies Coffee.

The gathering asked something simple and unusual of everyone

who came: to slow down enough to notice what was actually happening in the landscape, in the season, and in themselves.

The group began around a warming fire. There were hot towels, coffee, dark and fruity; it was unhurried, and there was very little talking. Silence at the start of a gathering like this is an invitation to register with the place.

It lets us release the journey and start to arrive in the place. Through the bird song, through the light between bare branches, and the smell of the ground after early morning rain we sense the land. Things that ordinary conversation drowns out.

From the fire, we shared a piece of writing by Nan Shepherd and then the group moved into the forest for time alone at sitting spots among the trees, this is the

practice that sits at the heart of Naturally Smart's work.

No instruction, no agenda. Just presence in a transitional place at a transitional moment. The equinox is one of only two days in the year when the world is genuinely between such states, and the forest at Hensol holds that feeling magnificently.

Later that day, the group came together to eat some wild garlic and potato soup and then to make nettle tinctures from early spring growth. Hands in the plants, we all got a few stings to remind us of their vital energies! We crushed the tiny leaves and poured alcohol over them, infusing the smell of green on cold air, a practical and ancient way of marking that the year has turned.

The day ended as it began: by the fire, another poem, a cup

of Dark Skies Coffee, under a Glenkens sky that reminded everyone why this corner of Scotland is one of the darkest and clearest in Europe.

Twelve people arrived as individuals. They left having shared something quieter and more lasting than a day out - a conscious encounter with the turning year, in a wood that has been turning with it for a very long time.

*Paul Clarke, Naturally Smart CIC*

*Naturally Smart runs seasonal immersive days at Hensol Wood throughout the year. The next gathering is at the summer solstice on Saturday 20 June. For information go to [naturallysmart.world](http://naturallysmart.world) or contact Paul Clarke at [info@naturallysmart.world](mailto:info@naturallysmart.world)*

**See p11 for Paul Clarke's new permaculture column...**



## Free Valuation Events



We are currently inviting entries for our busy programme of auctions in 2026. Pop along to one of our free valuation events held in our Dumfries saleroom every Wednesday from 9.30am - 12 noon to see what your items may fetch. No appointment necessary.

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**Singer sewing machine,** folds down into own table. Contact: 07516 242 507

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bed with no bottom bunk, very solid. Contact: 07727 127 997

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# From listening to action: *how our Local Place Plan led to a citizen science water quality project*

In late March about 12 people gathered in Carsons Knowe car park.

We headed off across the marshes to look at murky bits of water, and to fill bottles with samples.

It felt like back to school, with a bit of fun and an air of finding things out for ourselves. It was a dry run for a wet project. How had this come about?

In New Galloway and Kells, we had been latecomers to the local place planning process, and somehow squeezed nine months of surveys, drop ins, stalls, conversations and meetings into a busy year.

Residents shared their experiences of living in a small rural community – what we value, what worries us, and what would help the area thrive in the long term.

It's a lot of work so it was encouraging to hear from people who started out sceptical ultimately deciding the process was worthwhile! The Plan covers a wide range of themes – all important. One issue voted a top concern was water quality.

Concerns about sewage discharges are not new. Participants spoke about the condition of the Mill Burn and the Water of Ken, and potential knock on effects for wildlife, wild swimming, fishing and protecting the (internationally listed) Ken-Dee Marshes.

At the same time, two other things were happening. Jane, newly arrived in New Galloway, brought experience of a similar issue in Cumbria, where a community group helped provide evidence that sewage outflows affected water quality in Lake Windermere.

At the same time, the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere highlighted a small funding opportunity: the Royal Society of Edinburgh Healthy Planet, Healthy People Catalyst Award, with support from the Williamson Trust.

The fund is designed to support community led research that explores links between environmental health and human wellbeing, and that can act as a pilot or demonstrator.

The pieces came together quickly. Our Local Place Plan provided evidence that this was a community priority and an opportunity to make a longstanding concern more transparent. Jane's experience offered a tried and tested approach.

And the funding created an opportunity to move from concern to action. The Loch Ken Trust led the application – and amongst a cluster of exciting other projects across Scotland, we have just heard that ours has been funded.

Regular water sampling over the summer will explore whether sewage treatment affects the health of the Water of Ken, Loch Ken and surrounding marshes.



Local volunteers will be taking an active role: mapping wastewater inputs, monitoring water condition and aquatic life, and developing constructive dialogue with partners and regulators.

Citizen science is valuable not just for the data it collects, and not just for the experiences of the volunteers. Getting involved, the reality of seeing results from water that you have sampled, can be much more meaningful than reading a report.

By combining monitoring with shared discussion and storytelling, the project aims to build trust – between residents, institutions and the river systems

that shape everyday life here.

We're just getting started, but only months after the Local Place Plan was adopted, we can already see it is more than a statutory requirement; it helps us address community concerns.

The water quality project will continue to evolve as people get involved, data is gathered and conversations develop. And if you'd like to take part in water testing, we'd love to hear from you at: [office@lochken.org.uk](mailto:office@lochken.org.uk).

*Anna Lawrence*

*Anna Lawrence is a member of the New Galloway and Kells Community Council*

# Our Glenkens, your Glenkens

## *considering rural depopulation*

In coming editions of the *Gazette* we will be profiling many of the participants in the Our Glenkens series.

As you get excited about the bold ambitions to re-open a hotel, starting a coffee roastery, running a gymnastics club, fresh-water swimming or delivering valued community services – remember that these are all shining examples of the amazing lifestyles that our region has to offer young people already.

Celebrating and promoting their success is a key part of addressing depopulation.

We've all been impacted by it, but we don't always recognise depopulation as the underlying cause of issues as varied as reduced bus services, lack of childcare, cafes closing, deserted villages of empty second homes, rural school closures, digital disconnection, no NHS dentists, higher costs than in urban areas, etc.

There are lots of complex reasons behind each of these problems but underlying them all is depopulation, and communities across Dumfries and Galloway need to engage in addressing this challenge.

Funded by the Scottish Government, Dumfries and Galloway Council commissioned reports on Depopulation by University of West of Scotland

and CoDel consultants which set out the causes, challenges and solutions to depopulation in our region.

The report on Best Interventions highlights some exciting projects across Scotland and Europe that have delivered solutions to their area and demonstrate that depopulation is not inevitable and can be stemmed.

Some may say: "So what? Move somewhere that has what you need". But where does that leave the farmers and food producers who provide the food on your plate, the energy engineers who help keep your homes powered, the foresters who provide construction timber for your affordable housing, or the remaining hospitality workers to feed you on your holidays in our beautiful and increasingly empty landscapes?

Without thriving rural communities our whole national economy will suffer.

The reports recommend 26 actions which would deliver tangible benefits. We know Dumfries and Galloway Council faces funding pressures and many demands on their resources, but depopulation requires a long term, strategic, collaborative and community-led approach – not short-term reactive responses to the political pressures of the day.

For our part, there are three areas where the Glenkens

is particularly well-placed to collaborate with the local authority, to pilot a Community Wealth Building approach to mitigating depopulation.

This would mean delivering better services for our rural communities, saving public funds through better value service provision and strengthening our community organisations. These areas are:

- **Galloway Community Transport:** we are already working with other Community

## Without thriving rural communities our whole national economy will suffer.

Transport Operators in the region, Third Sector D&G, NHS and D&G Council to collaborate more regionwide, to support provision of school transport, public services & patient transport.

This alone delivers a better personalised service, saves public funding and supports the resilience of our charitable organisations. We know through the Local Place Plans just how much other communities in D&G recognise transport as a significant issue and demand for community led solutions will only grow.

- **Education & Learning:** the recent debacle around nursery closures has been indicative of the local authority approach to rural education and does nothing to instil confidence in the young families which rural areas need to attract and retain in order to address depopulation.

Through the work of the Glenkens Community Action Plan Steering Group, we want to explore with the council where we can help strengthen and stabilise provision of rural education for the long term



Glenkens  
Community  
& Arts Trust



– so that young families can make informed and confident decisions about raising their families in the Glenkens.

Look out for more discussion of this critical issue in the months ahead as we refresh the Community Action Plan.

- **Our Glenkens:** the depopulation reports emphasise the need for

a positive, community led narrative around life in rural areas – not about selling an area as one of empty beautiful landscapes for the benefit of tourists and holiday/second home owners.

The narrative needs to focus on people and families living and working within an undoubtedly beautiful landscape. We'd like to expand and develop the Our Glenkens platform to showcase the dynamic and sustainable lifestyles which young people and young families can have in the Glenkens, all year round.

We feel it would really strengthen and improve the Council's 'Move to Galloway' campaign.

We are grateful to the Scottish Government Climate Engagement Fund for their support of this project this year, highlighting the contribution that young people make to living sustainable lifestyles.

We are also grateful to South of Scotland Enterprise for their support last year.

Andrew McConnell,  
GCAT Chief Executive



# Jacob Brooks, Dark Skies Coffee

Jacob runs a small artisan coffee roasting business called Dark Skies Coffee from Hensol Estate, Mossdale, combining a love of traditional craft with a slower, more thoughtful approach to food and drink.

Roasting in small batches over wood fire, he focuses on quality, rather than mass production.

The idea for Dark Skies Coffee grew naturally from a long standing interest in fire cooking, good coffee, self sufficiency and the outdoors.

Rather than building a polished commercial setup from the beginning, Jacob has taken a hands on route, learning through experience and gradually developing both the roasting process, equipment and the wider vision for the business.

Jacob's background is varied and strongly connected to the natural world. Over the years he has worked in cheffing, forestry and biodynamic agriculture, experiences which continue to shape the way he approaches both coffee and life in general.

Time spent working with food gave him an appreciation for

flavour, balance and quality ingredients, while forestry and biodynamic practices deepened his interest in traditional skills, seasonality and working closely with nature

More recently, Jacob has also been working with Dumfries and Galloway Woodlands on local tree planting projects, something he sees as closely aligned with the wider values behind Dark Skies Coffee.

Supporting biodiversity, improving landscapes and helping restore woodland are all things he feels strongly about,

particularly in a rural part of the country where people still have a close relationship with the land around them.

Set against the backdrop of the region's famous dark skies and quiet countryside, the business reflects the landscape around it.

The roasting takes place in a rustic barn setting with fire. There is a strong emphasis on slowing down and enjoying the process, whether that is roasting coffee, sharing food around a fire or introducing people to the differences between light and dark roasts.

Jacob believes many people are looking for experiences that feel more genuine, authentic and grounded. While modern life often pushes speed and

convenience, Dark Skies Coffee aims to offer something calmer and more personal.

The business is still small, with the focus on maintaining quality, learning continuously and growing at a steady pace without losing the original ethos behind it.

...the focus is on maintaining quality, learning continuously and growing at a steady pace without losing the original ethos...

Alongside roasting coffee, Jacob has a broader interest in growing food, gardening and traditional skills.

He has spent years developing experience with plants, animals and productive gardens and sees strong connections between growing, cooking and coffee roasting.

Much of the inspiration behind the business comes from a desire to create something real and local, rooted in the character of the area rather than following trends.

Recent plans for the business include small tasting events and



roasting experiences where visitors can sit around the fire, learn about coffee origins and taste different roast profiles in an informal setting.

Jacob is also exploring ways to expand the business carefully over time, potentially working with others who share a

passion for coffee and artisan food. However, maintaining the original spirit of Dark Skies Coffee remains important.

At its heart, the business is about more than coffee alone. It is about slowing down, making things properly and creating spaces where people can gather, talk and enjoy simple things done well.

To buy Dark Skies Coffee visit [www.darks skiescoffee.com](http://www.darks skiescoffee.com) or pop in to New Galloway Community Shop.

Visit [www.glenkens.scot/our-glenkens](http://www.glenkens.scot/our-glenkens) to see more of the Our Glenkens series.



# SUMMER IN T

Over the next few pages you'll find information on fun summer

## Carsphairn Show

Carsphairn Pastoral & Horticultural Society will be holding their 133rd annual show on Saturday 6 June at The Crofts, Carsphairn.

The show is hosted by kind permission of Messrs McMorrان, and will mark the start of the agricultural show season here in Dumfries & Galloway.

Judging starts from 10am, with both confined and open classes in the Blackface Sheep section. There are also open classes for Commercial, Mule, Bluefaced Leicester and Any Other Breed - Native and Continental sheep - with entries taken until 9.45am on the day.

There is also a Dog Trial run in the adjacent field with entries taken on the field. From mid-day there are collie dog, young handlers, pets and dog classes for anyone to enter up to the time of judging.

There are children's sports in the afternoon as well as a bouncy castle, and an activities tent run by Bairn Banter, a family stay and play group from Carsphairn.

In the Lagwyne Hall, there are sections for baking, preserves, handicrafts, flowers, plants, walking sticks and the childrens section and again, anyone can enter.

*Catering and bar facilities are provided on the Showfield. Carsphairn Show is run by the Society with the help of their generous sponsors. Schedules can be found at [www.carsphairn.org](http://www.carsphairn.org)*



## The Glenkens Show

This year's show will be held on Saturday 15 August - come and join us for a fun, family day out!

The Dog Show and Fancy Dress is open to all, regardless of entering the show in other classes - we'd love to see you there.

This year we have affiliated to the Clydesdale Horse Society to try and help this much-loved but

endangered breed. We have also added some new classes and a Junior Championship in the horse section to encourage the youngsters amongst us that are just starting out.

Spectators are very welcome - the entrance fee at the gate is £5 per adult, and children are free. Remember your wellies!

To find out more visit us on Facebook @Glenkens Agricultural Society  
*Fran Dove*



This year's Spring Fling event saw an incredible number of Glenkens-based artists and makers participating.

With 17 creative people listed in and around the Glenkens, we thought readers may like to know what artistic talents are on our doorstep - perhaps some may wish to make their own summer craft trail, taking advantage of how how lucky we are to live in such an incredible part of the world.

• Patti Lean, Mossdale  
• Frances Ross, Parton  
• Sheena McCurrach, Mossdale

• Amanda Simmons, Corsock  
• Jesse Ball, Corsock  
• Sally Jennings, Corsock  
• Pamela Grace, Kirkpatrick Durham (KPD)  
• Allan Wright, KPD  
• Clare Dawdry, KPD  
• Adam Booth, KPD  
• Leeming & Paterson, Carsphairn/Dalry  
• Alex Rigg, Auchenstronan, Corsock/Moniaive  
• Morrison and Lemke, Corriedoo, Balmaclellan  
• Catherine Corfield, Dalry  
• Natalie Vardey, Balmaclellan  
• Carolyn Marr, Balmaclellan  
• Jo Gallant, Bennan, Mossdale  
• Fitch & McAndrew, Auchenvey, Corsock  
• Lorna Phillips, Corsock



# THE GLENKENS

*events and activities from across the Glenkens and beyond!*

## Music festivals with Glenkens links

With our very own Knockengoroch music festival having passed with flying colours, these two are not in the Glenkens but do feature artists and performers from across the area, and are within easy travelling distance, so we thought they were worth a summer mention...

**Eden Festival** will run from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 June, and is a weekend celebration of music and arts set in the lush Raehills Meadow.

A real Galloway gem that's managed by a Glenkens crew. We are a community Interest Group that is run by volunteers from all over the area. We invite you to come lose or find your selves in the Garden of Eden.

There's loads to do, day and night for the whole family. We are also very excited to be

showing the Scotland match on Saturday night in our very own pub, Rabbits Tavern.

Weekend and day tickets available now or on the gate ([edenfestival.co.uk](http://edenfestival.co.uk)).

**Kelburn Garden Party** is an annual independent festival combining music, arts and community within the grounds of Kelburn Castle on Scotland's west coast.

Running from Thursday 2 to Monday 6 July, this will be its 16th year, and the festival will welcome 6,000 attendees for its largest and most diverse edition to date.

This year's programme also features strong links to Galloway and the Glenkens, with performers including Corsock-based Alex Rigg and Oceanallover, alongside Samson Sounds, whose members hail from Laurieston among other areas of the region.

Set within the ancient glen surrounding the castle, the sprawling music programme spans electronica, rock, dance, avant-garde pop, folk, jazz, global, post-punk and experimental sounds, offering an expansive snapshot of Scotland's grassroots and alternative music and club culture.

Buy tickets at [www.kelburngardenparty.com](http://www.kelburngardenparty.com)



## Win tickets to the Glenlair Festival!



Tickets are now on sale for Glenlair Festival 2026, with two tickets and also two complimentary cocktails up for grabs for *Gazette* readers.

The popular rural festival returns on Saturday 15 August at Glenlair Steading, near Corsock, following the success of its 2025 event which doubled in size and drew a lively crowd to the farm setting.

Created by Angus and Frances Ferguson of Demijohn, the award-winning liquid deli, the Festival brings together live music, local food and drink, and a relaxed community atmosphere.

This year's line-up will feature live performances from local bands Palliro and Pedro & The Pirates, a return set from The Aberlady Sessions, and even a debut duet

from Sunshine & the Silver Seams.

The 2025 event saw 12 hours of music across the day, alongside a wide range of local produce including artisan hotdogs, oysters, baked treats and ice cream, plus craft beers, cider and Demijohn's signature cocktails such as the Citrus Sundowner and Bloody Pirate.

Director of Art D&G, who attended for the first time last year, said: "I really enjoyed the Festival; a lovely chilled vibe in a great outdoor venue as people listened to brilliant music, ate really good food, chatted and hung out together, all while drinking some very tasty and devilishly strong Demijohn cocktails! A must already in the diary for 2026!"

The festival runs from midday to 10pm, with camping available. Adult tickets start from £20 at [www.demijohn.co.uk](http://www.demijohn.co.uk)

**The first two *Gazette* readers to email [angus.ferguson@demijohn.co.uk](mailto:angus.ferguson@demijohn.co.uk) will win a tickets and a free cocktail!**

# Immerse yourself in local culture...

Our Cultural Glenkens summer programme is full of wonderful and enriching events.

We do hope there is plenty there to whet your appetite to enhance and increase your appreciation and understanding of the Heritage and Culture of the Glenkens

The Summer Galloway Conversations begins with a talk in June from SCAMP (Solway Coastal and Marine Project) & Galloway Fisheries discussing their exciting seascape scale & nature restoration project they are undertaking.

Our next conversation, in July, is by Judith Hewitt, from Dumfries and Galloway Museums, who will be enlightening us about Galloway Mermaids!

We are delighted to announce that these talks will be filmed and will be available both to watch online live as well as viewing them on our website... to find out more visit [www.gcat.scot/project/galloway-conversations](http://www.gcat.scot/project/galloway-conversations)

Later in the summer, future conversations include a talk about Dr Kissling the diplomat, scholar, gentleman, photographer and chronicler of folk life in Dumfries and Galloway, as well as a final update on the exciting findings at the archaeological dig at Stroanfreggan, which unearthed an Iron Age Hill Fort.

We are excited that the SongWave Choir are singing at New Galloway Town Hall on 20 June; Rise Up Singing, will certainly be a concert to lift the spirits.

Also on the same day there is the opportunity to have a fully immersive nature experience; a day immersed in the woods, walking, noticing, eating together around the fire as the light changes.

At the equinoxes and solstices - the four hinge points of the year - the invitation is to gather at Hensol Estate, Mossdale, to slow down, look closely, and let the land settle around us. Booking is also available on [www.naturallysmart.world](http://www.naturallysmart.world) - see

articles on p11 & p14 for more on this.

Next ....ever wanted to be on the inside of the trad music in the pub? Continuing after our successful pilot sessions last year, we are delighted to be offering 10 skill-based monthly workshops. Now's your chance to step into the circle and truly become part of the session.

These monthly workshops, led by professional musicians, will run once a month on a Sunday at The Smiddy in Balmaclellan.

They will be linked to four Folk Sessions at the Clachan Inn throughout the year, we hope to see you there!

In June, the New Galloway History Group are hosting a Historic Shop Front Tour of New Galloway High Street.

Now a sleepy, quiet little place, it can be hard to imagine New Galloway as a once busy, bustling town, the tour will bring to life the hustle and bustle of by gone days, and discover the multitude of shops and retail outlets that once flourished on the High Street.

A highly tuneful Spring Bird Watching Walk was held with RSPB ranger Chris Rollie, at Garroch Glen. We heard and mostly saw over 25 species, including pied flycatchers, great spotted woodpeckers, siskins and redstarts. We are looking forward to our Summer Bird Watching Walk in July, where we are confident there will be plenty more wonderful sights and sounds of our Glenkens birds on offer.

Cultural Glenkens is currently busy planning the next Land Notes Festival which will run from Friday 21 until Sunday 23 of August. We have some fantastic events lined up; we are looking forward to the second festival and building the momentum gathered from last year's successful run of events. Check the CatStrand Arts Programme for more details on the events on offer.

The Galloway Shorts Film Screening is taking place on 27 August. Please get in

touch if you are a film maker and would like to submit a short film for screening at the event. Or we will be delighted to see you there as a member of the audience to watch the exciting range of entries.

If you have any suggestions or projects with a heritage and or cultural theme, which you would like support with, or see happen do get in touch.

The Cultural Glenkens Internship Programme has launched with a young person employed by Carsphairn Community Woodlands and another internship in progress to begin with Galloway Fisheries Trust in the Summer.

If you have a Glenkens/Galloway based business and would like to know more about the Internship Programme and the opportunities to take on an intern for a six month period, please contact us.

The Cultural Glenkens Archive is now live, and holds images and oral histories from the Glenkens showing the way our region and landscape looked through the ages with spoken memories of days gone by.

Cultural Glenkens would like to thank all the contributors for their generosity with time and sharing of old photographs.

If you have any old photographs or memories of the Glenkens which you would like to contribute to the archive, then please do get in touch with me, [jo@catstrand.com](mailto:jo@catstrand.com) - scan this QR code to visit the archive.



To find out more about any of the items in this article please email [jo@catstrand.com](mailto:jo@catstrand.com), visit [www.gcat.scot](http://www.gcat.scot) or call 01664 420 374.

The Cultural Glenkens Project was made possible with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to The National Lottery Players.

Cultural Glenkens wishes you all a very happy summer!

*Jo Jackson,  
Project Lead,  
Cultural Glenkens*



**CULTURAL  
GLENKENS**





CULTURAL  
GLENKENS

# SUMMER



## SONGWAVE CHOIR / RISE UP SINGING

SAT 20 JUN 4:00PM - 6:00PM  
NEW GALLOWAY TOWN HALL



## TRAD FOLK MUSIC SKILL BUILDING WORKSHOPS

SUN 21 JUN 2:00PM - 4:00PM | SUN 26 JUL  
2:00PM - 4:00PM | SUN 9 AUG 2:00PM - 4:00PM  
SMIDDY BALMACLELLAN



## GALLOWAY CONVERSATIONS: SCAMP

(SOLWAY COASTAL AND MARINE PROJECT) & THE GALLOWAY  
FISHERIES TRUST

SUN 21 JUN 3:00PM - 4.30PM | CATSTRAND



## NEW GALLOWAY HISTORIC SHOP FRONT TOUR

WED 24 JUN 6:30PM - 7:45PM | CATSTRAND



## GALLOWAY CONVERSATIONS: MERMAIDS OF DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

SAT 18 JUL 3:00PM - 4.30PM | CATSTRAND

Glenkens  
Community  
& Arts Trust



HIGH ST, NEW GALLOWAY | 01644 420 374 | GCAT.SCOT/ARTS



# Summer fun at Barwhillanty

Round up the summer holidays with a day of family activity at Barwhillanty Estate, on Wednesday 19 August.

Elizabeth the Ranger will be bringing nature and science together, with an action-packed morning and afternoon session.

Activities include hands-on projects, environmental art and entertainment

for children in the beautiful gardens of Barwhillanty.

There will also be tea, coffee and cake available on site in The Pavilion in the Walled Garden. This is an excellent opportunity for a fun day out for kids whilst parents relax and soak up the stunning surroundings - a date for your diary not to be missed!

Tickets can be booked at [barwhillantystate.co.uk](http://barwhillantystate.co.uk)

See article on p10 for more on what's on offer at Barwhillanty Estate...

# Mobile chippies in the Glenkens

Plan your summer evening around a Glenkens chip supper! Both the Dumfries Mobile Fish & Chips and Moore's Street Food are offering mobile chippy services at various points over the summer season and beyond.

Andrew, from Moore's Street Food, said: "We were at New Galloway Golf club last week and had a good turn out from locals. We are working with the golf club to be back on a semi-regular basis.

"The golf club will open the bar for our visits and that will let customers eat their food in the club house and enjoy a beer. We are looking to be back in the next few weeks

but we are still looking to confirm the next date. We launched Moore's Street Food last year and have been very well received at events all over Dumfries and Galloway.

"We are now bringing our lush loaded fries and tasty tacos to local towns and villages. We will also be at the Glenkens Show in August."

Nicola, from the Dumfries Mobile Fish & Chips, said: "I started the business in 2018. I have always wanted to work for myself; when I was younger, before I had my kids and stayed at home to raise them, I had worked in catering jobs from restaurants, cafes and a chip shop.

"There hadn't been a chip van in the area for decades, and that's what I decided I wanted to do; I wanted to cater fish and chips to local village in and around Dumfries and Galloway.

"We work on a four-weekly rota around the villages, and we also do weddings, birthday parties and village galas/ fun days. We love the relationships we have built up with our regulars over the years and always enjoy seeing new faces. We make everyone welcome, and we cater for gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan customers."

**Follow Moore's Street Food and Dumfries Mobile Fish & Chips on Facebook to find out when they're next coming to the Glenkens!**



**DUMFRIES MOBILE FISH & CHIPS EST. 2018**  
07376 431 441

**VILLAGE POP-UP NIGHTS!**  
Would your village like a 4-weekly visit from our fish & chip van?

- ✓ Busy Village Hall 🏠 Community Centre 🏠 Pub Night 🍷
- ✓ Freshly Cooked Where You Are 🐟
- ✓ Perfect Treat For The Village 🍟🍷

COMMENT BELOW OR MESSAGE US WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS!

**f** **✉** **07376 431 441**

# Scottish Alternative Games 2026

The ever popular unique event will celebrate its 25th year in New Galloway on Sunday 2 August and incredibly, next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the first ever Alternative Games in Parton in 1977.

When the late Mungo Bryson came up with the idea for a quirky event to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, there is no way that he could have imagined that his Alternative Games invention would still be running half a century later.

Many of the original events still form the basis of the programme to this day, like the Snail Racing, Tossin' the Sheaf and of course the Gird 'n' Cleek racing which is now recognised as the official World Championship.

Some other events have come and went over the 49 years but the Tractor Pull and Hurlin' the Curlin' Stane have also lasted the test of time.

Thousands of people from all over the world have enjoyed the unique atmosphere of the Games over the years and the event has been featured on network TV on many occasions, most recently on 'Susan Calman's Grand Days Out' on Channel 5.

Susan's valiant attempts at the art of Gird 'n' Cleek racing were unlikely to win the World Title though, especially as current World Champion Alexander McKenna from New Galloway broke the record last year and became the first person ever to win the title five times.

This is one sport that our country truly excels in as the World Title has only ever left Scotland once in the entire history of the event. But, with Alexander hinting at 'retiring at the top', could this finally be the year for a successful overseas challenge?

As well as the events already mentioned there is also music, with bagpipes as you would expect and the bandstand featuring some of our area's brilliant young musicians during the day. This year the event is also delighted to welcome special guests 'Cirulation', Scotland's travelling contemporary circus ensemble who will be

performing their thrilling showcase of circus acts during the afternoon.

Whether you want to take part or just relax and spectate with a beer and a burger or a coffee and cake, everyone is welcome to come along and be part of the 49th Scottish Alternative Games. Tickets are £6 for Adults and £1 for under 16's making it one of the most affordable days out in the country! You can pay cash on the gate or book online in advance via [www.gcat.scot/project/arts](http://www.gcat.scot/project/arts)

***Pictured below is Ralph Spernagel on his way to his third successive Silver Medal in the World Gird 'n' Cleek Final 2025***



## Adventure, relaxation and lochside views at Galloway Activity Centre

Set on the shores of Loch Ken, the Galloway Activity Centre offers the perfect combination of excitement and relaxation, right on your doorstep.

Alongside watersports and adventure experiences, visitors can now enjoy relaxing sauna sessions, scenic boat tours, and time to unwind in our lochside café.

Whether you're looking for a family day out, somewhere to relax with friends, or simply a good coffee with a view, the centre offers a unique mix of adventure and relaxation in a beautiful setting.

### **Loch Ken Sauna**

Our brand new lochside sauna has quickly become a favourite with both visitors and locals. There's something really special about sitting in the warmth of the sauna while looking out across the loch, especially after being out on the water or enjoying a walk nearby.

The sauna offers a chance to slow down, warm up, and enjoy the outdoors in a completely different way. Whatever the weather, it's a peaceful experience and a

great way to switch off for a while.

### **The Lochside Café**

Our café is a relaxed and welcoming space where visitors can stop for coffee, cake, lunch, or simply enjoy the view across the loch. It's popular with activity guests, locals, walkers, cyclists, and anyone passing through the area.

We serve freshly made food, barista coffee, cakes, and light lunches, with large windows overlooking the water making it the perfect place to sit and relax.

We're also hoping to run some pizza evenings throughout the summer, so



visitors should keep an eye on our social media for updates and upcoming dates.

### **Boat tours on Loch Ken**

Our boat tours are a brilliant way to experience Loch Ken from a different perspective. From scenic trips taking in the landscape and wildlife to exciting high-speed rib rides, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

The tours are suitable for a range of ages and are always a popular part of people's visit to the centre. Many guests say it ends up being one of the highlights of their trip to Dumfries & Galloway.

### **Something for everyone**

What makes Galloway Activity Centre special is the variety of experiences all in one place. Visitors can spend time on the water, relax in the sauna, enjoy lunch in the café, and take in the scenery all in the same day.

As a family-run business, creating welcoming and memorable experiences is at the heart of everything we do, and we love seeing people enjoy everything Loch Ken has to offer.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @ Galloway Activity Centre or visit [www.lochken.co.uk](http://www.lochken.co.uk)

*Rachel Hutchings*



# A great day out at the Loch Ken Family Fun Day

The Loch Ken Family Fun Day returns for its fourth fantastic year on Tuesday 4 August 2026 - and it's shaping up to be the best yet!

The event is all about helping families stay safe around the water during the summer holidays, with lots of hands-on activities, rescue demonstrations and opportunities to learn more about the Water Safety Code.

One of the big attractions this year is K9 Aqua Sports, visiting Scotland for the first time since before Covid. Expect to see some amazing dogs jumping and swimming, with chances for spectators and participants to get involved. There will also be dog water safety sessions throughout the day.

There'll be lots of activities happening throughout the day including:

- Free water safety sessions
- Rafted canoe trips
- Ranger boat tours
- Wild swimming and sauna experiences
- Emergency services displays and rescue demonstrations
- Nature activities
- Mini golf, facepainting and fairground stalls
- The Great Loch Ken Stone Skimming Championship
- Live entertainment and local organisations

So grab your towels, bring the family - and maybe the dog too - and join us for a brilliant summer day at Loch Ken!

Thanks to the Glenkens and District Trust Community Fund for supporting this event.

Tickets can be booked via the QR code on the poster to the right.



**Loch Ken**  
**FAMILY FUN DAY**  
Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2026  
11:00am - 5:00pm  
Field next to Loch Ken Holiday Park,  
Parton, DG7 3NE

Water Activities    Water Safety    K9 Aqua Sports    Rescue Demonstrations

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!**

~Entry £10 per car / family  
Contact Lindsay@lochken.org.uk  
for more details.

Stalls • Funfair • Barbecue • Picnic Area • Prizes • Sauna Activities



## Scotland's Aircraft Crashes

My new book, *Scotland's Aircraft Crashes 1905-1939*, has just been published by Aviation Books Ltd.

This fully-referenced 150-page book contains 29 photos and provides a chronological listing of over 770 aircraft crashes. These include gliders, balloons and airships, which occurred

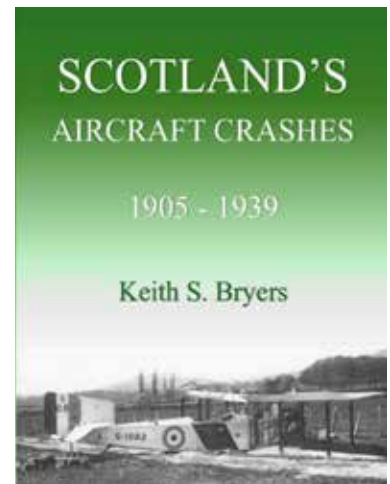
in Scotland, or which took off from Scotland but crashed elsewhere, between 1905 and the start of the Second World War.

It also contains details of those who were on board, including some 300 people who lost their lives, and has indices covering surnames of people involved, crash locations and types of aircraft.

The book is available on-line from Amazon Books and, with better quality print, The Great British Bookshop, priced at £20 plus P&P. Best of all, order from your local independent bookshop!

Book retailers can purchase stock from the publisher at a discount on RRP by emailing aviationbooksuk@gmail.com

Keith Bryers



## The Port Road Line

Retired postman Alan McLellan brings both warmth and determination to his presentation on the old Port Road railway line - a project born from personal challenge and a deep affection for local history.

After moving to the area six years ago to run a smallholding with sheep, Alan's plans changed following a diagnosis of prostate cancer, which left him unable to continue working the land.

Rather than step back, he chose a new challenge: walking the route of the former Port Road line, filming its remains and collecting stories along the way.

The result is a moving and personal PowerPoint presentation featuring vintage film clips, photographs and present-day footage of the old railway route.

Working entirely alone - with no crew or production team - Alan retraces the line on foot, uncovering not only the physical remnants of the railway but also the memories still carried by local communities.

Along the way, he has met people whose families once worked on the Port Road line, many sharing stories of a railway still remembered with great affection.

Their reflections add a human depth to the presentation and speak to the lasting importance of the line across the region.

Alan will be bringing his presentation to Corsock Village Hall on Sunday 14 June at 2.30pm. Entry is free, with a donation bucket in aid of Corsock Village Hall.



Castle Douglas station staff (late 1950s) (photo Galloway News)

Alan...uncover[s] not only the physical remnants of the railway but also the memories still carried by local communities.



# James Clerk Maxwell's Glenkens story

A quote from a forgotten genius: *"Anyone who thinks the sky is the limit has limited imagination"*.

The genius was James Clerk Maxwell, a Scotsman who ranked with Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton as one of the most influential scientists the world has ever known.

**As quoted by Albert Einstein, "Maxwell changed the world forever".**

James was born in Edinburgh on 13 June 1831. In 1840, aged nine, he and his widowed father (his mother having died in 1839) moved to Glenlair Estate, Parton. This remained his primary residence until his untimely death from cancer aged 46 years on 5 November 1879 in Cambridge.

Following his death, his body was returned to his family home at Glenlair and interned in the graveyard of the family church in the village of Parton, on the shores of Loch Ken, in Dumfries and Galloway.

James, during his relatively short life, accomplished so much. His early schooling was at the Edinburgh Academy, where he produced his first academic paper on mathematics aged just 15. He entered the University of Edinburgh in 1847, aged 16, and three years later went to study at Cambridge University, where in 1854 he secured a First Class Honours Degree in mathematics.

James remained at Cambridge, giving lectures on optics and hydrostatics (study of the properties of liquids) and also continued his research. In 1856 James left Cambridge to take up an appointment as Professor of Physics at Marischal College in Aberdeen (later to become Aberdeen University). Two years into his appointment he married the college principle's daughter, Katherine Mary Dewar. They remained married until his death in 1879.

In 1860 James became Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Kings College, London. Some five years later, and on the death of his father, he returned to Scotland, having inherited his father's estate of Glenlair, near Castle Douglas.

James held three eminent professorships, namely Aberdeen, London and Cambridge.

The contents of the brass plaque, located to the front of Parton church, sums up his

legacy to the wider world and reads as follows:

*His short life was rich in distinguished contributions to every branch of physical science – heat, light, mechanics.*

*Above all, by unifying the theories of electricity and magnetism, he established a sure foundation for modern physics electrical engineering and astronomy and prepared the way for radio communications and television.*

*A good man, full of humour and wisdom. He lived in this area and is buried in the ruins of the old kirk in this churchyard.*

Glenlair House was destroyed by fire in 1929 and remained in a state of dereliction for many years. The estate was purchased by the Ferguson family in 1950.

The Maxwell at Glenlair trust has been formed, registered Scottish Charity Number SCO30868. This is a charitable trust established to conserve and preserve, for the benefit of the public, Glenlair House the family home of James Clerk Maxwell.

Much renovation work has been undertaken, funded mainly thanks to donations from Dr James C Rautio of Sonnet Software, and from the Institute Electrical and Electronics Engineers. The house now stands restored and dignified, a testimony to the Glenkens' local genius, James Clerk Maxwell, who resided there all those years ago.

There is so much to tell about Maxwell, such as his equations, his development of photography, etc, but space here is limited. However, more information can be found at [www.glenlair.org.uk](http://www.glenlair.org.uk)

Bill Grant

**Top right - Parton Church. Right - Glenlair House.**

**Right - Maxwell's modest headstone in churchyard.**

**Below right - Bronze commemorative plaque outside the church.**

**Below - Information board at the Glenlair visitor centre.**



# Galloway Retold with Angela Miller

## *The Galloway Hydro Scheme*

The power station at Glenlee has been producing electricity for 90 years, and the fact that it is still generating electricity is a testament to great engineering and foresight from its architects.

Built during the Great Depression (along with Earlstoun, Kendoon, Carsfad and Drumjohn up here in the Glenkens, and Tongland further south) with huge manpower and resources, it was seen as a vital project for the newly minted National Grid.

The Galloway project was followed by a number of similar schemes in the Highlands in the 1950s, but it was the first publicly funded development of its kind in Scotland.

The effort it took to build the ambitious scheme, which today produces 110 Megawatts of Electricity, was nothing short of monumental.

Eleven dams were built to control water for it, and five lochs were created and many, many local farmers and landowners being compensated for the loss of their lands

beneath the waves of those lochs.

Five power stations were built to house the huge turbines needed for the scheme, with Drumjohn being added later in 1984 at the Loch Doon needle valve to plug an efficiency gap in the scheme.

A castle which was built by Robert the Bruce's father (also called Robert) had to be moved stone by stone from its original site on a Loch Doon island to the shore, and a battle site from the Wars of Independence was flooded.

A tunnel nearly 6km long was built through the hill from newly created Clatteringshaws to Glenlee, where two of the five men who died during the construction were killed.

The Glenkens played host to four work camps for the men who built the scheme, at Glenlee, Craigenbac, Craigshinnie and Clatteringshaws. Board in those camps was deducted from men's wages, with local men also forced to stay in the camps if they wanted to work.

Men came on foot from Glasgow to join the workforce, as well as from Ireland and England, which was a source of controversy in those straitened times

because part of the original bill that created the scheme in parliament had stipulated that local people were to be employed in its building. Busses were run from Dalbeattie to bring men to the camps.

But life in the camps wasn't too terrible. Canteens, hot baths and leisure facilities were provided. A football league was set up, and a local chaplain employed to administer to the residents, Rev Hitman, who was provided with a motorbike to travel between the camps.

While it may have disrupted life in the Glenkens for most of a decade, but there were few reports of crime associated with the men in the camps. Even so, the Power company employed two special constables just in case.

It's been over 90 years, and it's hard for us now to imagine what the Glenkens looked like before the Hydro Scheme was built, but at the time there was a lot of resistance to it's environmental impact.

Poems were penned, and angry letters written, and a clause was included in the legislation to minimise the impact.

The dams are made with locally minded stone, trees were



planted to screen them, even the locations of the power stations were considered to minimise the impact on the scenery, but people were still very upset, and with some reason.

The Tinker's Loup, a waterfall that was a local beauty spot up by what is now Kendoon, was blown up to make way for one of the dams there.

The scheme was officially opened in 1938 at Tongland, but had already been generating power for a few years by then.

You can see the full story in my series of videos about the Galloway Hydro Scheme on the Youtube channel, Galloway Retold.

**Look out in the next edition of the Gazette for more on this topic with a piece by Bruce Keith, who gave a well-attended talk on this subject at the CatStrand...**

CARSPHAIRN COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S  
**BIG LUNCH**  
Sunday 7th June, 1-4pm

All Carsphairn residents, families and friends are invited to a community buffet - catch up with friends and neighbours, old and new, over lunch in our Community Garden (Lagwyne Hall if wet).

*There is no charge to attend. See you there!*

Please RSVP to [cewhipp@gmail.com](mailto:cewhipp@gmail.com)

**THE GLENKENS HUB**

Have you thought about writing for the Hub?

Just like our sister publication, the Glenkens Gazette, we're reliant on our fantastic community of contributors for our quality content.

We'd love to hear from anyone who'd like to get involved with:

- \* writing articles, stories, poetry
- \* taking photographs of the area
- \* producing videos and audio
- \* advertising your community organisation
- \* promoting your business

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email: [glenkenshub@hotmail.com](mailto:glenkenshub@hotmail.com)

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

GLENKENS  
WINDFARM TRUST

GALLOWAY GLENS

# Gathering for painting in Mossdale

**G**athering for Painting is a series of art workshops that take place every few weeks in Mossdale Village Hall.

The day workshops offer accessible, affordable, sustainable and creative tuition in painting, at all levels of experience. The cost is £50 per day, bookable singly or as a block.

There's normally a topic or structure to each workshop. After coffee and cake, there's an on-screen look at artworks relevant to the topic; for example: colour, composition, tonal value, gesture, line, materiality, energy, presentation... Lively debate often ensues. Next, optional exercises are a helpful antidote to self-consciousness and over-deliberation.

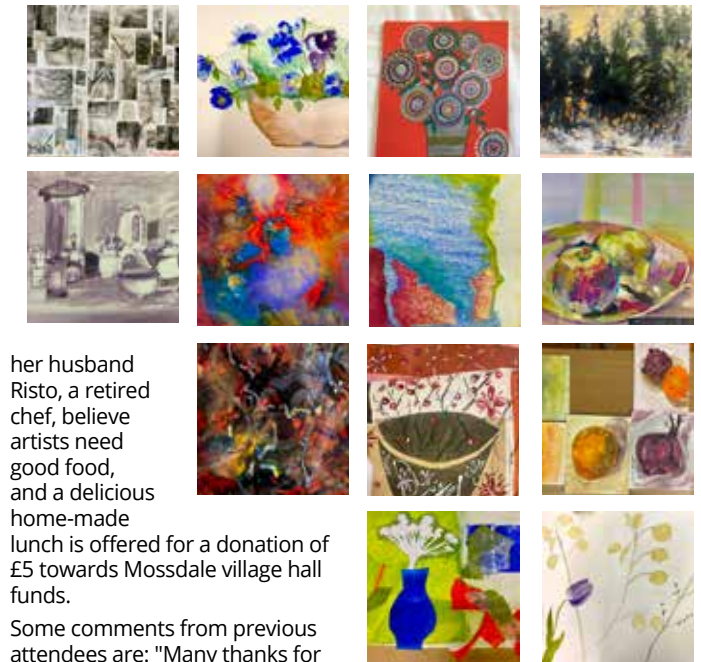
In the afternoon, experimental boundaries are gently pushed, with an emphasis on the wonderful material qualities of paint itself. The day concludes with a friendly whole-group review (more coffee, more cake!)

in which we gather to reflect on all the work and consider next steps in each artistic journey.

With a background of over 35 years' teaching in art practice, art history and contextual studies, Patti encourages all styles and approaches. Patti taught on the Fine Art degree course at University of Cumbria for eighteen years, and before that, at Dumfries and Galloway College, and holds a practice-based PhD in Contemporary Fine Art and Ecocriticism, the study of relationships between the arts and the living world. After spending time in Iceland and Finland, as well as Scotland, she says: "My particular interest lies in how notions of northerliness are examined and challenged in this era of climate crisis.

"I hope my workshops exemplify the importance of artistic community and real-life interaction with viewers, other artists and the living world. It's so good for body and soul to switch off your phone, sit on the grass, take a pencil and draw!"

Beyond painting itself, Patti and




her husband Risto, a retired chef, believe artists need good food, and a delicious home-made lunch is offered for a donation of £5 towards Mossdale village hall funds.

Some comments from previous attendees are: "Many thanks for all your thoughtful hard work. It's a joy to be with a group of like-minded creative people."

"Everything about the day is perfect – from the loch-side drive to the hall, the coffee and cake that awaits you before you even

start, each work station kitted out with paper and paint...Patti's endless encouragement... I love my Saturdays at Mossdale."

*To learn more about workshops, please email [pattilean.co.uk](mailto:pattilean.co.uk)*




**PAMELA YOUNG TRUST**  
*help with housing in the Glenkens*

---

Affordable housing for people living or working in the Glenkens whose circumstances would benefit from the provision of reduced rent.

Tenancy applications welcome from anyone, young or old, single or with a family, who qualifies under the terms of the Trust.



For more information or to download an application form, please go to [www.pamelayoungtrust.co.uk](http://www.pamelayoungtrust.co.uk), or telephone Peter Matthews of A B & A Matthews on 01671 404100.

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or call 01644 440602 for more info

[www.lothlorien.tc](http://www.lothlorien.tc)

# From the Bookroom

In 'From the Bookroom' Glenkens-based author of the novel *The Road From Damascus* and co-author of *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, Robin Yassin-Kassab, takes readers on a journey into his world of writing, reading and general thoughts on life.

I've just returned from a meditation retreat at Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey in northeast England.

The Abbey belongs to the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, which follows the Soto Zen tradition. Their main practice is zazen, or 'just sitting'. This means to sit with your back straight and your eyes open and to observe whatever arises – thoughts, images, emotions, physical sensations – and then, rather than attaching to these things, to allow them to pass away.

For the last five years I've spent about an hour a day (most days, not all) focusing on my breath. I think this has helped me to be more resilient in general, and in particular to process some of my life troubles, including my exposure to stories of torture and execution in my work at the Prisons Museum. I'm not sure quite how it has helped, but I do think it has.

I'm glad I started off by focusing on the breath. It helped me to gradually build my ability to concentrate and not get snagged in distractions. I think the zazen type of meditation I've learnt at Throssel Hole may have been too unfocused and confusing for me to start with.

But now I'm doing it, it feels like looking straight at reality. Most of the time, that's the reality of endlessly repeated and recycled thoughts, or of emotional sensations (anxiety, anger, etc) turning up in my abdomen and vanishing again. In between all that there are sometimes stretches of not thinking, not feeling, but just being aware,

and in those stretches there is a sense of something sacred.

Now I don't claim to know what that sense refers to. The Buddhists sometimes call it 'the Unborn', or 'universal Mind'. Ibn Arabi and the Sufis would have called it God. Perhaps it's just another state of the human brain. Whatever it is, it's mysterious, very interesting, and somewhat surprising, and I'd like to explore it more.

A huge range of literature on meditation is available, from pop-psychology self-help books to philosophical treatises. There are Hindu, Islamic and Christian approaches as well as Buddhist, and there are entirely secular approaches too.

What will appeal to you will depend on your preferences and the moment in your life when you open the book. Still, I'll make some suggestions. *Buddhism Without Beliefs* is a great little book by the 'secular Buddhist' Stephen Batchelor.

It will appeal to those who are interested in spirituality but put off by religion or rigid ideological belief systems. Right now I'm reading both *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*



Shunryu Suzuki, and *Buddha Recognises Buddha* by Daishin Morgan. Both are from the Soto Zen tradition, and both (in their different ways) are fascinating.

I'm also looking forward to reading *The Wild, White Goose* by the Reverend Jiyu-Kennett, founder of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives. Jiyu-Kennett was the first woman and the first Westerner to be trained and ordained as a Zen priest in Japan, and that makes a great story even for those who aren't particularly interested in meditation.

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# CatStrand SUMMER



## GALLOWAY SINGS FOR GAZA

12 JULY 6:30PM : MUSIC & SPOKEN WORD NIGHT  
2:00PM : CHOIR WORKSHOP

Scratch Choir Workshop, and an Evening of Music and Spoken Word supporting Medical Aid for Palestine.



## FAY GUIFFO ARCANA

26 JULY 3:00PM

A poetic journey of music, courage, and self-discovery, blending Western classical music with African musical traditions.



## ALTERNATIVE GAMES FEAT: CIRQLATION ENSEMBLE

2 AUGUST 2:00PM

Scotland's quirkiest games, this year with an added outdoor circus - New Galloway Park



## ALI AFFLECK NEW ORLEANS & HARLEM JAZZ

20 AUGUST 19:30PM

All Affleck leads a vibrant night of New Orleans and Harlem jazz.

# Land Notes

## LAND NOTES GLENKENS FESTIVAL OF LAND

Art, live music, talks, poetry, & events celebrating cultural richness, connection to land, living heritage, & cherished landscapes.

RUNS 21 - 23 AUGUST

Many events are free, but spaces are limited view the full programme at [gcat.scot/arts](http://gcat.scot/arts).

## USEFUL GLENKENS CONTACTS

### DOCTORS' SURGERY

Glenkens Medical Practice  
- 01644 420 234

### COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Balmaclellan: Martin Warnock - 07939 261 391
- Carsphairn: Liz Holmes - 07718 358 160
- Corsock: Julie Garton -

07769 647 702

- Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629
- Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691
- Dalry: Michele Owen - 07940 313 445
- New Galloway: 07741 656 601
- Parton: Tom - 07835 821 976

### FOOD

#### DELIVERIES

- Galloway Foodbank - 07730 788 335
- Galloway Food Hub - glenkens.scot/local-directory-listing/glenkens-food-hub
- Ballards Butchers - 01556 502502 (they also deliver groceries)
- Grierson's Butchers:

01556 502 637

- Henderson's Butchers: 01556 502 654
- Mitchell's Greengrocers: 01556 502 077
- Fleet Fish: call 07966 103 912 to find out about Glenkens delivery days
- Roan's Dairy - 01556 620 374
- Harris & Co: www.harrisandco.uk

## LOCAL ORGANISATIONS/GROUPS

**Glenkens Community Shop:** Contact Kate Bone on 07900 312425 9 or drop by the shop on Main Street, Dalry

**Glenkens Scout Group:** Contact Heather McIntosh on 01644 420 375

**Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING):** Contact info@ling.org.uk

**Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT):** Contact Michelle Owen at sjtdalrycc@gmail.com

**Dalry Town Hall:** Contact Lesley Blissett at lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

**Glenkens Community Centre:** Contact Sarah McAdam on minimac01644@gmail.com

**Lagwyne Hall:** Contact lagwynehallsecretary@outlook.com for info, or to book email lagwynehallbooking@gmail.com

**New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE):** Contact ngce5000@gmail.com or pop into New Galloway Community Shop

**Balmaclellan Community Trust:** Contact Julia Higgins at julia.higgins55@outlook.com

**CatStrand:** Contact info@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374 or pop in to the CatStrand

**Schools:** Visit the school office or call Dalry Primary on 01644 430 105 (for Nursery/ELC too), Dalry Secondary on 01644 430 259 or Kells on 01644 420 340

**Carsphairn Heritage Initiative:** Contact Ben Ade at carsphairnhi@gmail.com

**Galloway Food Hub:** Contact hello@gallowayfoodhub.org.uk or visit www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk

**Bairn Banter:** Contact Melissa on bairnbanter@outlook.com or 07979 492 791

***If you would like to add your community organisation to this list please get in touch with the Gazette - contact details are on the back page.***

## GLENKENS CHURCH TIMES

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

#### Sunday Services

**Crossmichael Church Hall, 9.30am:** all Sundays

**Balmaclellan, 11.15am:** 7 June, 5 July, 2 August

**Carsphairn, 11.15am:** 14 June, 12 July

**Kells, 11.15am:** 1 June, 19 July

**Dalry, 11.15am:** 28 June, 26 July

**For info contact Ian Knox on 07840 506 516 or i.knox29@btopenworld.com, or Irene McCreath on 07974 861927 or at irenemccreath.im@gmail.com**

### SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*St Margaret's Church, New Galloway, DG7 3RP*

**Sundays:** 10.30am, Holy Communion with refreshments after the service. All welcome.

**Tuesdays:** open for private prayer if the 'church is open' sign is outside.

**Prayer Requests:** please let us know if you would like us to pray for a particular person or circumstance. Email stmargaretsnewgalloway@gmail.com

**For further information please contact Christine Rankin, Vestry Secretary, on 07749 212 201 or visit www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org**

## GLASS RECYCLING

- Balmaclellan: beside the shop, Balmaclellan
- Carsphairn: in lay-by on A713, south of village
- Crossmichael: Memorial Hall, St Michael's Road
- Dalry: playpark car park, Kirkland Street
- New Galloway: Carson's Knowe car park
- Kirkpatrick Durham: St David Street

## USEFUL NUMBERS

- **Pothole Hotline:** 0845 276 0000
- **Police, non-emergency:** 101 or email [stewartryCPT@scotland.police.uk](mailto:stewartryCPT@scotland.police.uk)
- **Doctor:** 01644 420 234
- **NHS 24:** 08454 24 24 24
- **D&G Council:** 030 33 33 3000

## MINUTES/REPORTS OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT SPENDING

**GLENKENS DISTRICT TRUST (GDT)**  
[www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/gdt-corporate-information](http://www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/gdt-corporate-information)

**CARSPHAIRN RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND LTD (CREFL)**  
[www.carsphairn.org/CREFLArchive](http://www.carsphairn.org/CREFLArchive)



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## GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

You can now apply for a Garden Waste Collection Service permit at £40 per bin, for regular collections from March to November 2025.

Apply online at [www.dumgal.gov.uk/wasterecycling](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/wasterecycling) or in person at a customer service centre such as Dalry Library.

# Local Job Vacancies

Up-to-date job and volunteering opportunities can be found online at the Glenkens Hub on [www.glenkens.scot](http://www.glenkens.scot)

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## GLENKENS MEDICAL PRACTICE

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### CONTACT DETAILS



Phone Jason: 07704 662925  
Email: gctadmin@catstrand.com



Phone Jon: 07841 512449  
Email: gct@catstrand.com

Glenkens  
Community  
& Arts Trust



Connecting  
Communities



Supporting  
Independence



Driven by  
Community

# WHAT'S ON June/July

## JUNE

**Sun 4**, Towa Mura, CatStrand

**Sat 6**, Carsphairn Show, *see p18*

**Sat 6**, Glenkens Youth Group Golf Taster, New Galloway Golf Club

**Sun 7**, Carsphairn's Big Lunch, 1-4pm, *see p27*

**Sun 7**, Fungi Frida and the Myco Heroes, CatStrand

**Fri 12**, Gness, Dalry Town Hall

**Sat 13**, Summer Picnic Prom, Barwhillanty Estate

**Sat 13**, 1-3pm, Launch of Active Resilience Crossmichael, *see back page*

**Sat 13**, Glenkens Producers' Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

**Tue 16**, Revolution Days, CatStrand

**Wed 17**, Dalry Film Club: Downton Abbey The Grand Finale, Dalry Town Hall

**Thu 18**, Becci Wallace and Jonni Slater, CatStrand

**Sat 20**, Songwave Choir, *See p20/21*

**Sat 20**, Turning of the Year: Summer Solstice, Hensol Estate, *see p14*

**Sun 21**, Trad Music Workshop, *see p20/21*

**Sun 21**, Mid Summer Folk Session, The Clachan Inn, Dalry

**Sun 21**, Galloway Conversations: SCAMP, *see p20/21*

**Wed 24**, New Galloway Historic

Shopfront Tour, *see p20/21*

**Sun 14**, Talk: The Port Road Line, 2.30pm, Corsock Village Hall, *see p25*

**Sun 28**, Carsphairn Community Woodland Volunteer Day Sun 28, National Theatre Live: All My Sons, CatStrand

## JULY

**Fri 3**, Song Share, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry

**Sat 11**, Glenkens Producers' Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

**Sat 11**, Murder Mystery Event, New Galloway Town Hall

**Sun 12**, Seasonal Birdwatching For All: Summer, Dalry Town Hall

**Sat 18**, Galloway Conversations: Mermaids of D&G, *see p20/21*

**Sun 26**, Arcana - Fay Guiffo, CatStrand

## AUGUST

**Sun 2**, Scottish Alternative Games, *see p23*

**Tue 4**, Loch Ken Family Fun Day, *see p24*

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## Glenkens & District Community Councils

**Balmacellan:** Bi-monthly, 7.30pm, Balmacellan Village Hall - contact Martin on 07939 261 391

**Carsphairn:** Bi-monthly, last Monday of the month, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn - contact [carsphairncc@gmail.com](mailto:carsphairncc@gmail.com) or 07531 035 824

**Dalry:** First Monday each month, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall - contact [sjtdalrycc@gmail.com](mailto:sjtdalrycc@gmail.com) or 07940 313 445

**New Galloway & Kells:** Second Monday each month, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall

**Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham:** contact [mcnabblaurie@hotmail.com](mailto:mcnabblaurie@hotmail.com) or 01644 440 200

**Balmaghie:** contact [secbalmaghiecc@btinternet.com](mailto:secbalmaghiecc@btinternet.com) or 01644 450 621

**Parton:** contact [ericaporteous@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ericaporteous@hotmail.co.uk) or 01644 470 277

**Crossmichael:** Second Wednesday every month - contact [crossmichaelcc@gmail.com](mailto:crossmichaelcc@gmail.com) or 07803 204 433

Full minutes of local Community Council meetings can be viewed at Dalry Library or online at [www.glenkens.scot](http://www.glenkens.scot)

# REGULAR EVENTS & OPENING TIMES

## **Balmaclellan Village Hall**

**Tuesday Afternoon Teas**, 1st Tues each month, 2.30-4pm, Julia.higgins55@outlook.com

**Kettlebells Exercise Class**, Tue, 6-7pm  
**Glenkens Crafters**, Wed, 10am-12noon, julia.higgins55@outlook.com

**Community Library**, Saturdays only 10am-12pm

**Make Do & Mend**, fortnightly from 14 Feb, 7-9pm

**Stewartry Birdwatchers**, 2nd Thu each month Sep to Apr (Sep & Apr, 7.30pm; Oct-Mar, 2.30pm)

## **Men's Shed, Balmaclellan**

**General Opening Times**: Mon, Wedn & Fri, 9.30am-12noon

**Stick Making** - Mon, 7-9pm

**Art Group**, Thu, 2-4pm

## **Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn**

**Tuesday Morning Social**, 11am-2pm, 07710 124 255 - *finished till autumn*  
**Carsphairn SWI**, 3rd Thu of the month, 7.30pm

**Craft Group**, Fri, 10am-12noon, includes tea & coffee, carsphairncraftgroup@gmail.com

**Bairn Banter**; family stay & play session, Sat, 10am

## **CatStrand, New Galloway**

**Engisising Yoga Flow**, Tue, 9.30am

**Social Dance Lessons**, Tue, 7pm (beginners) & 8pm (improvers)

**Musical Misfits**, Wed, 3.30pm, term-time

**Dramarama**, Wed, 4.15pm, term-time

**Piano Lessons**, 4-6.30pm, term-time

**Morning Flow Yoga**, Thu, 9.30am

**CatStrand Singers**, Thu, 11am

**Piano lessons**, Sat from 9.30am, term time excl last Sat of the month

**Dance Steps**, Sat 1pm, monthly during term time

## **The Smiddy, Balmaclellan**

**Tai Chi**, Wed, 2-3pm

**Art Explorers**, Sat, 10.15, fortnightly

**Saturday Sketchers**, Sat, 11.15am, fortnightly

**Keyboard lessons**, Sat, 12.30pm, term-time, excl last Sat of the month

**Guitar lessons**, Sat 1pm, term-time, excl last Sat of the month

**Art Explorers**, Sat 10.15am, every other week during term-time

**Saturday Sketchers**, Sat 11.15am, every other week during term-time

**Treble Makers**, Sat, every other week during term-time

**For info contact Cat on 01644420 374**

## **New Galloway Town Hall**

**Men's Monday Morning Coffee**, Mon 9.30-11am

**Community Cafe**, Mon, 12.30-2pm

**Dance for Wellbeing**, Mon, 2.30pm (adults) & 4pm (children)

**Social Dance**, Mon, 7pm (beginners) & 8pm (improvers)

**Wet Felting Group**, Tue, 10am

**Tai Chi**, Tue, 3.30pm

**Sports Evening**, Tue, 7pm (carpet bowls or table tennis)

**Zumba**, Wed, 6.30pm

**Ukulele Group**, Wed, 6.30pm

**Hubbub**, Thu, 12noon-3pm drop-in

**Martial Arts**, Thu, 5.30pm, all ages

**New Galloway History Group**, Fri, 10am (meets monthly)

**COMMUNITY LARDER** - *open whenever the Town Hall is open*

**For further info email info@ling.org.uk, phone 07749 249 781**

## **Glenkens Community Centre**

**Citizens Advice Drop-ins**, every other Mon, 10am-4pm

**Glenkens Youth Group**, Mon, 7-8.30pm

**Dalry Good Neighbours Club**, Tue, 2pm, 07795 613 148

**Wee Wonders**, Thu, 9-10am

**Kickback Martial Arts**, Thu, 5.30-7pm, kmabrian@gmail.com or drop-in

**Song Share**, 1st Friday each month, 8-11pm, anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

**Yoga For All**, Fri 9.30am, drop-in, 07733 111 466

**Friendship Group**, Sat (excluding Glenkens Producers Market days), 10-11.30am, 01644 430 052

**Table Tennis/Badminton**, available to hire by arrangement, 07500 861 041

## **Glenkens Charity Shop**

**Opening Times**:

Mon 10am-1pm, Tue 6-8pm, Wed, Fri & Sat 10am-4pm

## **Dalry Library**

**Main St, Dalry - 01644 430 234**

**Library Opening Times**:

Tue 2-5pm, Fri 12noon-5pm with the first hour for NEC Bus Pass & Blue Badge appointments, etc. Book at the library or call 01387 260 196.

**Bookbug and Parent & Toddler Session**, Tue, 10.30-11.30am

**Glenkens Book Group**, last Fri each month, 2pm, 01644 420 361

**Lego Stay 'n' Play**, every 3rd Sat of the month, 1-3pm, contact Michele Owen on Facebook

## **Dalry Town Hall**

**Tai Chi**, Mon, 2pm

**Dog Training**, Tue, 7pm, 07831 590 822

**Gentle Movement**, Tue, 2pm

## **Mossdale Village Hall**

**Mossdale Painters**, Wed, 9.30-11.30am

## **Various**

**Bumps, Babies & Beyond**, every 2nd Mon, 10.30am, Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall

**Learn to Play Bridge**, Mon, 7-9pm, Lochinvar Hotel

**Keep Fit with Alex**, 7.15-8.15pm, KPD Village Hall

**Strictly Get Dancing**, Mon, 7pm, Galloway Activity Centre, Parton

**Spalding Bowling Club Sweep Nights**, Mon, 7pm, shazfish1@gmail.com

**Cosy Corner**, Tue, 1-5pm, Crossmichael Church Hall, 07889 016 963

**Glenkens Oil Painters**, Wed, 10am, Corfield House Art Studio

**Crossmichael Heritage Centre**, Wed 1.30-4.30pm & **Hearse Hoose** Mon-Sat, both Apr-Oct

**Cub Scouts**, Wed 6.15-7.30pm, Scout Hall, New Galloway

**Patchwork Workshop**, Thu, 1-3pm, Crossmichael Church Hall

**Dragon Boats on Loch Ken**, Sun 9.30am, Galloway Activity Centre

**Knockvennie Snooker Club**, contact Andrew on 01556 690 677

**Outdoor Bowls**, Dalry, contact Fiona on 07500 554 751

**Snooker/Indoor Bowls**, contact Gordon 07834 321 789

**Mum & Baby Movement**, Thu, 9.30-11.30am, Laurieston Village Hall

**Crossmichael Youth Club**, Fri, Crossmichael Memorial Hall

# Photo of the Issue



This issue's winner is Hayley Edgar with a view from Waterside Hill.

Hayley wins two portions of mac 'n' cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmaclellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "This sunset view is simply stunning - who would want to live anywhere else?!"

To enter you can send in any photograph taken in the Glenkens to [glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk)

**THE OPENING OF OUR NEW FACILITY**

ACTIVE RESILIENCE CROSSMICHAEL

**13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE | 1PM-3PM**

FOOD AND DRINK PROVIDED WITH HELP CLEANING THE WOODLAND PATH

COME ALONG, CELEBRATE AND BE PART OF THE ARC JOURNEY

**THE SCOTTISH ALTERNATIVE GAMES**

NEW GALLOWAY PARK

**SUNDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2026 - 2PM**

**FEATURING:**

- THE GIRD 'N' CLEEK WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
- SNAIL RACING
- TRACTOR PULL
- TOSSIN' THE SHEAF
- HURLIN' THE CURLIN' STANE
- TUG O' WAR
- CLASSIC CAR SHOW
- PIPERS
- BAR
- BARBECUE

Plus **Circulation's JOURNEY CIRCUS SHOW FOR ALL AGES**

**ADMISSION** £6 ADULT | SENIOR CITIZENS £4 | £1 CHILD

PROFITS SUPPORT LOCAL CHARITIES AND GOOD CAUSES.

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**  
 Submit events, activities, news stories, cartoons, reviews, tips & techniques, fiction, photos, ads or ideas... Contact Sarah Ade on 07727 127 997 or [glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk)  
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