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p12

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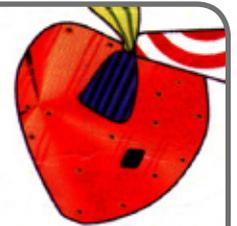
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Folk Fae Lithgae

ELISABET THORIN

It is now twenty years since Elisabet Thorin and her partner, Gail Boardman, opened up the Line Gallery in Linlithgow High Street.

The Line is an independent contemporary art gallery, showing regular exhibitions of fine and applied arts. Exhibiting artists include painters, basket makers, jewellers and photographers. Elisabet herself is a photographer, something she was first involved in as an eight year old in her native Sweden.

Elisabet graduated at Borås and Uppsala Universities and was Director of Culture for a large local authority in Sweden, before coming to Scotland in 1994. Having run art galleries for other people, she always wanted to open up one of her own, a dream she finally realised the following year.

"It was an adventure and still is", she told me. "It's a huge amount of fun and a huge amount of work and now we are doing lots of other things too. We have twelve exhibitions in a year, for about three to four weeks each. We have staged so many artists over the years, I couldn't count them all."

The Gallery has a great reputation for encouraging young artists, as Elisabet explained:

"A lot of artists, like Lesley Anne Derks, have stayed with us. We meet them when they're young, we show them and support them and then they stay with us throughout their careers. We also help to encourage artists who perhaps haven't shown for a number of years and I really enjoy that."

An exhibition in June featured a range of Elisabet's most recent photographs, many of which are a departure from her usual work.

"I've started doing a bit more with people, which is something I have never really done, partly because I'm fairly shy. You need to be confident to approach people. I'm practising at being a people photographer. Usually my work involves nature, a lot of ruined houses and atmosphere in nature, I want the before and after in my pictures, hinting at something beyond the image itself. I am interested in the intensity, clarity and uncertainty contained within a moment frozen in time."

Photography has been a life-long passion for Elisabet and she feels she is still learning, whether that is on her travels abroad, to countries such as India, or in the local area. It is something she would love to devote more time to.

Away from helping to run a busy art gallery and taking photographs, in recent years Elisabet has taken up beekeeping and has several hives around Linlithgow.

"It's a thing you can do for the environment that isn't all that difficult", she says, "It's educational and interesting and you learn a lot more about nature." Unfortunately, the poor weather this year has caused some of the hives to swarm, which means that the bees have left to find a more suitable environment.

Another great passion is taking part in field trials with her English Pointer dogs, Talisker and CJ, and the three of them are well known to dog walkers who go round the loch.

Elisabet loves Linlithgow and feels it is a privilege to live here. *"Linlithgow is great. It suits me size-wise and there are lots of activities within easy reach. It's a small town surrounded by lots of nature and yet it's a vibrant town. It's a really, really nice place to live and I like the people a lot. If you smile, you get a smile back."*

Murdoch Kennedy



LINLITHGOW ABANDONED?

Town Groups Reeling from
Lack of Council Support *by David Tait, Editor*

Members of several town groups who take an active interest in the development of Linlithgow have been left shocked by a recent decision by West Lothian Council to approve an application to build another out of centre supermarket on Edinburgh Road in Linlithgow.

The decision seems to fly in the face not only of the Council's current Local Development Plan and their own recent report which concluded that Linlithgow did not require additional supermarket capacity but also ignores Scottish Government planning advice clearly favouring town centre focused development.

Objections to the siting of the development on Edinburgh Road were lodged by the Community Council, Civic Trust, Linlithgow Business Association and the Linlithgow Town Centre BID as well as a clutch of town residents. Objectors were worried about the effect that the new supermarket might have on High Street businesses, with the closure of the more centrally placed Tesco another possible consequence.

All objections were swept aside in the rush to develop a gap site which, as well as being designated for housing, could well be the last feasible site to add car parking capacity near the railway station – a need already under supplied and which will no doubt be even greater once electrification of the line is complete.

Even as a one-off decision this would be hugely perplexing but it isn't a one-off. It follows a refusal by the Council to participate in a "charrette" to give the people of the town a professionally managed opportunity to express their ideas on their town's future despite over £20,000 of grant funding being available from the Scottish Government and Historic Scotland to finance the project. No financial contribution was even required from the Council, only a few hours of staff representation at the event – a wasted, and long overdue, opportunity.

Meantime, the Town Management Group – a forum for discussion and action, formed in 2006, comprising many local groups and West Lothian

Council – sits on around £350,000 of available funds, with town enhancing projects approved but little or no action taken for nearly two years. Sheer frustration has caused the departure of members who have over many years made exceptional contributions to the enhancement of the town – how can lost goodwill be better engaged for the future?

To that can be added the Council's refusal to support the Victoria Hall Trust in its efforts over the last two years to have something done with the High Street eyesore and wasted opportunity that is now the Victoria Hall. Sitting in the centre of Linlithgow's Outstanding Conservation Area, this structure, always a bit of a misfit on the High Street but originally funded by the community for community use, has been wholly neglected for many years when efforts to invest to maintain and improve it failed to win approval.

Having regularly canvassed opinion on the High Street and online questionnaires, and with over 420 members, the Trust firmly believes it enjoys the overwhelming support of the community for action to be taken to regenerate the site and bring a much-needed "hub" for community activities, including a community theatre/cinema. The present owner having publicly declared a refusal to negotiate, the Trust must now consider a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). Normal procedure is for the relevant Council authority to raise the action but once again West Lothian Council has refused to enter constructive discussions with the Trust for no reason that would stand up to analysis, the Trust having offered to do the bulk of the work required and to raise the funds to purchase.

When individuals who have freely and willingly given their time for the benefit of the community give up the ghost and resign then something is clearly going wrong somewhere. By common consent West Lothian Council is considered remote and disconnected from the town and that is a situation that surely cannot continue. With current pressure on Council budgets, and more to come, every town that wants to maintain its standards cannot afford to lose volunteers and, more likely, will need to gain very many more.



*"Excuse me!
Is this the way
to the new
supermarket
on Edinburgh
Road?"*

"Even as a one-off decision this would be hugely perplexing but it isn't a one-off. It follows a refusal by the Council to participate in a "charrette" to give the people of the town a professionally managed opportunity to express their ideas on their town's future despite over £20,000 of grant funding being available from the Scottish Government and Historic Scotland to finance the project. No financial contribution was even required from the Council, only a few hours of staff representation at the event – a wasted, and long overdue, opportunity."

A STEEP LADDER TO CLIMB – FIRST-TIME BUYING IN LINLITHGOW..



Last August we bought our first house. According to the Council of Mortgage Lenders we were average Brits purchasing our first property between the ages of 29 and 33.

We were renting in Linlithgow, perfect for accessing both Edinburgh (where I work) and Glasgow (where my partner works). We didn't buy our first property here, but we did purchase in Falkirk.

Again, according to the Council of Mortgage Lenders, first time buyers must pull together an average of 20 per cent deposit on their first property with many calling upon the 'Bank of Mum and Dad' to offer a helping hand(bag).

We were fortunate to be able to put down a deposit on a house straight away - the result of our frugal younger years and a conviction to be independent.

During our property search we had initially settled upon the idea of living in Linlithgow as it is my partner's home town, a fantastic commuter town for those working in the cities, and a great place to raise a family. And of course it is beautiful, and with just about everything you could possibly need on your front doorstep.

However, we soon noticed that we were having trouble locating properties which suited us and within our price bracket as first-time buyers.

Rightmove, the UK's largest property portal recently reported that the average price of a property in Linlithgow is £200,283, compared with neighbouring towns - Polmont (£120,555) and Falkirk (£124,636), with Linlithgow's property prices matching closer with those in Edinburgh, at £233,795.

We visited an impartial mortgage adviser and went through the fairly vigorous assessment process to scope what we could afford, then applied this to our expectations in Linlithgow.

Like anyone purchasing a house, whether for the first time or as a well-seasoned home buyer, it was necessary to research the market in the area and consider what we could purchase within our means. During our research I was very interested to learn that fifteen new four and five bedroom houses had been built on East Mill lane with the luxury Linlithgow newbie in mind, with the home builder's brochure offering a long list of reasons to buy in Linlithgow. These houses were in the region of £479,995 (for a four bed), so were out of our price range by a Linlithgow country mile.

Driving from the Blackness Road I noted 66 fairly new retirement/sheltered housing flats which were echoed in a new development of 41 flats on Linlithgow High Street - but I realised I had another thirty years before we could apply.

Scouring through a multitude of internet sites I read with interest how a planning application had been lodged for 600 new houses on the Burghmuir site at the north east end of Linlithgow, but reading on, that number had fallen to 200. Initially it was reported that Wallace Land who had lodged the application were looking to build 25 per cent affordable housing from the allocation, but this number was more likely to become 15 per cent because a new secondary school in Winchburgh could be on the cards.

We did come across a two-bedroom ground floor flat and submitted an offer. It wasn't accepted but instead we purchased a two bedroom house in Falkirk with a garden for exactly forty thousand pounds less.

The decision is still to be made by West Lothian Council as to whether the proposed Burghmuir development goes ahead, and with the proportion of affordable housing earmarked.

In the meantime we are saving our pennies and hopefully, one way or the other we will make it to the dizzy heights of the Linlithgow housing ladder.

Rebecca Bell



PERAMBULATION OF THE MARCHES, 2015

Photography by David Shirres.



The Perambulation procession in the Peel.



The flagbearers lead the way along the lochside path.



Piper playing at March Stone No. 4 in Springfield Road, with newly-planted Burgh Beautiful flowerbed in the foreground.



Linlithgow Reed Band at the Canal Basin.



The Gala Queen, Dominique Delahunty, atop the March Stone in Rosemount Park, along with the leading party.

The evening of Wednesday 10 June saw Linlithgow's second Perambulation of the Marches event, still very much a new tradition in the making but well on its way to becoming a permanent feature in the general Marches celebrations.

Once again in ideal weather conditions, the people of Linlithgow took a four-mile walk, following as closely as possible the 19th century boundary of the Royal Burgh of Linlithgow (originally the 'Parliamentary Boundary') and stopping at each of the march stones on the route. At the West Port start, leaflets on the Perambulation, and the places of interest en route, were distributed free of charge by members of the Community Council. These leaflets can still be obtained from the Burgh Halls, the Annet House Museum and the library.

As last year, the procession was led by the Provost, flagbearers and halberdiers of the Deacons Court, along with the Town Crier and Ross Miller, the town piper. Jim Carlin took part for the first time as Provost. Additional high-quality musical entertainment, provided by the Reed Band, added to the atmosphere at the Canal Basin where the Linlithgow Union Canal Society (LUCS) laid on refreshments for a well-earned break.

Also new this year, thanks to the involvement of the Gala Day

Committee, was the participation of the Gala Queen, Dominique Delahunty, who ably greeted the leading party beside the march stone in Rosemount Park. We are also grateful to all who acted as stewards at the various road crossings and to David Shirres who once again acted as our 'official' photographer.

Those who completed the route collected their certificates at the West Port Hotel where the Civic Trust and the Linlithgow Ramblers had publications stalls. Approaching 300 people took part in the event in one way or another, an overall increase since last year. Perhaps one day we'll reach the popularity levels of the long-established equivalent event in Lanark where around 2,500 regularly take part over a route of similar length.

It would be great to see a bigger turn-out of all ages next year – this is a great opportunity for the community to come out in force to take part. There is no need to register beforehand – leave your computer and TV screens for an evening and just turn up at 7pm on Wednesday, 8 June 2016, when we look forward to seeing you there.

Long live the Perambulation of the Marches!

Ron Smith



Cardboard capers at canal society Funday



For over 25 years, August has seen cardboard boats being paddled around a course in the canal basin until they either sink or complete the task set by the organisers. This is all part of the Linlithgow Union Canal Society's annual Funday, which sees the canal basin come alive. This year the Funday takes place on 16th August.

The cardboard boat race was born in 1989, when the canal society (LUCS) organised a water regatta as part of the celebrations that year to mark the 600th anniversary of Linlithgow's Burgh Charter. Since then hundreds of boats have delighted the packed crowd around the canal basin.

As in any race there are rules. The most important one is that all boats must be constructed entirely out of cardboard. Paint can be applied, but only above the water line and the use of any waterproof material and buoyancy aids is prohibited.

Prizes are awarded for the fastest team to complete the course, the fastest team under 14, most entertaining boat/crew, most interesting boat design, best new entry and the Wooden Spoon, which is given to the best capsize or slowest boat. *Entry forms are available at <http://www.lucs.org.uk/canal-fun-day/>*

16 boats took part last year and the winner completed the course in one minute 30 seconds. Only eight of the boats sank taking between two seconds and one minute eleven seconds to do so.

Of course there is much more to the Funday than the cardboard raft race. There are various stalls in Learmonth Gardens, including a Punch and Judy show. Musicians from Linlithgow Folk Festival Association entertain the crowds by the canal tea room, the barbeque serves burgers and, of course, there are frequent boat trips on offer.

Do come to the basin on 16th August and join in the fun!

David Shirres



Sun
16
AUG



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Wed
JULY &
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TIME TO LOOK OUT YOUR DANCING SHOES - SCOTCH HOP IS BACK!



This summer sees the 26th annual Scotch Hop in the spectacular surrounding of Linlithgow Palace.

On five – hopefully fine and sunny – evenings in July and August, the historic Palace walls will ring out with the sound of fiddles and accordions. Hundreds of dancers will step out in the Palace’s grand open-air courtyard for a procession of reels, jigs and ceilidh dances.

Dancers from all over the UK – and from overseas – travel to Linlithgow to take part. The sounds of some of the country’s best Scottish dance bands, and the sight of kilts swirling round the historic fountain in the Palace courtyard, have inspired visitors to come back time and time again.

Sheila MCutcheon, one of the organising committee and the dance caller, said: “*Scotch Hop is a real celebration of the best of Scottish culture – showcasing traditional Scottish music and dance. But it is also great fun and one of the highlights of the Linlithgow social calendar. The unique venue of Linlithgow Palace, plus a friendly atmosphere, makes Scotch Hop a really special event every year. It’s a great way to spend an evening, get a bit of exercise and meet new people. And it’s very informal – there’s no dress code but, wearing tartan is definitely encouraged!*”

John Carswell, who set up the event in 1989, stressed that it is an event for everyone. “*It is very much ‘Scottish dancing for all’. All the dances are called out, and also demonstrated, so people don’t need to know the steps, or indeed even understand English.*”

John is proud of the international attraction of the event, with visitors from all over the world, including Nepal, South Korea, Russia, the USA and Australia. But he is also keen to encourage more Linlithgow locals to take part. “*It is a fantastic night, in an amazing venue, and right on our doorstep. We are very pleased that the event receives so much local support, but we would like to see even more Linlithgow folk joining us. It’s a great evening for the whole family.*”

The event will also showcase five of Scotland’s best dance bands: Iain Anderson, The Occasionals, Wayne Robertson, Matthew MacLennan and John Carmichael.

The bands will lead the dancers through old favourites like the Gay Gordons, an Eightsome Reel and the Military Two Step. But the dancers will also be able to try lesser-known dances like the Shortbread Dance, the Boston Tea Party and the Gypsy Tap.

Each evening starts at 7.30pm, and this year’s dates are:

> Wednesday 15 July

> Wednesday 22 July

> Wednesday 29 July

> Wednesday 5 August

> Wednesday 12 August

Tickets can be bought at the door, priced £8.50 for adults and £6.50 for concessions. Under-12s go free when accompanied by an adult. If you fancy attending a few evenings you can save money with a season ticket, priced £26 for adults and £20 for concessions.

The ticket price also includes tea and shortbread at the interval. And there is no need to worry about the Scottish summer weather - the organisers have the Low Port Centre on standby in case of rain.

A new feature this year will be a new PA system, which will make it easier for the dancers to hear the caller throughout the Palace courtyard. This has been made possible because of the financial support offered to Linlithgow Scotch Hop by the Big Lottery Fund’s Awards for All programme, and West Lothian Council Community Arts Grants Scheme.

See more at www.scotchhop.org.uk or www.facebook.com/LinlithgowScotchHop.

Further information on 0131 331 1528 or from ScotchHopCommittee@gmail.com.

ART IN THE GARDEN

New Hopetoun Garden

We are passionate about displaying art in the garden and feel that there are so many opportunities for including bits of art in every garden. To encourage you all to share in this creative fun we run 'art in the garden' in July and August. Lesley has 11 artists working in Scotland install around three dozen of their original pieces of art in our themed gardens around the outside of the garden centre. During the summer visitors vote for their favourite piece and all those voting for the winner have their names put into a draw to win Garden Gift Vouchers!

If Lesley can't get to sleep at night she starts counting the pieces of art we have in our own garden and she never gets to the 36th before she is fast asleep! They range from the practical bird bath to the mosaic covered site, from the galvanised metal and glass giant plant to a wooden 'conker' swing. We have things we have found on holiday travels and glass hearts bought in Mexico. We have painted all manner of things ourselves - walls, arches and pots and laid patterned paving. Gardening can be such a great way to express your creative nature and making your own works of art doesn't need to cost the earth. We also love buying pieces of art to display in the garden, it is as creative as interior decorating.



Here are our top 10 tips to being creative in your own garden:

1. Make sure you create a view into your garden from every window of your house - Doug's favourite view is looking down from the bathroom each morning while he does his teeth - when shaving he finds he needs to keep an eye on the mirror!



2. Create focal points in every view using birdbaths, sundials, arches, statues or perhaps the Lithic Fire's sandstone 'Firepit' - beautiful and very practical.



3. Add colour to walls, fences, arches and arbours to create different moods and styles. Ratho Byres Forge's 'Kaleidoscope' of 52 butterflies in different shades of blues flying down the dry river bed in our woodland brings life and wonder to the garden.



4. Repeat elements from inside your home outdoors such as flooring materials, colours and shapes. We used a mix of timber decking and artificial grass to bring the indoors outdoors in our art in the garden showgarden.

5. Use your house and garden walls to hang plaques, mirrors and mosaics - think 'inside-outside', we have a blackboard in the gardens to encourage young folk to express themselves.

6. Choose plants with strong architectural shapes as works of art - the distinctive bristly shapes of dwarf pines, the flowing grace of Japanese maples, the bold strappy leaves of phormiums and silver birches with their clean white branches.



7. Incorporate different materials into your paving like pebbles, bricks or mosaics to create interesting patterns and strong lines.

8. Positioning 'found' stones or driftwood from your travels and holidays into planters or borders can create useful focal points, costs nothing and preserves happy memories. Yarn Bombing is a trend that is catching on in the UK - wrapping trees and objects with yarn, rope, knitting or crocheting to personalise inanimate objects and make our own environment more personal. Susan White has given this dead tree life, fun and humour with her knitting.



9. Temporary creations can be made by planted pot recipes of beautiful plants.

10. Lovely pots and urns can be as effective as statues placed cleverly in your borders. They don't need to be planted and narrow necked urns make great 'vases' for old seed heads or cones fixed to bamboo stems.

Perhaps you could send us some pictures of your own garden creations that we could share with others?

Dougal Philip and Lesley

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ST. MICHAEL'S FLOWER FESTIVAL

For three days in May this year, St Michael's Parish Church was transformed into a giant floral display, made up of many individual arrangements all based on the theme of 'Light'. This very impressive show was attended by more than 600 visitors and raised a total of almost £3000. The money will go towards the cost of the 'Empowered' project which had re-wired and re-lit the church during 2014.

The theme of 'Light' reflected the project's installation of a new low energy LED lighting system in the Church and the floral displays depicted selected Bible passages in imaginative and varied ways.

Perhaps one of the most imaginative followed how light and power are found in the sun and then converted through photosynthesis, fossil fuels, coal power stations, nuclear power, hydroelectricity, wind turbines, solar voltaic panels into the electric light and power that we all have in our homes.

A display by St Michael's RC church illustrated words from the Bible 'shining light on the world'

A display depicting the pillar of fire which provided light so the Israelites could travel by night during their Exodus from Egypt.

Another display used imagery reflecting the creation of the John Muir Way and Muir's view of the natural world

The members of the church's flower group, under the leadership of Mrs Sandra Stewart, were very grateful for the assistance of other members of the church, involvement of other congregations and organisations in the town together with local businesses. Thanks go to all concerned.

As a date for the diary, the final major fundraising event for the Empowered project will be a sound and light show on 13 and 14 November in St Michael's Church.

This multi-media Son et Lumiere presentation, 'St Michael's - The Local Legacy', has been written by Bruce Jamieson, the well known local historian who wrote the story of Linlithgow during the war years which met with such acclaim. The musical score by Andrew Sutherland, organist at St Michael's, includes a cast of 50 singers and this, together with recorded voices and live actors, promises to be a very exciting evening. Come along and hear some interesting stories about our town. You might be surprised!

Margaret Henderson

Fri & Sat
13 & 14
NOV





Travis



*Peter Ferguson
& John Richardson*

PARTY at the PALACE...

Last year's Party At The Palace brought more than 12,000 people to the usually-pastoral Linlithgow, to be part of a concert featuring some of Scotland's best music. This year is set to be even bigger, with great bands from all over the world coming to be a part of the fun.

SATURDAY

At their only show in the UK this year and headlining on Saturday is **Travis**, the monumental soft rock band hailing from Glasgow. With two BRIT Awards under their belt, expect to hear some of their greatest songs from a 25-year long career, including 'Sing' and 'Why Does It Always Rain On Me?' However, also expect tracks from their most recent album, 'Where You Stand', like the acoustic-spun 'Mother', as well as the titular track.

Even with such a prominent band headlining on Saturday, the other acts are not outshone. While last year had a focus on sophisti-pop, this year Party At The Palace looks set to have an array of 00s-era indie rock. One of this genre's pioneers, **The Feeling**, is also to take

to the stage on Saturday, with a set of summery, nostalgic tunes (hopefully to match to the sunny weather), like their breakout single 'Fill My Little World' and the larger-than-life, 'Never Be Lonely'.

Returning from last year is singer-songwriter **Horse McDonald**, who is set to wow us again with her powerful voice and emotional lyrics.

Also joining us is **Justin Currie**, frontman of alternative rock outfit **Del Amitri**. With that same style that made Del Amitri so famous (having five of their albums enter the national Top 10 in the charts), one that could be both plucky and upbeat (like in 'Roll To Me') and also poignant, like in the observational ballad 'Nothing Ever Happens'. Yet singles from Currie's solo career, like 'If I Ever Loved You' and 'Every Song's The Same' should also make an appearance.

Also playing on Saturday is **Little Eye**. Despite being more underappreciated than some other acts here, their energy and modern edge makes them fresh and stand out. **Winning Clyde 1's In Demand Band of the Year contest in 2009, their debut 'Fighting The Future' was released just last year.** With defiant singles like 'Choked Up' and 'Disco',

this band is set to turn many heads when they perform. Get down to the Peel nice and early to see some developing talent in the form of the battle of the bands winner.

SUNDAY

Disco gods **CHIC**, with their mastermind **Nile Rodgers**, headline on Sunday. With ubiquitous tracks filled with a funky flair, like 'Le Freak' and 'Good Times', their impact on the pop world is renowned. Even though they entered the scene at the turn of the 80s, when disco was allegedly dying, CHIC managed to stay fresh in the public eye with band-based instrumentation and catchy hooks. Along with their classic disco standards, we can also expect songs from their more recent efforts such as the heavy-bass, hip 'I'll Be There' (released just this year). His recent Hyde Park gig in front of 80,000 people saw him run through all his collaborations and you'll know every one of them from David Bowie's 'Let Dance' as well as his hits with Madonna, Duran Duran and Diana Ross amongst others.



CHIC with Nile Rodgers



In contrast to this is Gaelic singer-songwriter **Julie Fowles**, best known for her additions to the soundtrack of Pixar's 2012 film 'Brave'. While **Runrig** and **Capercaillie** fused rock with their Celtic roots, Fowles keeps her songs stripped to their basics, creating beautiful and lilting tracks like the poignant 'Tha Mo Ghaol Air Aird a' Chuan' (My Love Is On High Seas) or the fast-tempo 'Hug Air a' Bhonaid Mhoir' (Celebrate The Great Bonnet). In the same vein of singer-songwriters is **Nina Nesbitt**. Achieving fame in 2011 after being noticed by Example and Ed Sheeran, her talent for storytelling through brooding ballads with an astounding, distinct brogue voice sets her out as a talent to listen to. Fiercely independent from any label despite her wide attention, keep your ears open for songs such as 'Hold You', 'Stay Out' and 'Mr C'.

On the topic of reimagining Highland culture are the **Red Hot Chilli Pipers**. With a tongue-in-cheek edge to their work, this ensemble blends conventional instrumentation with the sound of bagpipes to add a folk flavour to their covers, an eclectic collection from Avicci's 'Wake Me Up' to rock medleys to Coldplay's 'Fix You'. Their inventiveness will surely surprise and entertain.

Perhaps one of the most successful bands performing over the weekend is **Scouting For Girls**. Like their

contemporaries **The Hoosiers** and **The Feeling**, this indie pop trio shot to the top of the charts in the mid-00s with their self-titled debut, powered by the sunny vibe in 'She's So Lovely', 'Elvis Ain't Dead' and later 'This Ain't A Love Song'. Having performed at the Royal Albert Hall and proud supporters of **McBusted** at their 2014 tour, this whimsical group will be great for fans of the Saturday acts.

With such a brilliant line-up ranging from disco to indie rock to folk, you don't want to miss this concert especially since it is right at your doorstep. With improved facilities and bigger acts, this year's Party At The Palace looks set to be the best yet.

Sat/Sun
**8 & 9
AUG**

Ian Macartney



The "Easy way" to buy your ticket from home and get a 10% discount...

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and claim **10%** off all meals (food only).

Sat & Sun 8,9 Aug. Noon - Midnight

John Davidson work experience with a real difference...

Ten straight hours in a catering tent with queues out the door on two consecutive days would not usually be my idea of a good time, but when I heard that some of Scotland's biggest musical talent would be playing fifteen minutes' walk from my house, I wanted to be involved in last year's Party at The Palace in any way I could to help make the event a success and ensure that it was the first of many.

Having put on a concert myself since then, (yes, it's me from the last issue) I now appreciate

even more what John and Peter have done for Linlithgow and what they are doing again this year in bringing such superb musicians into our humble little town.

The professional and collected manner that they deal with the divas that they have to put up with is admirable, and they didn't even pay me to say that. Having been shadowing them for some time at meetings with a variety of different organisations, I would have to say that the term work experience has occasionally been dominated by experience as opposed to work.

A meeting with people from the McEwan's marketing team for example, which I thought might be about the company's sponsorship of the event, was not much more than a beer

tasting session and afternoon pub crawl, the rock and roll lifestyle indeed. It can't be said however that I haven't learnt a lot from the pair, and I'm still impressed that they managed to pull off last year's Party at The Palace to the standard they did with no previous experience of events that size and complexity.

It may come as a relief to those attending this year that it won't be people my age serving food as a result of one of many learning curves from last year, however I look forward to getting as involved as possible with the event again this year and enjoying some more great music in the scenic surroundings that this great town has to offer.

Friday 7th

Last year's Party at the Palace put Linlithgow firmly on the map as a Scots music festival 'must' for young and old as 12,000 came together to rock in the shadow of the imposing historic attraction.

Now, thanks to the backing of businesses throughout the town centre, this year's PATP just got bigger and better, with bonus events adding to the draw of what promises to be a magic weekend. It's all down to the Linlithgow Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) which aims to do all it can to boost the attractiveness and appeal of the Royal Burgh's heart.

On Friday 7 August at 6pm, in a curtain-raiser to PATP, there will be a Battle of the Bands. Four local outfits will compete for the ultimate prize - opening PATP, starring Travis and Chic with Nile Rogers.

Shops, cafes, bars and restaurants will be open late for the occasion. Bring the kids, savour the atmosphere, and support the young musicians in their bid to hit the big stage.

Saturday 8th

Saturday 8 August sees a Family Fun Day at The Cross and The Vennel which promises to live up to its name.

On stage, there will be performances by the winners of the West Lothian's Schools Talent Competition, and other fun acts. With families at the heart of all that Linlithgow BID is laying on, there will be children's funfair rides, street performers, face painting and balloons for all. There will also be an array of stalls, offering a great variety of goods and services.

Linlithgow BID looks forward to welcoming you at one or more of our events - we want to do all we can to make it a weekend to remember for locals and visitors alike.

The stage is set - join the Party!



Electric bikes on trial...

More power to your knees!

Cycling is undergoing a high tech boom, which is a joy for some, but excludes the majority. Maybe we don't feel our best in hypertight lycra. Maybe we don't want to flog ourselves like galley slaves up and down the hills around Linlithgow on our day off. Is there a third way, a way to combine the old pleasure of cycling with the speed and ease provided by new technologies? The Germans and Chinese would answer a resounding 'Yes'.

Electric bikes, machines that supplement pedalling with electric motor power, have exploded in popularity in those countries. One hundred and fifty million have been sold in the last decade in China, millions more in Europe.

Linlithgow's Easygo Electric Bikes is at the Scottish vanguard of this new technology. This week I visited their fastidiously clean business unit in Linlithgow Bridge to learn more. Gordon of Easygo greeted me, and introduced his vision for the bikes in Scotland. *"Electric bikes really are the way forward. You don't need to be particularly fit to start with, and can ride for mile after mile without tiring yourself out. You still pedal, and can make it as challenging as you like. The electric motor just helps reduce or amplify your output."*

The Easygo range includes little step-through town shuttles and dual-suspension fat-tired behemoths. I selected a standard £1000 model. It was painted half white, half acidic tangerine, and looked like a chunky melding of a town bike and a mountain bike.



Gordon briefly explained the additional handlebar controls before releasing me on the road. The motor, he explained, is there to reduce effort required, not increase speed. It can be off completely, it can provide a graduated level of assistance, or it can completely power the bike. To test these different settings in extremis I went to Back Station Road. The hill from the traffic lights to the canal bridge resembles a tarmac ski slope and would provide a stiff test for the machinery. I rode up it three times. Once with no power, then with half assist and finally with maximum assist.

With the motor disengaged, I aimed up the hill and took off. At first, it felt merely slow. As the hill bit more sharply, however, the dead weights of motor and battery arrested my progress like anvils on my ankles. The chunky speedometer let me know I'd fallen to 4mph; walking speed. I heaved and huffed, puffed and pushed. I made it, but hated it. My clothes were stuck clammy to me and I needed a breather.

The second climb was done on 50% power. The assist amplified my effort magnificently. The speedo read about 9mph the whole way up. Much, much better.

As I aligned myself for the third, full-powered ascent, a conventional cyclist came to halt at the red light beside me. *"Hiya mate, you going up?"* I asked, indicating Back Station Road. *"Aye,"* puffed the lycra-clad gent. *"Fancy a race?"* He certainly did.

We lined up at the red light, side by side. For a moment, Linlithgow was Le Mans. The green blinked on, and we took off. He dashed into an early lead, but I was soon on his tail. We hit the meat of the hill. His sinuous legs sawed away desperately. Conversely I was totally relaxed, letting the motor do the hard work.

He beat me to the top by four metres. He was a red-faced wreck, gulping at the muggy June air and taking squirts from his drink bottle. I cruised to a gentle stop beside him. I pointed out that if the hill had been a half-mile longer, I'd have won and he'd have suffered a cardiac arrest.

The conclusion? This bike is a hybrid. It does not work as a push bike, but, if you are willing to put in a very moderate amount of effort then it will more than meet you halfway. It will flatten the hills and shorten the straights. You will cover easily distances and terrain that would challenge a road cyclist. And you can do it with none of the daft lycra!

Alistair Heather

Easygo 
Electric Bikes Ltd



COMPLETE HEALTH AT THE MILLSTONE - HEALTHY ADVICE WITH A SMILE



Did you know that Complete Health at the Millstone has been on our High Street since 1978? The current owner, Gail Laing, started her life in The Millstone as a Saturday girl while she was still at school. After she left school Gail worked at a firm of Searchers of Records, based in Register House in Edinburgh. But she wanted a change, and longed to be her own boss.

So, in 1992, aged just 23, Gail took the plunge and bought out the shop – investing her own savings and with some family help. The shop has been a healthy presence on Linlithgow's High Street ever since, with 23 years specialising in natural and organic products.

Four years ago, when she moved into larger premises, Gail renamed the business Complete Health at the Millstone. And Linlithgow man and regular customer **Alex Salmond** 'officially' opened the new shop!

Gail is a real expert. She runs the shop with her mum, Mary, and the pair pride themselves in offering specialist help and advice with warm and friendly service.

The shop sells a huge range of products, many of which are impossible to buy anywhere else locally. It meets the needs of the growing number of people who are increasingly concerned about the chemicals and toxins contained in our foods and the products we use on ourselves and in our homes. **For example:**

> *Food intolerances are becoming*

more common – Complete Health can provide a food intolerance test, as well as gluten and dairy free products.

> *People often turn to natural and herbal solutions when traditional medicines from the doctor don't work or have side effects. Common medical complaints (including hay fever, low energy, muscle and joint aches, stress, insomnia, menopause symptoms and many more) can be treated with natural products which are non addictive and safe. We hear scare stories about people taking medicines they have bought online, but Gail only carries natural medicines from trusted suppliers, who manufacture their own products and don't supply to chain stores.*

> *Gail sells a range of natural beauty products, none of which have been tested on animals. That includes hair colorants for people with sensitive scalps, which are also safe for those who have lost their hair to chemotherapy.*

> *Complete Health offers a wide range of chemical-free Ecover cleaning products including washing up liquid, laundry liquid, fabric conditioner and hand soap. They are kind on the environment and safe to use in your home. To cut down on packaging you can bring your empty containers back to the shop to be re-filled. And if you want to try an Ecover product, Gail will let you bring in your own container to take home a sample.*

> *And for the newest members of the family, the shop stocks a whole range of chemical-free and organic baby products.*

The shop is also a haven for local foodies. They stock fresh fruit and vegetables (almost impossible to get anywhere else on the High Street), free-range eggs and – in the summer – delicious allotment strawberries. That is on top of their range of dried fruits, nuts, herbs, spices and specialist cook's products – everything from preserved lemons, Moroccan spices and olive oil to pomegranate molasses and high quality flour. Oh, and Mary's homemade tablet. Gail also sells locally-produced honey, great for the hay fever season, and delicious heather honey in both jars and combs.

At Christmas they do a roaring trade in selling exactly-measured amounts of Christmas cake ingredients – just bring in your recipe and they will package up the exact quantities of everything you need. No mistakes, no need for scales and no waste!

Gail offers discount on bulk orders and free delivery within the local area. **Complete Health at the Millstone** 159 High Street, Linlithgow EH49 7EJ
Open: Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm (closed Sunday) Tel: 01506 847270
Email: millstonecompletehealth@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.completehealthatthemillstone.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/completehealthatthemillstone>

Linda Martin & Rachel Johnston





LINLITHGOW ROSE COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB END OF SEASON 2014/15 REVIEW.

The football fraternity traditionally has a break over the summer and as we all swap our muddy boots for flip flops, its right that we take time to reflect on some of the year's highlights, as well as looking forward to the future.

During the season, LRCFC was doubly honoured at the West Lothian Council Celebrating Sport Awards, where our respected coach John Adams was presented with the Local Service to Sport Award and the club itself received a Special Recognition Award for commitment to football in the community.

At Hampden Park in September, we were delighted at being named **2014 Community Club of the Year** at the SFA national grassroots awards. The presentation was made by Scottish football legends Kenny Dalglish and Gordon Strachan. The club decided that the wider community should benefit from this accolade and a set of football strips we received as part of the award was donated to Donaldson's school.

The work of the flourishing girls' section was recognised when two of the players, Grace Molloy and Tara McGonigle, were awarded with Scotland under 15 international caps, the first for the club. Their success was recognised by the club when the girls were presented with Outstanding Achievement awards at a recent gathering.

An achievement award was also received by our team of the year, LRCFC Amateurs. As well as earning three back to back league promotions, the group attracted national press coverage through their link up and promotion of national cancer charity Prostate Scotland. Promotion and fundraising on behalf of this great cause will continue into next year.

The club continues to grow and develop, with new groups involving women and over 35's men up and running. A Walking Football initiative on Monday mornings for the over 50's, which aims to provide an opportunity for fun exercise at a more relaxed pace, is also underway.

In conjunction with our partners at West Lothian Leisure, West Lothian Council and Sport Scotland, we are looking forward to using the new, full size, 3rd Generation synthetic pitch and improved changing facilities at Linlithgow Leisure Centre. This fantastic investment provides players, coaches and volunteers with facilities that will enable all weather, year round continued fun and enjoyment to all.

This is an ideal opportunity to say thank you to those that have provided Linlithgow Rose Community Football Club and its various groups with the means to continue. Your sponsorship and donations are very much appreciated by everyone involved and we hope that our subsequent actions have repaid your kindness.

We would also like to thank all our volunteers, from administrators, parents, coaches and fundraisers to those that help with equipment and transport and support our players throughout the country. We are always on the lookout for volunteers around the Club so if you think you have something to offer, please get in touch.

The final words must go to our fantastic group of players. Thank you for your dedication, commitment, respect and fair play and we hope to see you again next season - muddy boots and all.

HAIL THE GALLANT!!

Jim Gilfeather
Vice-president Linlithgow Rose
Community Football Club.



NATURALIST-EXPLORER CHARLES WYVILLE THOMSON

LINLITHGOW'S FAMOUS OCEANOGRAPHER



Do you know the connection between the American Space Shuttle Programme and Linlithgow? This was the question put to me recently – and I said that I was stumped. However, the answer was obvious – once I was told. The ill-fated space craft which blew up over the Atlantic in January 1986 was called ‘Challenger’ and was named after the sailing ship which carried naturalist-explorer Charles Wyville Thomson on his 70,000 mile voyage around the world’s oceans. This eminent scientist was born in Linlithgow. He is buried in St. Michael’s Churchyard – and commemorated in the ‘Challenger Window’ inside the church.

This ‘father of oceanography’ was born in the year 1830, in Bonyde House – an early 19th century residence built for his father, an eminent surgeon in the East India Company. On its high position above the town, the elegant mansion once boasted a beautiful garden.

Thomson attended Edinburgh University where he first studied medicine and then natural sciences. After gaining his degree, he undertook a succession of prestigious, academic jobs before becoming Professor of Natural History in Edinburgh. By 1870, he had turned his attention to the study of marine invertebrates, his appetite whetted

during two expeditions in the seas off the north of Scotland where he had discovered a wide variety of life forms, many previously believed extinct, at depths up to 650 fathoms. He became increasingly eager to form a mission to explore the depths of all the world’s oceans.

On December 21st, 1872, his goal was achieved when he set sail on board a converted naval warship, HMS Challenger, and spent three years ‘sailing the Seven Seas’, discovering, amongst many other scientific findings, some 4700 previously unknown marine species. His name is still remembered in the Wyville-Thomson Ridge, a 125 mile long, undersea feature stretching from the Faroe Islands to Scotland. On his return, many honours were bestowed upon him, culminating in his knighthood by Queen Victoria.

In the 1960s, his birthplace was converted into a hotel and, under various names including the ‘Allanvale’ and ‘The Earl of Moray’ has remained so to the present day.

It was in this building, in 1882, that Wyville Thomson died - hailed by his colleagues as one of the greatest scientists who had ever lived. His funeral took place in St. Michael’s and featured a glowing eulogy by Professor Balfour. Three years later, a stained glass window,

the work of artists from the eminent Clayton and Bell, London workshop, was erected above the high altar of the church. Its theme is The Creation –based on the words of the 104th Psalm. The lower four panels show the “*great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.*”

I often look up at this tribute to the great oceanographer – the window, and his headstone just outside, a tribute to his lasting legacy. I always smile at the red lobster depicted on the sea bed. Obviously the designers were unaware that living lobsters are blue-black in colour!

Sadly the ship ‘Challenger’ has no such marks of respect. She was decommissioned in 1878 and converted into a receiving hulk (a prison ship) in the River Medway, where she stayed until she was broken up in 1921. It is said that the elegant wood panelling in the reception area in the Bonyde Hotel is made from oak salvaged from the ship. The only other remaining piece of ‘Challenger’ is her figurehead which is on display in the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton.

Bruce Jamieson

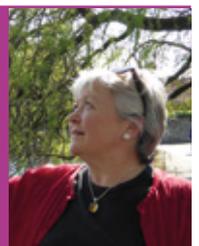
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CRIME TIME IN LINLITHGOW

Scottish writer, John Dodds, has returned from a seven year sojourn in Bulgaria to live in Linlithgow. Author of the crime thrillers, *The Kendrick Chronicles*, he promises not to bump off any local residents in the name of research.

"I like the place and the people I've met here too much," he jokes. *"So I'll probably seek another location for my next victims."* He adds, *"Mind you, I may well feature Linlithgow in my next crime novel – if I can find an excuse to get my detective, Tom Kendrick, out of Glasgow for a bit."*

While you won't find any of John's books in paperback at this stage, since they are either in audio or ebook formats, he has something in common with several big name writers, notably George R R Martin, who wrote the *Game of Thrones* novels.

He explains, *"The actor who narrates my third Kendrick novel, Babylon Slide, which came out in February, is John Lee, who also narrates one of the huge Game of Thrones books. John is an award-winning audiobook narrator, with many big name authors to his credit. My previous narrator, Robin Sachs, who sadly died a few years ago, was also a brilliant voice actor for the Kendrick books Bone Machines and Kali's Kiss. Robin is known for appearances in Buffy The Vampire Slayer, Babylon 5, Torchwood and much more."*

John says he already feels very much at home in Linlithgow, adding, *"Not only is it peaceful and picturesque here, but it also seems as though there is a lot of creativity, too. Arts and crafts activities seem very popular, as well as the wide range of sports and clubs, which makes the place feel quite buzzy."*

"It's also a place of coincidences. For instance, I realised a former colleague, Gail Boardman, of The Line Gallery, lives here. She and I worked together something like thirty years ago when I was publicist at the Third Eye Centre in Glasgow, and I haven't seen her from that day to this."

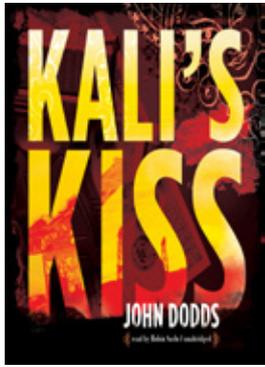
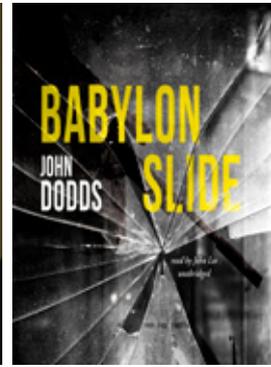
Among John's favourite things to do here are walks around the loch, or cycling on the canal towpath.

He said, *"Only recently my wife, Carole, and I cycled to the Falkirk Wheel and back. Quite apart from the wonderful scenery the route was full of surprises, like the aqueduct and the long canal tunnels, one of them even containing stalagmites, amazingly enough."*

While known mainly for crime and horror (three of his stories received honourable mentions in *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*), John writes other kinds of fiction, too. These range from paranormal romantic comedy to science fiction, historical romance and, with his latest work, *Cafe Insomnia*, mainstream serio-comic fiction.

"One of my earlier slice-of-life pieces," he says, *"was a short comic monologue called 'Trainers', which was performed at The Traverse Theatre's Monday Lizard event. Seeing an actor perform it, and being there for the audience reaction, was unforgettable. I found myself laughing at bits I didn't know were funny; the performance made something new happen. I feel that's also true of my Kendrick audiobooks, because listening to these great actors performing my work feels like they were written by someone else and I am experiencing them for the first time."*

John has also done some narration himself, such as on the podcasts *Starship Sofa* and *Tales to Terrify*. On those shows, as well as others such as *Pseudopod* and *Crimewave*, you can also hear others narrate some of John's short stories. The podcasts are free, of course.



Having trained as a journalist on the *Alloa Advertiser* as a teenager, he later went on to work as an arts publicist, and latterly a communications officer at *Communities Scotland*. John quips, *"My first novel involves an artist who is a serial killer who makes public sculptures from the bones of his victims. My killer, of course, bears not the slightest resemblance to any of the wonderful artists with whom I worked."*

While writing the sequel to *Cafe Insomnia*, he is planning to run writing classes in or around Linlithgow. Although no dates are yet set John would love to hear from people who enjoy creative writing and who are interested in finding out more about the classes. He says: *"I may run general creative writing classes or topic-specific ones, such as writing crime, horror, or other genres, depending on what people are most interested in."*

To put your name on the mailing list for more information, simply fill out the contact form on his website with the words **"Writing Classes"** in the subject line. The website is: <http://jakk1954.wix.com/johndodds>. You can also link to John Dodds through his blog (<http://bonemachines.wordpress.com>) or twitter (@Jakk54).



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The Linlithgow Black Bitch magazine is written, designed, typeset and distributed entirely by volunteers.

There is always loads to be done, and we are always on the look-out for new people to join our wee team.

That might be writing some articles, doing a bit of proof-reading, interviewing people, taking photos, delivering the finished magazine through people's letterboxes or helping with general admin tasks from home.

You can volunteer as much or as little time as you can spare.

We are a friendly bunch, and a mix of old hands and new volunteers who have just joined us.

Fancy finding out more?

Contact us at: on.a.lead@gmail.com



Last month's
Jura Competition
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Events List

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

July

Sat 18 WLCCA 1st XI vs. Gala 1st XI
1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Sun 19 WLCCA 3rd XI vs. Glenrothes
3rd XI, 1pm Boghall Cricket Ground

Folk Session, 2.00pm,
Black Bitch Tavern

Tue 21 Linlithgow Speakers Club
Meeting 7.45pm-9.45pm, Low Port
Centre, Blackness Rd

Sat 25 WLCCA 1st XI vs. Kelso,
1.00pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Aug

Sat 1 WLCCA 2nd XI vs. Fauldhouse
1st XI, 1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Embroiderers Guild in Linlithgow
Library. 10.00am - 1.00pm, National
Day of Stitch. Try out a few stitches
and see some of the Guild's work on
display.

Sun 2 WLCCA 3rd XI vs. Dalgety Bay
1st XI, 1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Tue 4 Embroiderers Guild in
Linlithgow Library. 1.30am - 3.30pm,
National Day of Stitch. Try out a few
stitches and see some of the Guild's
work on display.

Thu 6 Folk Session, 8.00pm
Football & Cricketers' Arms

Fri 7 Embroiderers Guild in
Linlithgow Library. 10.00am - 1.00pm,
National Day of Stitch. Try out a few

stitches and see some of the Guild's
work on display.

Party at the Palace - "Battle of the
Bands"

Sat 8 Party at the Palace - Travis

Family Fun Day, The Cross and
The Vennel

Sat 8 WLCCA 1st XI vs. Edinburgh
South 1st XI, 1pm, Boghall Cricket
Ground

Sun 9 Party at the Palace - CHIC

Sat 15 WLCCA 2nd XI vs.
Westquarter 1st XI, 1pm, Boghall
Cricket Ground

Sun 16 Folk Session, 2.00pm
Black Bitch Tavern

Sat 22 WLCCA 1st XI vs. Watsonians
2nd XI, 1.00pm, Boghall Cricket
Ground

Sun 23 WLCCA 3rd XI vs. Livingston
1st XI, 1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Tue 25 Community Council meeting
7.30pm, Burgh Halls

Sept

Thu 3 Folk Session, 8.00pm
Football & Cricketers' Arms

Sat 5 WLCCA 3rd XI vs. Dunnikier
1st XI, 1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Sun 6 WLCCA 3rd XI vs.

Dunfermline Wanderers 1st XI
1pm, Boghall Cricket Ground

Thu 10 Linlithgow Folk Festival
Linlithgow

Fri 11 Linlithgow Folk Festival
Linlithgow

Sat 12 Linlithgow Folk Festival
Linlithgow

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra
7.30pm, St Michael's Parish Church

Sun 13 Linlithgow Folk Festival
Linlithgow

Sun 20 Folk Session, 2.00pm
Black Bitch Tavern

Tue 22 Community Council meeting
7.30pm, Burgh Halls

Fri 25 Deacons Court Quiz Night 7.00
for 7.30pm, Queen Margarets Hall

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.

The Black Bitch Magazine

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