



the **BLACK** *bitch*

60p **ISSUE 27** JULY 2014

Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow people

Let's Party

Party at the Palace p11-14

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Perambulation - on the March p6



Mahri's on a Mission in Missouri p9



Linlithgow's EasyCar Club p16

Plus

Folk Fae Lithgae, Party at the Palace, Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange Community Council, LinlithgowPlus, New Hopetoun Gardens, – take your pick!

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We're Linlithgow's
Community Magazine -
your local magazine with
local news & events.

*Referendum 2014 -
nearly time
to decide!*

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from pipe dream to a hell of a party...*

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*Volunteer and
lose two stone
the Glenn Miller
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A big thank you to the team and volunteers...

The Black Bitch is brought to you by a dedicated regular team of David Tait, Chris Hamilton at cghcreative.co.uk, Murdoch Kennedy, Dougal Philip, Tony Oxbrow, Lesley Watson, Ron Smith, Gillian Arthur, Donna White, Melanie King, Alison Train, Rebecca Bell, Marjory Boyle Crooks and Gordon Jack **Guest Contributors:** Sandy MacPherson, Gordon Young, Verena Throp, Mahri Nicholson, Ian Macartney, Derek Halden, and Deborah Paton. **Photography:** Gordon Jack: Front cover & Party at the Palace. Martine Stead: Folk Fae Lithgae. David Shirres: Perambulation of the Marches. Gordon Young: Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange. Derek Halden: LinlithgowPlus

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Folk Fae Lithgae

LAURA NEARY

In 1994, four year old Laura Neary made her stage debut as a rat in the chorus line of Linlithgow Players' pantomime 'Dick Whittington'. Now, twenty years later, she has just been elected as the youngest-ever chairman of the Players. "I'm not really sure if it's 'chairman' or 'chairwoman', she says. "My predecessor Judy Barker used to like to say, 'Madam Chairman.'"

Laura has developed into a seasoned performer with the Players, particularly in their annual pantomime, where she has regularly played the part of Principal Girl. She is very excited about her new role, and told me

"I'm looking forward to it, but it will be a tough task as well. The previous chairman leaves big shoes to fill."

First established in 1943, the Players are Linlithgow's oldest arts organisation. Their staple programme includes a spring production, historical re-enactments at the Palace in summer, a 'Plays and Wine' evening in October and the pantomime in January. In recent years, new challenges have been undertaken, such as the 2012 joint staging of Shakespeare's 'The Winter's Tale' with the Barony Theatre group in Bo'ness. This year's spring production saw the bar being raised even higher, as Laura explained:

"We wanted to invest some of our money into developing our acting skills, so we forked out for a professional director, Andy Corelli-Jones, to work with us from January until April on the stage version of 'Blood Brothers'. We rehearsed with him week in, week out and it certainly paid dividends for the club, as the production was a huge success."

The Players are certainly not resting on their laurels. With support from Historic Scotland, they have recently been

involved in performing an excerpt from "A Satire of the Three Estates" at Stirling Castle. Plans for the rest of the year are already in place and a return to Shakespeare is pencilled-in for their next spring production.

Laura told me: "2015 is a big year for us. We have been selected by the Royal Shakespeare Company, and as part of their project 'A celebration of Shakespeare', we are going to perform a modern take on 'Twelfth Night'. Once the cast is chosen, long-standing members Eleanor Bain and Sandra Moar will write the script, and there will be a lot of improvisation. It's very exciting. It's a modern twist on the play and I think it will suit everybody. It will use Shakespearean language and will be a very big challenge for the people involved."

Laura has lived all her life in Linlithgow and has recently set up a new home in the town with her fiancé Chris. The couple are due to be married on June 6th next year at the Inchyra Grange Hotel. Laura juggles her commitments to the Players with a busy career as a staff nurse at St John's Hospital in Livingston, working in the areas of plastic surgery, head and neck and maxillofacial.

For her, being in the Players is like being in a family. "I have grown up with these people, and not only have they taught me so much about acting, they have also been with me through all the milestones in my life, such as when I was Gala Queen in 2001. Hopefully they will be going through many more milestones with me in years to come."

Murdoch Kennedy



REFERENDUM TIME!

This September, those of us who live in Scotland have a monumental task ahead of us. Do we vote to stay put in an arguably successful alliance with our neighbouring islanders, or should we enter into a “conscious uncoupling” from the United Kingdom and break out on our own, seizing the opportunity to be an independent country again?

I, along with many others have still not landed on a permanent decision. I sway from one to the other. My heart says “Go on, we can rise as a successful nation”, my head says, “There are too many unanswered issues to resolve.”

An easy option would be to just not bother voting at all. I could assume that plenty of Scots will understand the politics better than me and will turn out to exercise their right to vote. The option not to vote just isn't palatable to me. We are very lucky to live in a democracy, and this year, with events unfolding in Ukraine and elsewhere, I am acutely aware of how privileged I am to do so. I also think about my forefathers, who lived 300 years ago when the historic English opposition to a closer union with Scotland was abandoned and union of the two Parliaments became an imperative. Back then there was no national popular vote, the decision was taken by parliament. History books say that opinion was sharply divided between the “ordinary folk” - that's you and me! - with mobs forming, politicians pelted and petitions signed against an incorporating union and the “high heid yins” who were in favour of the union. I have recently pondered about what it must have felt like for ordinary people. I'm sure though that, whether the prospect of joining the new Kingdom of “Great Britain” was exciting for them or if they were upset to lose their independence, either way, they would have wished for

the opportunity to have taken part in the decision. We have that opportunity in 2014 and I feel very strongly that we have a duty to get involved.

It's not that there is a lack of information to help us to decide. The issue for me is that much of what is written or reported includes a negative slant about the opposition's approach. Even independent reports are inevitably picked up and interpreted by either side to make for some very confusing and unpropitious reading.

This is why the Black Bitch Community Magazine has decided to throw out a challenge to anyone on either side of the debate. We invite them to write an article laying out their vision for Scotland, should they win the referendum.

> The article can be 500 words long, the only stipulation being that it must focus entirely on the future Scotland they propose and refrain from negative comment about the opposition!

> The two articles will be published in Issue 28 of the magazine, to be delivered from 28 August 2014.

I look forward to reading both sides carefully as I spend the next couple of months coming to a final decision. No matter what the outcome is on the 18th September, I want to be able to look back in 10, 20 or hopefully 30 years' time, and to tell my children and grandchildren that while many parts of the world around us were in bitter conflagration I took part in a model example of a democratic referendum.

Gillian Arthur





PERAMBULATION OF THE MARCHES

The evening of Wednesday, 11 June 2014 saw Linlithgow's first 'Perambulation of the Marches' event, originally the brainchild of Ron Smith, chairman of Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow. Ron had connections with Lanark where, each year as part of Lanark's Lanimer Day celebrations, around 2,500 townsfolk follow the traditional route around the countryside checking the town's March Stones.

As there are so many other historical parallels between the two towns, Ron wondered if another could be added. 'Sounding out' discussions suggested that an evening 'Perambulation' might fit in well with Linlithgow's Marches events and would be an excellent way to draw more folks into active participation in the ancient traditions of the town - as well as the obvious health and learning benefits!

So began the process of detailed arrangements including fundraising to replace the long lost 1832 boundary marker stones and all the other detailed work required to make a success of the event.

Blessed with a beautiful evening on 11 June, 250 walkers assembled at the West Port and enjoyed a pleasant stroll of around 4 miles, approximately tracing the 1832 Parliamentary Boundary and its related March Stones, new and old.

Deemed a great success by all who participated, Ron and his Civic Trust team are already looking forward to next year's event when it is planned to incorporate several ideas arising from the inaugural outing to make the event even more enjoyable - and take another step towards matching Lanark's turnout of around 2,500!

Thanks go to all members of the Perambulation sub-group of Linlithgow Civic Trust, in particular to John Aitken - and of course to Provosts Tom Kerr and Jack Adair who inaugurated the event, the Town Crier, flagbearers and halberdiers of the Deacon's Court, and Ross Miller, the piper, all of whom added immeasurably to the atmosphere and status of the 'new tradition'. Not forgetting either, 250 of Linlithgow's finest who were awarded their certificates at the end of a pleasant evening.

See you at next year's Perambulation on the Wednesday evening before Marches Day!

**Long live the Perambulation
of the Marches!**

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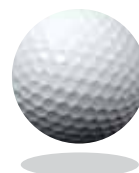
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Rotary

Club of Linlithgow Grange

The 2014 Charity
Golf Tournament



Mon
18
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LINLITHGOW GOLFERS TEE-OFF FOR CHARITY

The Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange (RCLG) hosted its first Am/Am Charity Golf Tournament in 2003, after a few abortive attempts at establishing a Pro/Am, where three amateur golfers paid to be teamed with a professional. Although never financial failures, the hard work was not rewarded with proportionate income for the Club to donate to charities. The adopted proposal to run a more straightforward event where teams of four amateurs (thus, for the uninitiated, the epithet 'Am/Am') played against each other was transformational. Every year since, RCLG has donated £5/6000 to favoured charities. With a grand total well over £60,000, it has easily been our biggest fundraiser and we are extremely grateful to all our players and benefactors. This impressive total reflects the constant encouragement, help and effort of all club members.

The club president nominates the charity or charities to benefit from the income. Traditionally this is split between a main beneficiary — usually a Scottish based charity — with the remainder going to an international good cause. 'Home' charities in previous years have included Alzheimer's Scotland, Teenage Cancer Trust, and Enable Scotland. International good causes, such as Mercy Ships have also benefited. Occasionally, there is a single beneficiary such as the newly formed Prostate Scotland or End Polio Now, Rotary's own charity fighting to rid the world of polio (with already 99% achieved and every optimism for total success).

This year, the chosen charity is the Bethany Christian Trust, which helps homeless and vulnerable people throughout Scotland to rebuild their lives. Rev Alan Berry, then a minister in Leith, founded Bethany in Edinburgh in 1983, in response to the needs of the many unfortunate people he confronted daily.

Today Bethany helps 5,000 people annually across Scotland to find, equip and maintain homes, overcome addictions and social and educational barriers. Bethany's vision is to see

people enjoying full and healthy lives within their community. It now offers a range of services: a Care Van in Edinburgh offers food and clothing to rough sleepers; Bethany provides temporary accommodation at Kharis Court in West Lothian or fully furnished accommodation for homeless and vulnerable people in Edinburgh, Dumfries and Fife. Addiction Support Teams offer practical help, while Bethany Homemaker assists families and individuals on low incomes to find furniture and other essential household items. Bethany offers advice on budgeting, legal matters, health issues, family relationships, housing applications, benefit claims, and contact with counselling services and other agencies.

The international charity is Rotary ShelterBox.

ShelterBoxes are family-sized disaster relief tents each packed into a crate along with essential survival equipment, thermal blankets and groundsheets, water storage and purification equipment, solar lamps, cooking utensils, a basic tool kit, mosquito nets and a children's activity pack.

The 2014 Charity Golf Tournament (Monday 18th August at Linlithgow Golf Course) is worthy of your support; you could enter a team, sponsor a tee or green, or donate something for our prize draw or silent auction. A team of four costs £130, with a two-course meal provided at end of play; sponsorship of a tee or green costs £50, including your publicity poster beside the tee or green and a listing in the programme. Ian Orr, the Golf Tournament Organiser, will happily uplift any raffle prize or auction lot. You can contact him on 0790 841 3265 or at charitygolf@linlithgowgrange.org.uk.

Gordon Young

For more details, please contact Gordon Young 0770 663 2300
Marketing, PR and Communications Committee
The Rotary Club of Linlithgow Grange



Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council invites the people of the town, and outlying communities, to join the upcoming **Public Health Consultation - 11 September 2014, at Burgh Halls, from 7.00pm - 9.30pm.**

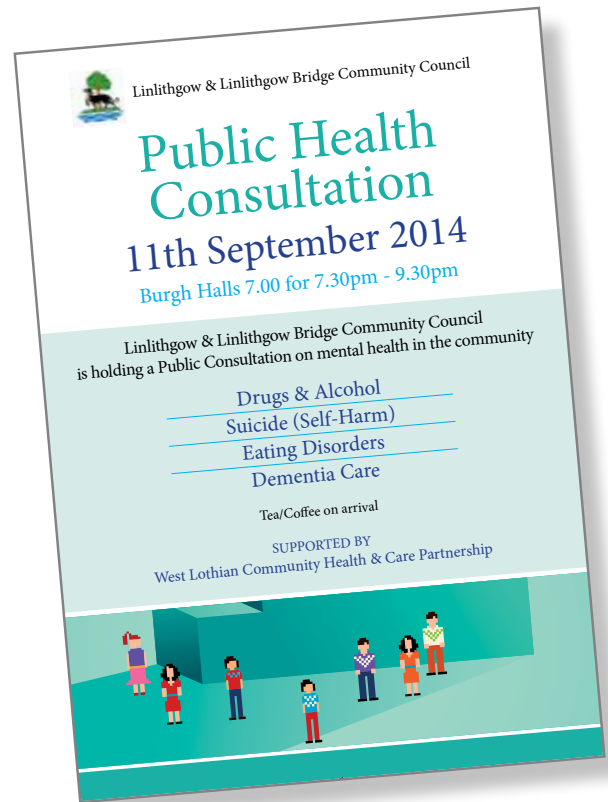
The consultation is focused on mental health in the community, specifically on - Alcohol and Drugs, Suicide and Self-Harm, Eating Disorders, and Dementia Care, all are known to affect people from many backgrounds.

The purpose of the consultation is to ask:

- > “What are the Health and Care needs of people in the local community;
- > What help and support is available;
- > Are current support services appropriate, and adequate; What can be done to overcome difficulties, and bring change, where need for change is identified.”

Health and Care Professionals will be attending the event, to hear what people are saying, and to let people know how the Scottish Government is implementing changes in NHS and Social Care, through promotion of innovation, and re-design of services with emphasis of providing good, safe care in the community, with aim of improving the health and wellbeing of all people.

Representatives who have pledged to attend the consultation event are - West Lothian Carers - Mental Health Advocacy - CAHMS - West Lothian Drug & Alcohol Service, and other Community Interest Groups.



The Community Council’s Health and Care working group will write a summary report of the consultation outcome. The report will be submitted to West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP), for consideration, and action. The report will also be available at Linlithgow Library, and on the Community Council’s website - www.llbcc.org.uk

The Consultation is supported by West Lothian Community Health Partnership.



Verena Throp
Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council



LINLITHGOW ACADEMY...“WHAT MAHRI DID NEXT”



MAHRI SAYS....

Asking my friend group what they wanted to do with their lives while we were still in sixth year, I received a myriad of responses: a vague outline of a career; a desire to travel; absolutely no idea! Even the more simple question, “what do you want to do in the next five years?” was answered with hesitation. Although many of my friends might have told you, uncertainly, that they wanted to go to either university or college, what career they wanted this to lead to, or even what subject they wanted to study, was also questionable. Considering we were all only 17 or 18 at the time, this hesitation is unsurprising.

One thing that I knew for sure, even when applying to universities in the October of my sixth year, was that I wanted to study abroad in my third year. I only had a vague idea of what that would mean; what it might look or feel like, or what I would gain from the experience. I was definitely uncertain that I actually would study abroad – I just knew for sure that I wanted to. I did not mention to any of my friends or family at the time, presuming that as third year grew closer I would be too settled at university to want to change my whole life for a year.

However, as things went, I spent this past year at Washington University in St. Louis, in Missouri – not a stereotypical tourist city but the campus is beautiful. Although it has one of the highest crime rates in the country, and is incredibly segregated, the state has implemented a lot of new programmes designed to turn this around. Most people will tell you the same thing about their experience studying abroad – they made new friends, experienced a new culture, learned more about the world, gained a passion for travelling and had a brilliant time. All these things turned out to be true for me and I got even more out of the experience than I could have imagined. I think going was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made.

The summer before I went to St. Louis I took the

opportunity to volunteer in Uganda for six weeks, along with six other students, through the student-run charity Edinburgh Global Partnerships. Before leaving, we raised funds to build two new classrooms for a primary school and then went over to Uganda to help with their construction. It was the best experience I’ve ever had, particularly in regards to how much I learned about the world, and what career I would eventually love to have (which, to be clear, is definitely not in construction!) Like studying abroad, volunteering abroad was something I had always wanted to do; it just took me a couple of years to find the right project and charity. I can’t tell you where this desire came from, just that I envisioned studying and volunteering abroad as part of my life, years before either of them actually happened.

I believe that these thoughts will be reassuring to others, just leaving school, who have no certain ideas about what they want to do with their lives. It is probably too big a question to ask people that age what they want to do with their entire lives, as even the next five years seem like a long stretch of time to most young people. Having carefully laid plans might work for some people, but most young people will undoubtedly change their ideas regularly about what they want to do with their life. Therefore, it makes sense to follow your gut instinct with opportunities to travel, volunteer, and study in different places. Inevitably, careful planning and research is important when it comes to making such big decisions. However, if you have been holding onto the vague notion of taking such an opportunity, the chances are that the experience will exceed whatever expectations you could have ever had about it.”

Mahri Nicholson Age 20

(Second from right in photo) left Linlithgow Academy in 2011 and is currently studying History at Edinburgh University.

At last we have all been able to enjoy a normal summer and have some meals and barbecues in our gardens!



We had a great evening party to launch our summer event, art in the garden, and you can come anytime you like to enjoy the two dozen works of art installed in our gardens here. The event runs until the end of August.

We have a very grand carved oak bench by Nigel Ross in the Scottish Garden. The piece is entitled 'Reflection' and is sitting in the same garden as the Larch throne carved by Nigel for us 25 years ago! The throne was carved out of a very large Larch tree that had been planted here in Hopetoun Woods in the 1840's. It was blown over in a storm in the early 1990's and we transported it to the Walled Garden at Hopetoun House where Nigel 'released' the throne you can see today. We returned it to Hopetoun Woods when we moved the garden centre up here in 1998.



Come and sit on it and feel part of the rich tapestry of history that has washed over this part of Forth Valley.

Hopefully you will have had some good edible crops from your garden or allotment this year. The other bit of good news is that July is a good month to start growing some crops that will take you into

the winter. You can start a second crop where you have lifted early potatoes, lettuces and broad beans.

Pop in some young plants of leeks, spring cabbage, winter cabbage, Swiss chard or Purple sprouting broccoli. Try some baby crops from seed like Baby turnips, carrots, radishes, spring onions or spinach - you will be



cropping these in the late summer or autumn. Japanese onions can be planted in early September to crop next May.

THERE ARE NO EXCUSES FOR NOT HAVING A GO!

Don't forget those herbs we have been encouraging you to grow this year. Summer is the perfect time to enjoy and be refreshed with a herbal tea in the garden. Infusions of fresh herbs from your garden are becoming more and more popular. Use a good bunch of herbs infused in water just off the boil. Experiment with different blends of herbs to find the ones you enjoy the most.

Lemon Verbena is delightful. Grow it in a large pot on its own and taken inside for the cold half of the year.

Different mints are best kept in large pots on their own to stop them spreading all over the garden or mingling their flavours with each other.

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Party at the palace

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Ian Macartney

I, and most people here, wouldn't exactly class Linlithgow as the capital of musical talent. It is less a hub for acoustic innovation as it is a hub of hairdressers, quaint shops and cafes. Much less a place for world-class bands to come and play at, for sure.

Yet here we are, edging closer and closer towards **Party At The Palace**, a concert featuring **Simple Minds** of all things, as well as sophisti-pop group extraordinaire, **Deacon Blue**, and many more of Scotland's finest musical talent. All in the space of a weekend.

Simple Minds are one of the most iconic bands of the 80s, to say the least. They have turned out some of the most prolific songs of that decade, such as "Don't You (Forget About Me)" and "Alive and Kicking", the former being used in the credits of renowned coming-of-age film "The Breakfast Club".

Deacon Blue were prominent in the 80s too, and are still releasing new material today (after getting back together in 2000. In fact, this September their eighth record "A New House" will be released).

The band is known for their sublime lyricism and their own blend of music, a bluesy type of pop rock. This helped create great songs, from "Chocolate Girl" to "Raintown" to the more recent, such as "The Hipsters" (2012) and "You'll Know It's Christmas" (2013).

The line-up for the other bands are surprising, varied and all amazingly talented in the creation of their music.

Saturday is set to begin with the band **Runrig**, with their mixture of Celtic influences and rock having known to make them renowned over the world. To add to the folk vibe is the Gaelic lyricism, courtesy of lead singer **Donnie Munro**. Since their inception in 1973 they've become known across Denmark, Germany and Canada. A very fitting start to a day of Scottish music.

After that is singer-songwriter **James Grant**, with the band **Love And Money**. An extremely talented acoustic ballad-spinner, his songs are known for their expressive melancholy and poetic lyricism. A mellow yet entertaining performance.

To counter this sombreness, the 80s band **The Bluebells** will be playing. Known for their single "Young At Heart" (a rendition of the Bananarama song of the same name) which reached the No. 1 spot in the 1993 UK Charts, their form jangly guitar pop will make their sound ear-catching and unique.

Sophisti-pop duo **Hue And Cry** follow on. Made up of the brothers **Pat and Greg Kane**, their later musical careers went away from funky and intelligent pop songs to more experimental routes, exploring jazz, latin, and even D&B genres. Expect great tunes from them.

To add a more contemporary side to the event, indie rock outfit **Attic Lights** are expected to perform. With comparisons to The Beach Boys and R.E.M under their belts, their guitar-heavy rock (akin to a Glaswegian Weezer) will be a brilliant act to go on before headliners, Deacon Blue, take their place.

Sunday starts with **Blues n Trouble**; straight and proper blues music, hailing from Livingston, but expanded to have a resounding reputation across all of Britain. Great boogie and experienced instrument playing, especially in the harmonica.



Following on from this is four piece **Brownbear**. Hailing from Ayrshire, they've supported well known bands like Babyshambles, The Libertines and The View (who play later on). The group has spent 2013 touring extensively, playing gigs like T In the Park and the T3ree Music Festival. Infectious hooks and great singing will make this a fun act to listen to.

Back to the 80s; slightly experimental pop-folk from **The Silencers**. Considered a mixture of U2, Simple Minds and The Proclaimers, their colourful anthems will be a great addition to the concert.

Female singer-songwriter **Horse** comes next, her sonorous and expressive voice helping to bring over her intelligent lyricism. Hailing from Newport on Tay, her work has garnered her praise from The Scotsman and even a place as a support act on Tina Turner's tour.

Next up is **Frightened Rabbit**. An indie rock quartet, they supported Death Cab For Cutie on their 2008 UK and Ireland Tour. They are set to play their lyrical, melancholic songs set to moving guitar, plus emotional vocals. Last act before Simple Minds is a band that Brownbear helped support in their tour, **The View**. A multi-genre hopping punk rock band, their blend of folk, post-punk revival and indie pop makes their line-up a very eclectic yet brilliant mix of tunes. That's not all, however. There is also poised to be a special guest performing at some point over the weekend.

So whether it's nostalgia for Simple Minds, or a taste for some contemporary indie rock from the likes of The View, or just to enjoy a range of Scottish music, then get your tickets as soon as you can!

For more information, see the website at www.partyatthepalace.co.uk.

And buy your tickets online from: www.LinlithgowPlus.org.uk.

Party At The Palace is from the 9th to the 10th of August.



Ian Macartney is 15 and studies at Linlithgow Academy. His interests include music, writing and some way to marry the two together.

He has won several competitions for his writing, including the RSPB's Wildverse 2012, and was a prizewinner of the Pushkin Prizes in that same year.



LinlithgowPlus

Sat/Sun
9/10
AUG



Deacon Blue

The View



HOW TO HAVE A PARTY (at the PALACE!)

Pints and pipe dreams in The Four Mary's pub led to a lot more than John Richardson bargained for. Party At The Palace was born out of a group of Linlithgow dads meeting up for drinks on a regular basis, throwing around ideas for what might make a good business.

Father-of-two John recalled: "One of the guys came from a farming background, so his idea was to invest in livestock."

"It was just brainstorming at first, dreaming of what we would do if we had unlimited funds."

John, 43, who lives just off the High Street, works in the music industry, and through managing a singer he'd travelled to a lot of festivals - including the V Festival and the Isle of Wight Festival.

"Some of them are organised really well. The Isle of Wight in particular involves the whole community. As soon as you get off the ferry, there are people selling ice lollies out of their front garden, or bottles of water, or burgers."

I always thought it would be good to do something that would involve the Linlithgow community, and local businesses."

Those regular chats down the pub led John to the idea of putting on a musical event at Linlithgow Palace - although he didn't know what kind. He called in his friend Peter Ferguson, 40, an Edinburgh-based events organiser, and the pair scoped out the site, approaching Historic Scotland and West Lothian Council for a few exploratory meetings.

John explained: "At that point we thought we might do something like Proms in the Park."

Peter used to put on shows with orchestras and choirs at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh."

But as conversations continued, the fellas figured that since this is the year of Homecoming - with the Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup - then a concert showcasing the best in Scottish music made sense.

And so began a learning curve for the men, who may have worked in the music industry, but had never dealt with booking pop acts before.

"We started by approaching our wishlist of top Scottish acts. We knew that the T in the Park acts would be tied into a contract which meant they couldn't commit to anything else. So that ruled out Paolo Nutini,

Twin Atlantic and Biffy Clyro.

We wanted our event to be a little more refined, appealing to an older audience. So we thought we'd go for The Proclaimers, Deacon Blue, Runrig, Texas, and Wet Wet Wet.

Deacon Blue said yes quite early on. Everyone else said no - because we were new and not established it was difficult to get people on board. There was also the fact a lot of musical managers would say 'OK they're available, put in an offer. We didn't have a clue how much to bid. We wanted to avoid paying over the odds, but we didn't want to insult them. Some managers gave us a ballpark figure after much pleading, others wouldn't. So we had to ask around and research how much bands had been paid for other gigs and take a shot."

Once Deacon Blue and Simple Minds were on board, it was easy to get other bands interested.

But the red tape of getting the go ahead from Historic Scotland took a while. And once the paperwork came through, the guys had lost many opportunities.

"We only got confirmation we could do this at Easter - and by that time some bands who were initially interested had committed to

Simple Minds



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Peter Ferguson
& John Richardson



something else,” said John.

“Del Amitri, for example, were contracted to The Wickerman Festival. Others said they’d love to be considered for next year, but this year they were taking time off.”

Despite the hurdles they’ve faced, the fellas made an impressive line-up which consists of Deacon Blue, Hue and Cry, The Bluebells, Attic Lights, James Grant (of Love and Money) and Runrig’s Donnie Munro booked for Saturday. And Simple Minds with The View, Frightened Rabbit, Horse, The Silencers and Brown Bear for Sunday.

Being a two-man operation, they’ve had everything else to organise from catering to security to cleaning crew and more.

“For the hours we’ve put in, we could probably have worked for McDonald’s and made more,” he said.

“But it’s about building up something which can involve Linlithgow and bring in work for local people. Apart from one catering company Peter has a connection with in Edinburgh, we’ve sourced everything else within

a 20-mile radius – the lighting, the stage, children’s entertainment, facepainting, local cafes are getting involved.

All of our production is being looked after by a local guy called Steedsy, who seems to be a well kent face in the town.

We’ve got 33 beds booked at Donaldson’s School for crew. Beecraigs got in touch to ask us to take their campsite off our website because they’re full.

Our booking agent tells us we’ve got tickets purchased from Hong Kong, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany and Canada. We’re putting Linlithgow on the map and hopefully making something that will benefit the whole community.”

The men had the added complication of there being three weddings that weekend – two at the Burgh Halls and one at the Palace. If any of these wedding parties objected to their event, it would have to be called off.

“We’ve jumped through hoops to make sure everything is arranged so

our Party doesn’t detract from their big days. We’ve made promises to those couples and we will honour those promises.”

Add to that the letters they’ve fired out to residents living around the loch, offering to answer any concerns about noise and additional traffic on the weekend, and John and Peter are determined to make this a pleasant experience for everyone – whether they’re going along or not.

“We’ve given out a number to anyone who has any issues. Who’s manning that hotline? Me and Peter.”

But despite all their hard work, John insists it’s the local businesses, heritage groups and townsfolk they’re grateful to. For making a pipe dream what promises to be one hell of a party.

Tickets are available via The Burgh Halls or through www.partyatthepalace.co.uk

An information line for any concerns that neighbours may have is available at 0131 644 3062 or via email info@partyatthepalace.co.uk

Donna White



PARTY AT THE PALACE USES LINLITHGOWPLUS TO REWARD THE TOWN



LinlithgowPlus

Party at the Palace wanted to invest in local good causes so everyone in the town does better, not just those who attend their event. LinlithgowPlus is open to any seller or provider of goods and services in Linlithgow to reward whoever they choose so Party at the Palace are using the service to ensure that 2% of the ticket sales revenue generated through LinlithgowPlus goes to these good causes.

LinlithgowPlus is also being used to enable local people to select the good causes. Local businesses, community groups and other organisations who want to improve the town are being encouraged to list their project at www.linlithgowplus.org.uk. Local people will be able to select the good causes they support to help decide how the rewards are spent. As the reward fund builds up from Party at the Palace ticket sales, the most popular good causes will be funded.

THE PARTY STARTED EARLY AND CONTINUES LONGER...

One of the first good causes to register an interest was Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Children's Gala Day and after only 3 weeks of ticket sales LinlithgowPlus was able to reward their work with £1000 to make their annual event bigger and better.

Using the local rewards scheme also enables other local businesses to promote offers to people visiting the town for the event in August. The more businesses that use the service the greater the rewards.



LINLITHGOWPLUS IS SIMPLE TO USE AND EFFECTIVE

By using LinlithgowPlus local businesses can:

- > Make targeted offers to Party at the Palace visitors;
- > Make targeted sales offers to customers throughout the year at no cost;

> Share the benefits of additional sales with partners and local good causes and only by growing local businesses will LinlithgowPlus be able to make any money itself;

> Benefit from an additional shop window to complement their existing sales channels.

CUSTOMERS:

> Sign up using the smartphone app (mobile. linlithgowplus.org.uk), or online from their computer (www.linlithgowplus.org.uk). People and businesses who don't like new technology can manage all day to day activity from printed vouchers, but will need to rely on a friend or a relative with technology when undertaking some tasks. The app requires no special type of smartphone;

> Buy products and services and collect points and rewards. If sellers know who they are selling to then they are better able to target offers and rewards.

LINLITHGOWPLUS OFFERS MANY BENEFITS TO CUSTOMERS

Parking and bus travel for Party at the Palace are already cross selling using LinlithgowPlus, but it is not just transport that can benefit. LinlithgowPlus is keen to help make more connections in the town to spread the benefits of more people working together.

LinlithgowPlus is a project managed by Loop Connections whose founder Derek Halden has lived in the town for 28 years. He has seen the approach his firm started to develop in 2008 work well in towns across the UK.

The team would welcome the chance to discuss ideas from people in the town about how they could use the scheme to connect Linlithgow by making win win solutions easier to manage.

If you want to discuss your ideas with them, including how to share in the rewards from Party at the Palace please contact:

Derek Halden by e-mail at derek.halden@loopconnections.org.uk or by phone at 0131 524 9531.

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In a time of economic uncertainty, we've seen new initiatives emerging within the so-called "sharing economy". Linlithgow's promotional trial of the easyCar Club scheme is an example. easyCar Club operates on a peer basis – it allows you to rent out your car or van, generating an income from something you already pay for. The scheme has been running in London for a year as a pilot, and is now operating across the UK. As well as providing a supply of local vehicles to those who need one, the scheme makes use of cars when they're not being used (some estimates suggest that can be 95% of the time). easyCar Club members around the UK have shown that you can earn up to £3,000 or more a year depending on how often you make your car available. Even renting a few times a year can help offset motoring costs, and crucially, the money stays in the local community.

Why Linlithgow? Transition Linlithgow has won funding to promote the easyCar Club scheme in the town for a trial period. Supported by Carplus and Transport Scotland's Developing Car Clubs in Scotland (DCCS) programme, the scheme is being trialled in Linlithgow to encourage take-up and test if this type of scheme can thrive in a vibrant, close-knit community. Promotion of the scheme is important if it is going to work – it can only be viable if people are aware of it, and both Car Owners and Drivers sign up and use it.

Transition Linlithgow believes this scheme could help the town in a number of ways. Alan Brown, Chair, says "We're interested to see how this scheme develops. A traditional car club, with a fleet of cars, would be great. But these are expensive to run, and need a lot more hires to be commercially viable than a peer to peer car club. The scheme might support some car-free households in Linlithgow, helping to tackle the growing air quality problems on our High Street. It could also help our community be a bit more resilient, weather the economic storms, by providing an extra source of income. It might even open up use by visitors to the town and support the local economy."

Deborah Paton, the local coordinator of the promotional trial will be monitoring progress of the scheme and providing updates to the community. She is keen to talk to local organisations about the scheme, and encourage people to try it and offer their feedback. Deborah can be contacted at carclub@transitionlinlithgow.org.uk, and further detail on the scheme is available at <http://transitionlinlithgow.org.uk/projects/car-club/>.



Deborah Paton
Transition Linlithgow

So how does it work? Head to www.easycarclub.com, and sign up for free. As a Car Owner, you decide when your car is available for hire and how much to charge. You can accept or reject each booking, hand over keys face-to-face or leave them in a key security box which easyCar Club provides for free. Most importantly, easyCar Club provides comprehensive insurance for each hire, so your own insurance policy is not affected. As a Driver, easyCar Club check your driving records for the benefit of all members. Then you search for a car or van in your area when you need it and book it without any further paperwork. Pay a refundable deposit for the car upfront, and rent cars from as low as £20 for a day. Nationwide RAC breakdown and recovery is included for all easyCar Club cars, all the time.



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On your Bike!

Black Bitch volunteer, Glenn Miller...



The way Black Bitch volunteer Glenn Miller tells his story is reminiscent of a scene in a Norman Wisdom movie. (Or if you're too young to remember him, think Mr Bean).

Picture the scene: a group of dads agree to a charity bike ride. Excited to get out on the road, our hero digs out his tracksuit bottoms and a T-shirt, pedalling proudly to the place where they've all arranged to meet... only to be greeted by a lycra clad army of Chris Hoy lookalikes who mean business!

You can almost picture Glenn's face, as he gulps and surveys the athletic figures before him.

But despite this baptism of fire, the dad-of-two didn't let this put him off, and he went through with the training and the subsequent fundraising cycle ride last September, from Glasgow to Edinburgh.

Since then he's "gracefully declined" to go cycling with that group again - but has continued to get on his bike, particularly when he delivers the Black Bitch magazine around his neighbours in Avontoun Park.

"They were far too fast for me," he recalled.

"But I enjoy cycling and often go out on my bike delivering the magazine, and people come out to talk to you. I've been volunteering with the Black Bitch for more

than a year now. And that's how I got to know some other guys who cycle. We've all got kids at Linlithgow Academy. After seeing me out on my bike, delivering the magazine, we got talking.

This time, Glenn checked his new bicycling buddies were more at his speed, and together they've gone for regular rides.

As a pleasant side effect, Glenn, who is in his 50s, has lost two stones in weight through doing what he loves.

He said: "I wanted to get fitter and healthier, and I'm feeling a lot better. I do about 50 miles a week, going to the Gyle and back among other routes. I enjoy getting out in the fresh air. There's nothing like it. And without even trying I've shed the pounds."

As a community magazine, Glenn says he knows plenty of people who enjoy reading the Black Bitch. But for him it's opened up a whole new lease of life.

"It's great for getting to know people - and connecting with others of similar interests. Anyone who sees me out delivering the magazine is welcome to come and say hello. I might be on two wheels, but I've got time to stop and chat."

Donna White



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NOT OUT!

West Lothian County Cricket Association

The sport of cricket has a long and proud history in Linlithgow. As early as the 1880s and 1890s, no fewer than four matches were played on the Peel on a Saturday afternoon, and the leading local team met and defeated the best in Scotland.

Nowadays, the West Lothian County Cricket Association flies the flag for the 'King of Summer Games' in the town. The organisation was formed in 1928 and their first match was played in 1929 at Boghall in the east end of Linlithgow, where they are still based. This year marks eighty five years of cricket at the ground.

To find out more, I went along to a recent match and met up with two stalwarts, **President Ken Thomson** and **committee member Bruce Dixon**, who in his day has been Captain and President and is currently responsible for press reports and looking after the pavilion.

I discovered that the club played from 1930 in the Scottish Counties Championship, and won it in 1965, 1984 and 1995, the final year of the competition. It has also enjoyed significant cup successes over the years, and many players have represented Scotland. Particularly notable has been **Gavin Hamilton**, who learned his cricket at Boghall and was first capped in 1993. He subsequently went on to play for Yorkshire and England.

Bruce Dixon explained "The club's gone from highs to lows... we've had good times and we've had bad times... it just goes in cycles, really. Up until this year, the first eleven has been playing in the Scottish leagues, but with re-organisation, they are now playing in the East Championship, which is the top league in the east of Scotland. The second eleven plays in East Division Two and the thirds play in East Division Six and that goes from the beginning of May right through to the end of August. On a Sunday, we also enter a team in something called the

Forth Union, so everyone involved in the club has the chance of a game over the weekend."

The club used to employ a professional every year, but now the emphasis is on putting resources into other areas, such as refurbishing the clubhouse and improving the ground.

"That's where our money will be targeted", **Bruce** told me. Youth development has always been very strong at Boghall and ninety per cent of the current personnel have come up through the juniors. Nurturing talent is the job of long-serving coach, **Tom Williamson**, who puts budding youngsters through their paces every Wednesday night and works closely with local schools. Emerging players are given a chance at an early age.

Ken Thomson noted that the current third eleven has an average age of twenty eight, because half of them are in their late forties and fifties and the other half are under fifteen. He recalled a humorous incident after a recent victory at Dunbar:

"In the clubhouse, one wag observed that it wasn't often you get a visiting team where one half were in the bar and the other half were in the play park."

The club is always looking for support and sponsorship and would welcome any interest from the local community. Since 1956, they have organised an annual seven-a-side tournament in August, where the stipulation is that players must not have played competitive cricket for the last five years, or not have played at all. Teams are welcomed from local groups and organisations and contact can be made via the club's Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/WLCCA>

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Congratulations to last month's winner George Trist

The Black Bitch has joined forces with award winning malt whisky Jura. The holiday season is upon us and we're having a 'little fun in the sun'. So get your google maps out to find the secret location in the photograph above.

Written and illustrated by Marjory Boyle Crooks© www.bonnietheblackbitch.co.uk e: bonnietheBB@gmail.com



Events List

For more details and more events visit the
what's on page at www.linlithgow.com

- Sat 19 July** • Strenuous walk of 13km (8 miles), 8.00am, The Cross, Linlithgow • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11:30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • WLCCA 1st XI vs MDAFS, 12.00 noon Boghall Cricket Ground • Meet the Palace Alewife, 12 noon - 4.00pm Linlithgow Palace
- Sun 20** • Moderate walk of 13km (8 miles), 9.00am, The Cross, Linlithgow • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 12:45pm & 3.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Meet the Palace Alewife, 12.00 noon - 4.00pm, Linlithgow Palace • WLCCA Sunday XI vs Broomhall, 1.00pm, Boghall Cricket Ground • Folk Session, 2.00pm, Black Bitch Tavern • Ghost Tour - prebooking essential, 7:30pm, The Cross
- Mon 21** • MAKING MONDAYS, 10.00am-4.00pm, Linlithgow Burgh Halls • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Ghost Tour - prebooking essential 7:30pm, The Cross • Unchartered Waters, 9.00am-5.00pm, Linlithgow Burgh Halls
- Tue 22** • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre (LP)
- Wed 23** • Strenuous walk of 10.5km (6.5 mls), 8.30am, West Port (WP) • Moderate walk of 17.5km (11 mls), 9.00am (WP) • Moderate walk of 17.5km (11 mls), 9.00am, WP • Leisurely walk of 8km (5 mls), 10.00am, WP • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebook essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, Lowport Centre • Games Opening Ceremony Dinner, 7.30pm, Donaldson's School, • Scotch Hop, 7.30pm to 10.00pm, Linlithgow Palace
- Thu 24** • Guided walk Linlithgow - prebook reqd, 11:30am & 2pm, LP • Ghost Tour - prebook reqd, 7.30pm, The Cross
- Fri 25** • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11:30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Star and Garter Live Music's Fridays, 10.00pm, Star and Garter Hotel
- Sat 26** • Strenuous walk of 16km (10 mls), 8.00am, The Cross • Leisurely walk of 8km (5 mls), 9.00am, The Cross • Guided walk of Linlithgow - (see Wed 23) • The Queen's Progress, 12.00 -4.00pm, Linlithgow Palace • WLCCA 2nd XI vs Broomhall, 1.00pm Boghall CG • Linlithgow Rose F.C. v Beith, 2.30pm, Prestonfield
- Sun 27** • Moderate walk of 18km (11 miles), 8.30am, The Cross • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential 12.45pm & 3.00pm, The Lowport Centre • The Queen's Progress, 12.00-4.00pm, Linlithgow Palace • Ghost Tour - prebooking essential, 7.30pm, The Cross
- Mon 28** • MAKING MONDAYS, 10.00am-4.00pm, Linlithgow Burgh Halls • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Ghost Tour - prebooking essential 7:30pm, The Cross • Unchartered Waters, 9.00am-5.00pm, Linlithgow Burgh Halls
- Tue 29** • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre
- Wed 30** • Moderate walk of 11km (7 miles), 9.30am, West Port, Leisurely walk of 8km (5 miles), 10.00am, West Port, • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Scotch Hop, 7.30pm to 10.00pm, Linlithgow Palace
- Thu 31** • Guided walk of Linlithgow - Prebooking essential, 11.30am & 2.00pm, The Lowport Centre • Ghost Tour - prebooking essential, 7.30pm, The Cross
- Fri 1 August** • Star and Garter Live Music's Fridays, 10.00pm, Star and Garter Hotel
- Sat 2** • Moderate walk of 15km (9.5 miles), 9.00am, The Cross, Linlithgow • WLCCA 1st XI vs Grange 2nd XI 12.00 noon, Boghall Cricket Ground, Wildlife Photography Workshop, 9.00 am to 4.30pm, Linlithgow Loch
- Sun 3** • Mod walk of 16km, 8.30am, The Cross, • WLCCA SunXI vs Dunfermline Wndrs, 1.00pm, Boghall CG
- Mon 4** • Hopetoun Wildlife Week, 10am-1.00pm, Hopetoun Hse • MAKING MONDAYS, 10am-4pm Burgh Halls
- Wed 6** • Strenuous walk of 13km (8 miles), 8.30am, West Port, Leisurely walk of 11km (7 miles), 9.15am West Port, Leisurely walk of 8km (5 miles), 9.30am, West Port, Scotch Hop, 7:30pm to 10pm, Linlithgow Palace
- Thu 7** • Folk Session, 8.30pm, West Port Hotel • **Fri 8** Star & Garter Live Music's Fridays, 10.00pm, S&G Hotel
- Sat 9** • Walk of 8km (5 mls), 9.30am, The Cross • Linlithgow Rose v Penicuik Athletic, 2.30pm, Prestonfield • WLCCA 2nd XI vs Kelso, 1.00pm, Boghall CG • Party at Palace, 1pm to 10pm Sat and Sun, The Peel • Chapterhouse Theatre - The Jungle Book, 5pm-8pm, Hopetoun House



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