



60p **ISSUE 33** APRIL 2015

the **BLACK** *bitch*

Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow people



C'mon, we can do better than this p5

**100%
LOCAL**



**Community Choir —
on Song** p9



**'George Allan'
Football Festival** p12



**Barbara Dickson
at the Academy** p13

Plus

Folk Fae Lithgae, New Hoptoun Gardens, Emma Fleur - Wing Walker, Rotary Club of Linlithgow & Bo'ness, Sax Pistolz, Victoria Hall , Competition... and lots more!

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

The Sax Pistolz

*Barbara Dickson
and Ross Miller*

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*Wing Walk
for charity*

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*Next copy
deadline
19 May 2015.*

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The Linlithgow Community Magazine (aka The Black Bitch) is
a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO): SC042542

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The paper we are using is FSC approved.

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Folk Fae Lithgae

ALISON DICKSON

As a new golfing season gets underway, Alison Dickson is looking forward to a busy time in her capacity as the captain of the Ladies Club at the Kingsfield Golf Centre.

Alison's first sporting love was tennis and she still plays regularly at the local tennis club. When she took up golf in recent years, she was attracted to Kingsfield, because of its relaxed and friendly atmosphere, as she explained:

"It's not like a normal golf club which is run by a committee and members own it. So that makes it very relaxed. Not all ladies who, like myself, had just taken up the game, were ready to be part of a golf club, because they get worried about how poorly they play and things like that. However, the only way you can gain a handicap in golf is to be a member of a golf club and you require a handicap so that you can go and play at other places and enter competitions."

"There was a wee group of ladies who were quite keen to obtain a handicap, but not join a formal club, so we approached the owner, Robert Arkley, and he was very keen for us to form a ladies section, as part of the fantastic set-up at Kingsfield. We established it in 2011 and I was elected as captain."

Alison and her fellow members have a fixture list and their season runs from April until October, with medals, competitions and invitationals, everything you would expect from a traditional club.

The Kingsfield Golf & Leisure Centre on the outskirts of Linlithgow was previously a working farm, owned by the Arkley family. Nowadays, it boasts a 9-hole golf course, specialist short game area, an 18-hole family putting green and a driving range, plus laser clay shooting, archery,

falconry, mountain bike hire and a family-run coffee shop. Golf tuition is available from a team of PGA professionals, and the centre is closely linked with Ryder Cup player Stephen Gallagher and his foundation, which aims to encourage and develop junior golfers in the Lothians and Borders area.

"Kingsfield is a good place for improving your golf", says Alison, *"And lots of people go there to practise. Robert Arkley and his staff are very welcoming and make you feel at ease."*

Alison has had a long career as a primary school teacher, including a six year stint at an international school in Japan, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

"It was very interesting to live and work in another culture and to teach alongside Japanese colleagues", she told me. *"I found it to be a very polite, safe society and I had no fears walking around Tokyo at eleven o'clock at night."* She currently works part-time at a school for children with profound special needs in Livingston.

The social side of golf is very important to Alison and she is involved in the ladies section at the long-established Springfield Golf Society. Membership is drawn from ladies at all the local clubs and they organise regular outings and events to raise money for the charity, Children 1st. One of the most popular things they do is the *"Jean Armour Night"* during the Burns season, which usually involves a lot of dressing up. Last year, Alison took part in a Broons and Oor Wullie skit and also gave a very spirited *"Toast to the Laddies."*

Murdoch Kennedy



“CROWDFUND” APPEAL LAUNCHED AT VICTORIA HALL TRUST INAUGURAL GENERAL MEETING



For many Linlithgow people, the tattered remnants of the former cinema known as The Ritz have become a sad eyesore on the High Street. However, that realisation has prompted a dynamic community membership organisation in Linlithgow to address the future purpose of the site and the possibility of returning entertainment, fun and laughter to the heart of the community.

Following the Linlithgow Victoria Hall Trust’s first formal general meeting on 31st March, a fundraising initiative to meet the cost of a valuation report on the Victoria Hall site by the District Valuer was launched by Trust Director Felicity Harrison.

Felicity explained that by using the mechanism of an online “crowdfunded” project, the Trust aims to make it easy for anyone to donate and at the same time galvanise support from residents of the Linlithgow area, past and present.

The target is to raise £3,000 by 30th April to cover the cost of the District Valuer’s Report and provide funds for regular on-going promotion to raise community backing for the project.

Pledges can easily be made online here: <http://bloomvc.com/project/Linlithgow-Film-Theatre---Dereliction-to-Delight-1>

(Please note the magazine will be available online from 23rd April and you may find it more straightforward to use the link online to make a donation)

Sadly, crowdfunding rules dictate that, if the £3,000 target is not

reached by the specified closing date, 30th April, then none of the funds can be drawn down. This makes it all the more important that those in favour of such a community-owned project, providing a major asset to boost the town’s economy and ridding our High Street of a twenty-year blight, should act now by making a donation.

The idea of crowdfunding is that everyone can make a contribution to a project they believe in thereby becoming “part owners” – the end product belongs to the “crowd” who helped make it happen. As you will see when you visit the website, pledges can be for any amount large or small – they all go into the pot to help make it happen.

The Trust is motivated by the belief that the community at large wishes to see something made of what is a key asset in the town centre. Now is the time to help us take the next step towards making that happen – please make a donation now. This is your chance to help bring a fantastic community-owned asset to fruition – if we don’t do it, then nobody will!

For those who prefer to donate directly to the Trust this can also be done in the usual way with donations to: Linlithgow Victoria Hall Trust, c/o 4 Rivaldsgreen Crescent, Linlithgow, EH49 6BB.

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PRIZE QUIZ



Where can this be found?

- a) the Council tip on Braehead Road
- b) Linlithgow’s Town Centre Conservation area
- c) a war zone?

One winner will receive a bottle of Jura. Email the editor, David Tait: on.a.lead@gmail.com



MACKINNON HALL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW



Sat
30
May

We at 4th West Lothian Scout Group (based at the Linlithgow Bridge end of town tucked away just off Mill Road) are about to undertake a massive project to redevelop our Scout Hall, MacKinnon Hall, and wanted to take this opportunity to share our plans with you as we're very excited if not a tad daunted by what lies ahead.

In the main MacKinnon Hall is structurally sound but time is starting to take its toll on the fabric of the building with more and more repairs becoming necessary. Also, due to a lack of insulation, poorly fitting windows and antiquated heating system the building isn't very energy efficient and has a damp feeling/smell. All this means that at times the hall can be not a very pleasant place to be in and as a consequence is underutilised.

With this in mind our **Group Executive Committee** has decided that now is the time to take action and redevelop MacKinnon Hall as after all it is our greatest asset.

The key aims of the redevelopment project are:

- >> Provide the local community with a modern, energy efficient facility which is a much needed resource in the area
- >> A reduction of our carbon emissions by 70%
- >> A more engaged and educated community on energy efficient behaviours

The total cost of the project is **£160K** of which we have already secured more than half and are awaiting feedback regarding further funding from a number of different organisations and corporate businesses.

It's worth noting that the redevelopment has been designed in such a way that the majority of the work can be carried out independently of each other so irrespective of the outcome of the other funding applications we will be making significant changes to MacKinnon Hall this year.

Over and above this we have raised in excess of **£13K** to pay for the administration costs associated with such a project. This money has been accumulated via a number of fundraising events as well as generous donations from D M Hall Chartered Surveyors and Linlithgow Round Table.

In order to help successfully deliver this project we have set up an **Eco Implementation Team** made up of people with the correct mix of skills and experience. In addition to this we have teamed up with **Transition Linlithgow** to ensure the project reaches its maximum potential in terms of energy efficiency and have engaged the services of local architects **EKJN** to design and project manage the whole build for us.

We strongly believe that MacKinnon Hall is a sleeping giant and once redeveloped will not only hugely benefit 4th West Lothian Scout Group but the wider community as a whole. Within Linlithgow it is unique in terms of what it can offer in that as well as the hall itself we have ample parking, it is in a safe secluded spot away from main roads and has two large grass areas (one of which is a campsite), all great spaces for groups and individuals to utilise and enjoy.

To find out more about what MacKinnon Hall can offer you why not pop along to our Open Day on Saturday 30th May between 14:00 – 16:30. On the day you will be able to view the plans/drawings and talk to the project team about the redevelopment. You will also be able to talk to energy efficiency experts who will be on hand to give free advice on a wide range of topics.

This year 4th West Lothian Scout Group is celebrating its 90th birthday. The Group are confident that with the successful redevelopment of MacKinnon Hall we will be around for another 90! We sincerely hope that once you've read this you'll feel the same way too.

Yours in Scouting,

Paul Charlton
Group Scout Leader
4th West Lothian Scout Group

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THE SAX PISTOLZ Neil Anderson

The Saxophone was invented in 1846 by the Belgian musical instrument designer and musician, Adolphe Sax. Inventing this instrument was no mean feat. In his life, he suffered criticisms, legal disputes, sabotage and even assassination attempts just to invent the instrument we all know today. Often described as one of the most unique and versatile woodwind instruments, saxophones have the smoothness and fluidity of the clarinet while having the boldness and the jazziness of the trumpet, without the boringness of the clarinet or the obnoxiousness of the trumpet. We are all familiar with the saxophone whether it's Lisa Simpson playing the blues or famous saxophone solos such as Baker Street or George Michael's Careless Whisper. In fact, if you watch any top of the pops performances from the 1980's there is probably a saxophone solo in there.

At Linlithgow Academy there is a lot more excitement around this instrument. If you are in town and happen to hear a blast of noise coming from the school on Tuesday lunchtimes, you can be sure that it is the Linlithgow Academy Saxophone Ensemble. There are two saxophone groups at the school. There is the saxophone ensemble, conducted by music instructor, Ms Benezra, with 10 members from all years at the academy. This group of all ages gives the opportunity for younger members to play with more experienced players.

We have played various popular songs including our favourites: 'The Bare Necessities', 'Pirates of the Caribbean' and 'The Pink Panther'. Last year, the group played at the Five Sisters Zoo, entertaining both the park rangers and the animals. In particular, Sophie the cockatoo thoroughly enjoyed our playing as indicated by her dancing.

The other group is the senior saxophone quintet, otherwise known as the 'Sax Pistolz'. This group plays at an advanced level and enjoys tackling challenging pieces. The Sax Pistols were invited to play at the West Lothian Council Stellar Awards where school pupils are awarded for their achievements.

In March the Sax Pistolz entered the prestigious Edinburgh Competition Festival, returning after coming first in the woodwind ensemble class in 2013 and playing at the Queens Hall in the final concert.

This year, after many weeks of intense practise, we entered with the pieces 'Promenade (Walking the Dog)' by George Gershwin and 'Safer Sax' by Nigel Wood. These are two lively and energetic pieces that we all enjoy playing. The day trip involved transporting 6 saxophones of multiple sizes on the train and through Princes Street Gardens to St Cuthbert's Church in Edinburgh. We waited eagerly to play and enjoyed listening to our competitors. The acoustics of the church did wonders for our sound and we were very happy with our performance. Much to our delight, we came first yet again in the woodwind class. We were ecstatic that all our hard work, dedication and teamwork had paid off. We were proud to return to the school with another achievement to add to the endless list of pupil achievements.

After playing the saxophone for 6 years at Linlithgow Academy it is safe to say that playing with the Sax Pistolz and the saxophone ensemble has been a highlight of my time at school. Although many people may play more classical instruments such as the violin, or more popular instruments such as the guitar, I would encourage anyone of any age to pick up a saxophone and have a go.



Not one, but two, great local theatre shows

Linlithgow and Bo'ness residents will be spoilt for choice this Spring, as two local theatre groups put on productions by world-famous authors.



What...You Will?

The Linlithgow Players are getting ready to perform *What...You Will?* as part of the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) Open Stages. The project sees the Players breaking new ground, as they have not only devised the play, but they will be performing it in an outdoor venue in the ground of Donaldson's School.

What...You Will? is based on Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, but transports the characters to the Highlands of Scotia in the present day. While the action and most of the dialogue have been modernised, the characters and themes have been carefully retained.

"We wanted to create a mix of accents with both modern and the original language and really 'play' with Shakespeare's most popular comedy. We think he would approve!" said a Players' spokeswoman. "The outdoor venue at Donaldson's really adds to the sense of fun which runs through the play. The audience will be taken on a comical, musical and romantic journey with some surprises along the way."

RSC Open Stages is the UK's biggest amateur theatre project. Only seven groups in Scotland were chosen and are now being supported by the RSC and Dundee Rep Theatre to create their production. Through training, director mentoring, feedback and support, the RSC aims to transform the relationship between amateur and professional theatre.

Performances are at 5.00 pm on 18, 19, 25 and 26 April in the grounds of Donaldson's School (or (indoors in the case of wet weather). Seating is provided.

Tickets, priced £7, are available from *Far From the Madding Crowd* and the Player's box office on 07847 735077.

Special post-theatre meal deals are available with the Star and Garter Hotel. More details on the Players' website: www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk.

The Crucible

Over the hill in Bo'ness, the Barony Players are hard at work rehearsing Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. A dark and dramatic work it tells the story of the seventeenth century witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, but was written by Miller as an allegory of McCarthyism in 1950s America.

Barony Theatre chairperson Wendy Turner said: *"The Crucible is a hugely powerful piece of theatre, involving lust, greed, hysteria, fear, loathing, love and courage. It tells the story of one of the darkest periods in American history, but also has really interesting parallels with the 1679 witch trials in Bo'ness, where six people were burned to death after being accused of being witches."*

The show will be performed in the Players' own theatre in Bo'ness. A converted former primary school, the building has been home to the theatre company for fifty years. The group has ambitious plans for a major overhaul of the building - more about this in a future edition of the *Black Bitch*.

Performances of *The Crucible* will be at 7.30pm on Monday 18 - Saturday 23 May, in the Barony Theatre, Borrowstoun Rd, Bo'ness, EH51 9RS.

Tickets, priced £10 (£8 concession), are available from the Barony box office on 07480 737900.

More details on the Barony Theatre's: www.baronyplayers.co.uk.

Murdoch Kennedy



LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CHOIR



Fresh from their success at the recent Matt McGinn Tribute Night at the Academy Theatre, members of the Linlithgow Community Children's Choir – otherwise known as the "Linlithgow Linties" – are gearing up for a busy time over the coming months and are asking local children to come and join them.

During the month of April, the Linties will take part for the second year in the Rugby Club choir's annual charity concert, where they will appear together with a choir from the Netherlands.

At the local Folk Festival in September, they will be singing on the outdoor Nora Devine Stage at the Cross and taking part in a special event, being organised by the highly acclaimed songwriter, author and educationalist, Ewan McVicar, who lives on Linlithgow High Street.

The Children's Choir was established almost two years ago, the brainchild of teachers, Alison Sharp and Victoria Knox. Victoria told me:

"Alison and I taught together and often remarked on how sad it was that children didn't have a community singing group. We had been at various Linlithgow schools' events with our own choirs and thought it would be good to have one that welcomed and represented all primary-aged children in the Linlithgow cluster."

The Linties is aimed at children in Primary 3-7. They don't hold auditions and sing a wide range of songs with an emphasis on singing for enjoyment. During term time, rehearsals take place in the music room at Springfield Primary on Monday evenings from 6.00 - 7.00pm.

Victoria explained: *"Our first-ever rehearsal was on Monday May 27th 2013. We have built strong links with the Rugby Club and Ladies choirs, as well as the Folk Festival and are delighted that this important community children's project has been such a success."*

The Linties are currently on a recruiting drive and new members are very welcome. Further details can be obtained from Victoria Knox at: linlithgowlinties@gmail.com



Murdoch Kennedy

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We believe that it is really important to make the time to sit down and enjoy your garden's sights and sounds in our busy world. How are your garden seats, are they ready and in the right places for the coming months? Maybe you need to plan now for warmer relaxing weather?

We are very lucky that our small garden wraps right around our house so we have all four aspects from which to choose. There is always somewhere out of the wind to sit or garden, although sometimes this is in the shade which makes it only pleasant to sit there when the temperature is really warm!

In our climate we generally opt to sit in the sun and soak up all the vitamin D we can. In the summer when we have a day off we have a bench table on the east side which catches the morning sunshine and can be delightful for breakfasting outdoors. The borders here are seen everyday so they are full of year round interest. As we write this we are still waiting for Spring to arrive and this side of the house is only warm enough for the birds to enjoy breakfast outside.



During the middle of the day our main patio faces south and we can tuck into the lee of the house to be out of the prevailing wind if it is blowing. This patio is big enough to take a table and six chairs - sit your furniture out and measure how big your patio needs to be. On the odd occasion it can be too warm here, so we have a seat under a pine tree that is in full shade and also has the benefit of a lovely view north to Fife. Even if we don't sit here very often the view from inside up to the tree and the seat is very inviting and makes the garden look longer than it actually is.

After work there is nothing more relaxing than walking around the garden with a glass of wine and ending up on the small patio on the west side of the house from where the sunset is perfectly enjoyed.

This paved area is just big enough for a small gazebo bench and two small chairs.

Although this faces into the prevailing wind it can be very sheltered as the wind lifts up and around the house leaving the seats in a relatively sheltered position. You may have noticed when picnicking in the countryside it is usually more sheltered sitting against a stone dyke facing the wind rather than on the other side where the wind is battering down having lifted up over the dyke.



Where will you be sitting in your garden this summer and will you make the time to sit still and watch the world go by?

Dougal Philip and Lesley Watson
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FREEDOM CAR ROTARY CLUB OF LINLITHGOW & BO'NESS

Our members are pleased to announce the arrival of our brand new replacement Freedom Car which our club provides free use of (except for petrol) to anyone within the club's local area wishing to take a wheelchair bound friend or relative out for the day or to hospital appointments etc. This will be our 3rd vehicle in 8 years. We feel it is necessary to renew it regularly so as to provide safe reliable transport. The following is a quote from one of our regular users.

"Rona Keir (49) lives in Linlithgow and is supported by the Action Group every Monday and Friday. Rona and her support staff use the Rotary Freedom Car on both these days. Having the use of the car has enabled Rona to travel further afield and enjoy activities with her friends. She has been to Blair Drummond, Burntisland and various other places for shopping trips and meals.

Rona previously used to travel to these places by taxi at great personal expense and restrictions on the time she could spend at events or activities. Having the use of the car has greatly reduced her expenses and allows her to spend much more time at her destination. We would like to thank the Rotary Club of Linlithgow & Bo'ness for the use of the Freedom Car."

Linlithgow Action Group

For further information and to arrange a booking please contact John Kerr on 01506 842280

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Rotary



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Linlithgow Community Development Trust PUBLIC MEETING AND AGM

A public meeting and the third AGM of Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT) will take place on Sat 30 May 2015 in the Queen Margaret Hall at 2.00pm.

Members and non members are invited to join us to hear about the work of the Trust, and its next steps forward. This will be followed by a brief AGM with reports from the chair and treasurer, and election of new board members

LCDT is community owned and managed, with the sole aim to deliver benefit to the people of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge area. It aims to make the town a better place to live and work, through a community led plan of action which provides services, amenities and/or financial support to local initiatives.

The board of LCDT is made up of member directors and co-opted non-member directors, with the latter being appointed on an as-needed basis. Member directors must be members first, that is, residents from within the community who have registered.

The organisation would welcome new people to come forward and nominate themselves. To make the process as simple as possible, prospective members are

asked to email Gill Fawcitt (chair@trust-linlithgow.org.uk). Please provide your name, address, and a few words about what you could offer the Trust. Gill will then collate these names and put them forward at the AGM. If there are more than the maximum number of directors allowed by the constitution then a ballot will be held. In this case, all nominees will be asked to make a short statement about themselves and how they feel they can benefit the trust.

The meeting and AGM are open to all residents in the town, but only full members can vote.

The Agenda for the meeting will be sent out to all members electronically nearer the time of the AGM as will details of the various presentations. Copies of the AGM agenda will also be available on the day.

Gill Fawcitt, Chair
Linlithgow Community
Development Trust



Sat
30th
May



Sunday
17th
May

FLEDGLING FOOTBALLERS ARE UP FOR THE CUP!



Fledgling footballers from Linlithgow and district will be 'up for the Cup' on Sunday 17 May, when the annual George Allan Memorial Football Festival for local primary schools takes place at Linlithgow Rose FC's Prestonfield ground. Kick-off is at 9.00am.

Now in its twenty-fifth year, the event honours the memory of Linlithgow Bridge footballer, George 'Dod' Allan, a star centre forward on both sides of the border who, in 1897, became Liverpool Football Club's first Scottish internationalist. Sadly, George died of tuberculosis in 1899, at the age of only 24.

In 1988, while examining the history of Linlithgow Rose, I unearthed the story of

George Allan in the archives of the local newspaper. The following year, after extensive research, an article about his career appeared in the publication Lithca Lore Four. Intrigued by the story, Simon Mason of Linlithgow Bridge Community Council was determined to see something done to recognise this forgotten son of The Brig.

Mr Mason suggested an annual primary school football tournament which would, as he said, be "a living memorial". This first took place in 1991 and continues to this day. Last year, around 100 youngsters, both girls and boys, took part.

Participants play in two seven-a-side leagues; the developmental Reston League and the more advanced Gallagher League, named after the first two Scottish Junior Cup-winning captains of Linlithgow Rose.

The winners of the Reston League receive the George Allan Shield, while the Gallagher League victors carry off the George Allan Trophy.

The Football Festival is always eagerly awaited by the budding young footballers in the primary schools. A number of former participants have gone on to have a successful football career at junior and senior level. Included among these are former Falkirk players Stewart Murdoch and Kyle Turnbull, Ruari and Roddy MacLennan of Linlithgow Rose and Darren Wilson, who is a community coach with Heart of Midlothian FC and Fife Council.

A very special guest will be in attendance this year, namely Mrs Georgina Waugh (nee Allan), who is the great-niece of George Allan and was named after him. Her son, who lives in Erskine, has recently been researching the story and was intrigued to find that an event in George's honour has been taking place since 1991.

The centenary of George Allan's appearance in the Scotland v England fixture was celebrated in 1997, when a party from the Linlithgow area travelled to Anfield stadium to present two framed photographs of the player to Liverpool Football Club. A similar trip is being proposed for next year, to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Football Festival.

Murdoch Kennedy



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TWO GREAT MUSIC EVENTS IN MAY

Music fans are in for a real treat next month, with two great events taking place at the Academy Theatre...

On Friday May 8th, second year students of the Scottish Music course at the prestigious Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) in Glasgow will finish off a short Spring tour with a concert featuring eleven of Scotland's finest up-and-coming young folk musicians. Included among them will be Linlithgow's very own, **Ross Miller**, well-known for his Marches Day role as the Burgh Piper.

Supported by Linlithgow Folk Festival Association, the concert will feature several traditional and contemporary tunes, arrangements and Scots and Gaelic songs from a group considered to be the cream of Scotland's young traditional musicians. The sets in the programme will range from the full eleven piece ensemble playing as a group, to small groups and solo spots.

The full band's instrumentation comprises vocals, pipes, fiddle, whistle, flute, harp, accordion, cello, guitar and piano. The students have played with various bands and ensembles all over the world.



Friday
8th
May



Two weeks later, on Saturday May 23rd, the legendary songstress, **Barbara Dickson** makes a welcome return to Linlithgow for a Gala Concert with accompanist, **Nick Holland**.

Barbara Dickson emerged from the Folk revival of the 1960s and has become the biggest-selling Scottish female artiste of all time.

Known to a wider audience in the 1970s and 1980s, with hits including *Answer Me*, *Another Suitcase in Another Hall*, *The Caravan Song* and *I Know Him So Well*, she enjoyed ten years of chart success as a pop star.

As an actress, she has appeared in award-winning theatre productions *John, Paul, George, Ringo and Bert*, and *Spend, Spend, Spend*. In Willy Russell's *Blood Brothers*, she was the original Mrs Johnstone and the author's muse.

Barbara has returned to her roots once again, after a musical odyssey of 40 years creating music, playing guitar and piano, acting and song writing. In a new acoustic performance, Barbara and her pianist Nick Holland explore her catalogue of songs at an intimate level. The pair let the words and melodies take 'centre stage', as they perform a wonderful range of material, drawing on her folk roots, her latest exploration of the songs of Gerry Rafferty and some of her classic hit records.

Support will be by the **Duncan McCrone Band**, who are well known to Linlithgow audiences.

Tickets for the Gala Concert on Friday May 23rd - priced £25 - can be bought from the box office at the Burgh Halls in Linlithgow Tel. 01506 282720 and are also available online at www.linlithgowfolk.yapsody.com

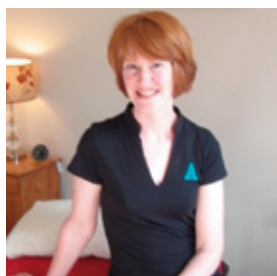
Tickets for the concert with the RCS students on May 8th, priced £10, can be bought at Norman Cummings shop and online at the Linlithgow Folk Festival (website address above.)



Sat
23rd
May

Murdoch Kennedy





Irene Sandham is owner and therapist of 'Massage for Every Body'. In this article Rachel Johnston, one of our new Black Bitch volunteers chats with Irene, to find out how massage can help you with pain, stress, relaxation and your sports performance.

Q. Tell me a bit about yourself?

A. I've lived in Linlithgow since 1999 with my husband and now our two children. We enjoy living in the town and love its community spirit. I've been a massage therapist for over 14 years now and work from a warm and cosy treatment room in my home. The therapies I offer are *Advanced Sports and Remedial Massage, Swedish Massage, Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Pregnancy Massage* and *Organic Facials*, which are all great value for money.

Q. Why did you become a massage therapist?

A. I've always been passionate about sports, health and wellbeing. *When I was younger I was in the Scottish Gymnastics Team.* I also ran with a running club and competed in some triathlons. Skiing and hillwalking are other activities I enjoy. Being so active I know how important it is to prevent injury and to recover quickly. Having regular massage can make a real difference in keeping your body and muscles in good shape.

Q. What can I expect from a massage treatment with you?

A. I offer all my clients a treatment that is tailor-made just for them and their specific needs. *In our first appointment*

we'll do a full consultation where I take some time to listen and understand any issues. This allows me to use a number of advanced techniques to resolve any aches, pains, stresses and strains. I often blend a number of different treatments to achieve maximum benefit for my clients. I also give advice on exercises and stretches that may help in between massage treatments.

Q. Who is massage suitable for?

A. I treat people of all ages and walks of life; most people can benefit from regular massage.

I treat recreational and elite athletes for optimal performance and I have clients who are nurses, pregnant mums, office and manual workers with bad backs or repetitive strain. I can also help some clients manage their arthritis with gentle mobilisation and massage to ease tight muscles. My clients tell me that aromatherapy massage and reflexology help with their relaxation, stress relief and wellbeing.

Q. Why do you use organic products?

A. I personally prefer to use natural products in my everyday life and around my home. *I truly believe that nature does it better, so that's why I use organic products in all my treatments.* I chose the Beyond Organic skincare range because, for me, the natural ingredients and aromas are far superior to synthetic ones. All my massage oils are certified organic, so there are no herbicide or pesticide residues. Many of my clients tell me that they find the organic facial relaxing, indulgent and great for their skin.

Q. What qualifications do you have and what professional

organisations are you a member of?

A. I'm professionally qualified in all the treatments I offer. I'm a member of the Scottish Massage Therapists Organisation and the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council. I enjoy regular learning to keep my skills up to date and as advanced as possible.

Q. How to get in touch to make an appointment?

A. You can call Irene on 01506 846799 or 07407 341527.

Her website address is www.massagforeverybody.co.uk and her email address is info@massagforeverybody.co.uk

She can offer both day and evening appointments and because she work's from home, you can park right outside the front door. If you have any questions on the services offered, or would just like to know more, please do just give Irene a call.

Rachel Johnston



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www.massagforeverybody.co.uk

BENEFIT FROM PARKING AT THE DOOR

FOR SOME FRESH WATER IS A LIFE SAVING LUXURY

In January last year, Black Bitch kindly published an article on my past humanitarian work. The article also made reference to the 'Bala Water Project' undertaken by local charity Association of Serving the Humanity International (ASHI) that I currently chair.

The aim of the 'Bala Water Project' is to provide clean and safe drinking water to a community of 10,000 people in Bala, Northern Uganda from a sustainable local water resource of high quality. **On behalf of ASHI I am extremely proud to inform your readers that the first of five stages of the 'Project' was completed on 31st January this year. This saw installation of a deep borehole water pump that serves a village of 600 people plus thousands of travellers.**

Villagers from neighbouring communities are also using this desperately needed facility and it is the aim of ASHI to provide another four similar installations. **A link to the opening ceremony can be found at www.ashi.org.uk**

Stage 1 of the 'Project' could not have been achieved without the financial support from Linlithgow people and

others beyond. This evolved through a 'bag packing' event in Sainsbury and donations from the congregations of the town's St Peter's Episcopal and St Michael's Parish Churches and patrons of both the Star & Garter Hotel and Livingston's Restaurant. The congregations of St Columba's Episcopal Church, Bathgate and St Columba's Parish Church, Stewarton also made an invaluable contribution for which villagers in Northern Uganda are extremely grateful. The two 'before and after' photographs featured highlight the difference that the first of the proposed five water installations has made in providing what is a fundamental human requirement.



BEFORE:
Previous water facility

ASHI is a small charity with modest resources dependent on personal commitment, contacts and volunteers. It is currently managed by a team of nine volunteers and no remuneration is paid. The charity is always looking to increase its membership and, therefore, if any readers would like to become involved or simply seek more information, please contact me by telephone 01506 650111 or email: d.olwa@ashi.org.uk

David O Olwa
Chairperson

ASHI (Charity Reg. No: SC041523)

AFTER: New deep borehole water pump



THE LINLITHGOW TRAIL

Town trails aren't new but the Linlithgow Trail is certainly proving to be a big hit with locals and visitors alike. The Linlithgow Trail, funded jointly by the Linlithgow Business Improvement District committee (BID) and their counterparts in the Burgh's Pubwatch scheme, could see those taking part earning a free T-shirt. The idea is to promote the town's pubs and inns and help generate business, as well as encouraging participants to visit some locations they might not normally reach. Launched late last year this successful promotion has been extended into Spring 2015 with more T-shirts available and ready to give away.

Ian Gibson, secretary of the local Pubwatch group said:

"The rules are straightforward – if you visit all of the eight taverns in the town and buy from the agreed list, you can collect a Linlithgow Trail t-shirt."

To get started, collect a card from either the West Port or the Star & Garter. As you visit any of the pubs on the trail –

and buy a pint or a selected spirit – ask to have your card stamped. Once the card is completed with eight separate stamps it can then be exchanged for a limited edition T-shirt in either start or finish hotel. There is no need to complete the card in one evening. In fact, the organisers would encourage a sensible approach as the preferred option. They stressed that it was not an excuse for a 'pub crawl' and should be viewed as an extra town attraction.

The participating outlets are The West Port Hotel, The Black Bitch, The Crown, The Footballers, the Auld Hole in the Wall, The Four Marys, Platform 3 and The Star and Garter.

There are plenty of T-shirts available for people who complete the unusual trail this spring and if you are minded to add to your T-shirt collection you could always repeat the trail in the summer as a new design will be available from June! It is hoped that BID and Pubwatch will combine to see the Trail become a permanent offering within the town.

Having just picked up my own card it got me wondering if the participating

outlets might at some point in the future include some non-alcoholic beverages on the list of approved drinks. I've only just started on my personal trail but at my first point of call I did wonder if the scheme would benefit from a bit more promotion within the pubs, or maybe I just missed the promotional material. However, that aside, both myself and my partner enjoyed our visit and will most likely venture forth in the coming weeks to sample more offerings from other local hostleries!

Kathy Buckner



LINLITHGOW LINK – HELPING OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

For the past 35 years, Linlithgow Link has been working to strengthen our community by bringing generations together and offering friendship to all. We are a local organisation, made up of volunteers, who help the people of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge.

We offer a whole range of services – some practical and some social. People are welcome to use one, or the other, or both. Often often we find people who need some practical assistance go on to enjoy our social events as well.

Our services include:

Driving

We have drivers who can take you to hospital or a local medical appointment when using public transport is just too difficult, or when there is no friend or family member who could help.

Befriending

We would like to hear from anyone who would like a befriender. You may be housebound, or not get out much, and would like someone to visit you

regularly for a chat.

Social gatherings

We run a small social group that meets weekly on Tuesdays, with volunteer drivers available to provide transport. Tea and a chat can be a great way to spend an afternoon.

Our volunteers also run the Caring Café, which is on the third Wednesday of each month, from 10.00am to 12 noon, in the Low Port Centre in Linlithgow. This is for people with memory problems and their carers. Home baking is provided and also various activities.

We hold an annual Burns lunch, with local primary school children providing musical entertainment, and our volunteer drivers helping to transport guests who might not manage without assistance.

We organise two big outings per year, which are a great opportunity to enjoy good company and share food. On our outings we use an accessible bus that has a wheelchair lift, so mobility needs are not an obstacle.

We also send out small gifts at Easter and Christmas to the housebound, and take

people to enjoy the local primary school concerts at Christmas and in the Summer.

Our social events are much enjoyed, and are a good way to make friends in the community, whether you join us as a volunteer or as a guest.

There is no charge for our services, other than a nominal mileage rate of 45p per mile for car journeys (capped for longer journeys). This goes directly to the drivers and not to the organisation. We also ask for donations towards bus costs etc on our outings.

We would like to hear from you if you need a driver, would like a befriender, or fancy joining us for some of our social events – ring us on 845137. And we are always looking for new volunteers – it's a great way to meet new people and get involved in your community. Again, ring us on 845137.

Our office is open five days a week from 9.30am to 12.30pm. We also have an answer machine out of hours.

Linlithgow Link: Administration Building, St Michael's Hospital, Linlithgow, EH49 6QS. Tel: 01506 845137. Email: co-ordinator@linlithgowlink.org.uk. Web: www.linlithgowlink.org.uk.



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WINGING IT FOR WEST LOTHIAN FOODBANK

Over the last 12 months throughout the UK the Trussell Trust has provided over 900,000 adults and children with three day's emergency food and support, a staggering 163 percent rise on numbers helped in the previous financial year. Closer to home 56,052 people within Scotland (38,704 adults and 17,348 children) received assistance from Trussell Trust foodbanks between 1 April 2013 and 24 February 2014 and West Lothian foodbanks have fed over 7,000 people since November 2012.

These figures are both highly worrying and totally unacceptable. The United Kingdom is the sixth richest country on earth, yet the number of people (many of whom are working individuals and families struggling to make ends meet) having to use a foodbank is rapidly increasing with each year that passes. In our wealthy society

millions of tonnes of food are thrown away each day and foodbanks are fast becoming the status quo.

Emma-Fleur lives and works in Linlithgow and started volunteering at the Whitburn and Linlithgow foodbanks in March 2013 after seeing a sign advertising the Foodbank.

She was really shocked to see a foodbank in an affluent town like Linlithgow and decided there and then that she would like to do her bit to help others in a time of crisis.

Emma-Fleur really enjoys her volunteer work at a grassroots level, however she would like to do more, hence why she is raising much needed awareness and funds by completing a wingwalk on May 31st!

For those that aren't sure what a wingwalk is, it involves being strapped to a plane while it zooms and climbs up to a speed of 130 mph!



Together we can all tackle food poverty. Please help to support the West Lothian foodbank by sponsoring Emma-Fleur's wingwalk at the following Virgin Money Giving page: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/EmmaFleurGrof>.

Your kind donation will be greatly appreciated by not only Emma-Fleur and the West Lothian foodbank but by the individuals and families that find themselves in crisis.

Chocks away!

www.linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk

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MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS STATUE AT LINLITHGOW PALACE

INVITATION TO THE PUBLIC UNVEILING CEREMONY...

We hope that everyone in Linlithgow is looking forward to the public unveiling of the new statue of Mary, Queen of Scots on the Peel at Linlithgow Palace at 2.00pm on Saturday 25 April. The Marie Stuart Society is very excited about this event, and has invited the Linlithgow Gala Queen and her Chief Lady-in-Waiting to do the honours for us. We are aware that recent national media coverage of the new statue has suggested that the Marie Stuart Society has stated that this is the ONLY statue of the Queen in Scotland. May we reassure everyone that no such statement came from the Society, and that we are more than aware of the delightful statue of the Queen in the Annet House garden. The two statues are quite different reflecting contrasting aspects of Mary's personality and very much complement each other. It is our hope that visitors to Linlithgow will find that a visit to both Linlithgow Palace and Annet House will give them a very fair and comprehensive insight into the character of our only sovereign queen. Do please come along to the Peel at 2.00pm on Saturday 25 April, and join the

Marie Stuart Society in the excitement of seeing this new statue of Mary, Queen of Scots unveiled.

Margaret C Lumsdaine
President
The Marie Stuart Society



Public unveiling of the new statue of Mary, Queen of Scots on the Peel at Linlithgow Palace at 2.00pm on Saturday 25 April.

Sat
25th
April

CHOCOLATES WITH AN HISTORICAL TWIST

Linlithgow has a new chocolate business. Mary Stewart Chocolates is an online chocolate retailer based in Linlithgow offering an array of handmade Scottish chocolates in beautiful packaging with an historical twist. (www.marystewartchocolates.co.uk)

The business has just been set up by **Julie Watt** who ran the popular Chocolate Shop on Linlithgow High Street for many years. The new business combines Julie's two great loves - fine handmade chocolate and Scottish History!

Her special collection of chocolates is influenced by the historic surroundings of Linlithgow where Julie has lived with her family for the last 18 years. The business is named after Mary Queen of Scots who was born in Linlithgow Palace in 1542, but she admits a lot of people question her about the spelling of the name. Is it 'Stuart' or 'Stewart'?

'I referred to quite a few history books' says Julie, 'and both spellings are used, but in the end I went for Stewart because that was the original Scottish spelling of the name and the Stewart kings that came before her. She was

born a Stewart in Linlithgow Palace, Stuart seems a later English or French spelling.'

'I've always loved the history around Mary Queen of Scots since I was a schoolgirl and won Antonia Fraser's wonderful biography of the queen as a prize,' says Julie. 'I've enjoyed naming my new chocolate collection after figures connected with Mary's history.'

Using only the finest ingredients, the chocolates are lovingly crafted by expert chocolatiers. It is important to Julie that the chocolates are all made in Scotland.

'We have a great heritage of superb food and drink in Scotland and artisan chocolates are part of that.' Says Julie.

Each chocolate is a feast for the senses with flavours and names that evoke a romantic past. They include the Mary Stewart, a raspberry and white chocolate velvet, the Darnley cherry cream with a dark kirsch heart and the Rizzio, a lemon cream in white chocolate. Others include the Bishop, with hazelnut and soft caramel and the Frippery with peanut butter and jam (just for fun) and who could resist delicious champagne and

strawberry truffles.

Packaged in a variety of stunning ballotins and boxes, they make a wonderful gift for a special occasion at any time during the year.

'Apart from the big dates on the chocolate calendar; Christmas, Easter and Valentine's day,' says Julie, 'people like to give chocolates at other special times such as birthdays, a treat for a new mum or a thank you for nurses and teachers. They also make a wonderful end to a special dinner party.'

'For those who are looking for something completely different we also sell handmade truffles encased in a large chocolate cocoa pod and boxes of champagne and ginger Buddhas dusted with edible gold powder!'

'So far I've had a really positive response to the business,' says Julie. 'Lots of people remember The Chocolate Shop and seem really pleased that we are back. I still recognise a lot of the chocolate lovers in Linlithgow. I may not know all their names but I remember them well from the particular chocolates they loved - coffee cream man and marzipan

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"Each chocolate is a feast for the senses with flavours and names that evoke a romantic past."

See advert. Go to back cover.

OLD SCHOOL PALS PUT THE FUN INTO FUNDRAISING!

Former Linlithgow Academy pupils from the 1980s are looking forward to their big annual charity fundraising night, which has become a major event on the local social calendar.

The 80s Fundraisers group raises money for charities and local worthy causes by holding a disco every year, with music for all tastes. This year, the event will take place at Linlithgow Rugby Club on Saturday May 16th and tickets are already selling well.

Cousins Lyn McLernon (44) and Roy Snedden (46) are heavily involved in the group. When I met up with them recently to find out all about it, Roy told me:

"My wife, Marion, died of a brain tumour in 2007 and in the following two years, I ran a 10K to raise money in her memory. In 2010, Lyn and I decided to organise a charity disco around the theme of getting old friends back together for a school reunion. We held it in the Rose Club and it was brilliant. It just seemed to click into place and everybody really enjoyed it. As well as raising money, everybody was meeting up with old friends and people you hadn't seen for years. At the end, people were saying 'Same again next year' and we decided to have a similar

thing the following year. That time, some of our former teachers even came along, including the legendary Alistair 'Donnie' Allison!"

In 2012, the event moved to the Academy itself and was styled as 'The end of the world Prom', giving the forty-somethings the chance to attend a school Prom, which had never happened in their day.

"People arrived in limos and really entered into the spirit of it", said Lyn.

Starting as an initiative on behalf of Roy's chosen charities, the disco has gone on to help many other causes, including the 'Walk for Jock' organised by Davie 'Deep-sea' Paterson.

"We always keep it local", Lyn explained. *"This year, proceeds will be going to the David Henderson Fund at St John's Hospital. David was a cancer nurse who died of cancer himself and the fund in his memory is used for complementary therapies for palliative patients at St John's."*

Lyn told me that people like the fact that local causes are being helped and they are always very generous.

"They really enjoy the night. It's developed from an 80s school reunion into a great



night with music from the 60s onwards. The crowd really gets into the whole thing and some even come in costumes from their favourite era. I've got a whole 70s rig-out organised for this year!"

The music gets underway at 7pm on Saturday May 16th. Tickets are only £6 and can be booked through the Facebook page Linlithgow Academy 80s Fundraisers.

**Sat
16th
May**

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f TO ENTER:
Go to the Black Bitch Facebook Page and LIKE to become a Friend and then enter your answer A, B or C. Closing date for entries: 19 May 2015.

PHOTO QUIZ



Where can this be found?



- a) the Council tip on Braehead Road
- b) Linlithgow's Town Centre Conservation area
- c) a war zone?

One winner will receive a bottle of Jura. Email the editor, David Tait: on.a.lead@gmail.com

Congratulations to March Kingsfield competition 'Family Winners' ...
Scott, Martin, Hamilton, Paterson, Fleming and Robertson

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

APRIL

Sat 25 What...You Will? 5.00pm
Donaldsons School, Linlithgow

Mary Queen of Scots Statue.
Invitation to the public unveiling
ceremony, 2.00pm, Linlithgow Palace

Sun 26 What...You Will? 5.00pm
Donaldsons School, Linlithgow

Tue 28 Community Council AGM
7.00pm, Burgh Halls

Linlithgow Speakers Club Meeting
7.45pm - 9.45pm, Low Port Centre,
Blackness Rd

May

Fri 1 Linlithgow Rugby Club
Golf Day, 9.00am onwards,
Kingsfield Golf Club

Thu 7 Folk Session, 8.00pm
Football & Cricketers' Arms

Fri 8 RCS BA Scottish Music Year 2
Tour, 7.30pm, Linlithgow Academy
Theatre

Deacons Court Golf Tournament
tba Linlithgow Golf Club

Sat 9 Street Fair, Reed Band opens
at 1.00pm, The Cross Linlithgow

Tue 12 Linlithgow Speakers Club
Meeting, 7.45pm - 9.45pm, Low Port
Centre, Blackness Rd

Sun 17 Folk Session, 2.00pm
Black Bitch Tavern

Thu 21/Fri 22 Flower Festival
11.00am St Michael's Church

Fri 22 Catwalk - Ladies Night
7.00pm, Linlithgow Rugby Club

Sat 23 Flower Festival, 11.00am
St Michael's Church

Barbara Dickson with Nick Holland
7.00pm, Linlithgow Academy Theatre

Catwalk - Ladies Night, 7.00pm
Linlithgow Rugby Club

Tue 26 Community Council meeting,
7.30pm, Burgh Halls

Linlithgow Speakers Club Meeting
7.45pm - 9.45pm, Low Port Centre,
Blackness Rd

Sat 30 Spring Fayre, 1.30pm - 4.00pm
Craigmailen Church Hall

Belles and Bellinis, 2.00pm
Linlithgow Rugby Club

LCDT presentations and AGM
2.00pm - 3.30pm, Queen Margaret's
Hall, Linlithgow

Burgh Beautiful Plant Sale
9.30am - 12.30, The Cross, Linlithgow

June

Thu 4 Folk Session, 8.00pm
Football & Cricketers' Arms

Fri 5 Eve Marches Dance, 7.00 for
7.30pm, Marquee at the Rubgy Club

Sat 6 Sponsored Cycle, 10.00am
Donaldson's School & The Union
Canal Towpath

1st Deacons Night, 6.30pm from West
Port, High Street, Linlithgow

Tue 9 Fashion Show, 7.30pm
Linlithgow Academy

Linlithgow Speakers Club Meeting
7:45pm - 9:45pm, Low Port Centre,
Blackness Rd

Wed 10 Perambulation of the
Marches, 7.00pm. In front of
St Ninian's Craigmailen Church

Thu 11 Beer Festival, 7.30pm
Marquee at the Rugby Club

Fri 12 Crying of the Marches,
12.00 o'clock. Starts at the Low Port
along the High Street

Provosts Dinner 7.00 for 7.30pm
Marquee at the Rugby Club

LINLITHGOW RAMBLERS

WALKING CALENDAR

With so many exciting walks
pencilled in across the monthly
calendar why not check out
www.linlithgow.com for details
on the type of walk,
duration and your
meeting point.



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**Meet us in the
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2pm till 4pm
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* except 22nd April.

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