



Linlithgow's news by Linlithgow's people

the BLACK bitch

LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE ISSUE 68 AUG 2019

**CASH FOR LOCAL
GOOD CAUSES...
TAKING MATTERS INTO
OUR OWN HANDS**

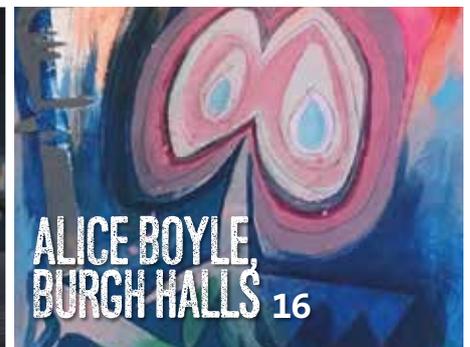
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**LINLITHGOW
FOLK FESTIVAL 6**



**DOORS OPEN
DAY AWAITS 12**



**ALICE BOYLE,
BURGH HALLS 16**

PLUS

New Hopetoun Gardens, Burgh Beautiful, Town Centre BID/Mill Road BID, Transition Linlithgow, Police Scotland, The Arts, Folk Fae Lithgae, Book Review...

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www.linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk/publications

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CASH FOR LOCAL GOOD CAUSES... TAKING MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS



Moving away from a place gives you a different perspective on it. I've recently moved back to Linlithgow, having been away living and working in Stirling for the past five years. It's been fantastic to re-discover the treats of life here in Linlithgow: some of my favourite places (Bar Leo, the unbeatable hardware shop, strolls along the canal and round the Palace) are just as good as I remembered them, and it's been fun to discover new places for the first time (cheese and wine at Du Vin Bouchers, vegetables from Grow Wild and the honesty shop at Narrowboat Farm).

Linlithgow's strong sense of community is the thing I've missed most, and one of the main things that drew me back here. I'm always in awe of energy that volunteers and community groups bring to Linlithgow, and the impact their efforts have on the town. Volunteers at Burgh Beautiful bring colour to the street, the Canal Centre is buzzing with enthusiastic volunteers, and Transition Linlithgow pops up all over the place in their mission to encourage us to live more sustainably.

Whilst time and energy are the fuel that drives initiatives like these, money and profile can be almost as important in making or breaking a good idea. Traditional routes for securing funding can be absolutely invaluable for the right project, but they're often time-consuming, admin-heavy or unwieldy, and can be impractical for tiny projects and people in the early stages of a great idea. Living away from Linlithgow has been an opportunity to see how other towns are tackling this challenge, and to discover new initiatives that help turn good ideas into reality. In the spirit of taking inspiration from our neighbours elsewhere in Scotland, and sharing ideas that might find application here in Linlithgow, here is one of my favourites:

> **THE SOUP MOVEMENT, AND STIRLING SOUP** The SOUP movement is a network of community-run crowdfunding events, each celebrating and supporting local

projects in their area. The concept is simple: local people donate a small amount (usually £5) for an evening of live music, delicious food and good company. During the event, four local people pitch an idea to improve their community - anything from planting flowers, to running a kids' club, to establishing a community cafe. Attendees listen to the pitches, then vote on their favourite. The winning project takes away all the donations to make their project happen, then return to a future event to report back on how they got on. Inspired by the original event, established in Detroit back in 2010, SOUPs have now sprung up all over the world, and in Scotland in Stirling, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness and Moray. I founded Stirling SOUP, back in 2016 (it's now run by a new team of volunteers), and was always struck by the power of local people choosing to invest their own money in local projects. For many winners, the vote of confidence from local people putting their trust in a project was the boost they needed to take their idea to the next stage.



Savi Maharaj made the winning pitch at the first Stirling SOUP, on behalf of local charity Stirling Citizens for Sanctuary (since renamed Forth Valley Welcome). She said *"This has been an amazing initiative, providing not just a novel fundraising opportunity for local charities, but also giving them greater visibility and a chance to network with each other. The £500+ prize pot was very helpful for the work we do to befriend and help Syrian refugees resettled in Stirling and Clackmannanshire. But the money was not the only benefit we received. We also made many new friends, attracted new volunteers, and made useful contacts with other local charities and social enterprises"*.

by **Kathryn Welch**

Awesome Glasgow is at <https://www.awesomefoundation.org/en/chapters/glasgow>

Stirling SOUP is at <https://www.stirlingsoup.com/>

Voluntary Arts Scotland writes a 'Cash for Culture' publication with ideas and links of other accessible ways for community groups to raise money:
<https://www.voluntaryarts.org/cash-for-culture>



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www.linlithgow.com/pride_passion.htm

WHAT'S ON - AUG & SEPT

Aug

Sat 31 Alice Boyle - Coming alive exhibition. Edinburgh-based artist, Linlithgow Burgh Halls. Till October 13*

Sat 31 Linlithgow Active Travel Festival celebration for all things walking, cycling and more. 10am - 3pm, 29 The Vennel

Sat 31 Rocking all over the World, Family Fun singalong silliness, 12 noon - 2pm, Linlithgow Academy

Sept

Sun 1 The British Fuchsia Society Flower Show, Linlithgow Primary School, 12pm - 4pm

Mon 2 Linlithgow literary lunches - with Claire Askew. Far From The Madding Crowd have teamed up with Granary Café, 1pm - 3pm at G Café.

Tue 3 Sewing Workshop: Clothes Upcycling, Transition Linlithgow, 6pm - 8.30pm, Donaldsons School

Thur 5 Thursday of every month sees Platform 3 buzz with excitement for our monthly charity Quiz Night. 8pm - 10pm

Fri 6 BSL tour of Mary Queen of Scots' birthplace - Linlithgow Palace, 6pm - 8pm

Fri 6 Paula O'Brien Psychic Medium, Linlithgow Burgh Halls, 7.30pm - 10.30pm

Sat 7 Go Bats. Night time walk around the Palace and Peel. 8pm - 10pm

Sun 8 Pedal for Scotland, 8.30am - 2pm

Mon 9 Art & Mindfulness. Practice a range of relaxation-based activities. Free event. Burgh Halls, 6pm - 6.45pm

LINLITHGOW RAMBLERS WALKING CALENDAR

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



WANT TO WRITE / BLOG FOR THE BLACK BITCH MAGAZINE?

The magazine is **looking for young people to help establish a regular presence on its website, Facebook and Twitter accounts.** Contact me in via social media, tel or email **Alice Ferguson** MSYP
Twitter - @aliceMSYP
Instagram - @alicemsymp
Facebook - @aliceSYP



Contact the Black Bitch

For editorial and to advertise: on.a.lead@gmail.com
Editor: David Tait, 07767 713024



Copy deadline for next issue is 25th Sept 2019.

LINLITHGOW MUSEUM WINTER TALKS

Dr Callum Watson. "Putting Linlithgow in its Place; Linlithgow as a focus for Royal activity in late medieval Scotland"

THUR 26 SEPTEMBER 7PM
St Peters Church

COME & TRY ORIENTEERING IN LINLITHGOW

Saturday 7th September, 14th September, 21st September, 28th September 1.30-3pm. Come and Try Orienteering in Linlithgow.

Families and beginners welcome. Contact Jen for more information: membership@fvo.org.uk

PROBUS CLUB AT THE ROSE

A friendly club for retired or semi-retired men and women.

Linlithgow Rose Club from 10am-12pm every second Wednesday - Sept to May. Get in touch or to find out about planned events visit our website at bolinprobus.org.

ANTONINE ENSEMBLE

Directed by Alison Hastie

SAT 7 SEPTEMBER 7.30PM
St Michael's Church

LINLITHGOW LADIES CHOIR

15TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

SUN 29 SEPTEMBER, 7PM
St Michael's Church

*Note: These events will run consecutively over several weeks or have weekly sessions confirmed. Check website for further details.

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

The Linlithgow Community Magazine (aka The Black Bitch) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO): SCO42542 Find us on Facebook, Follow us on Twitter.

The paper we are using is FSC approved. Images: A big thank you to all our photographers who support the magazine throughout the year.

Black Bitch magazine design & production: www.cgcreative.co.uk



WEDDINGS • EVENTS • PORTRAITS

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Folk Fae Lithgae

ALISTAIR PATON



Dare to be honest and fear no labour is the quote from Robert Burns which Ayr United season ticket holder, **Alistair Paton**, has inscribed on a tile in the tunnel at the club's Somerset Park ground. Alistair will no doubt be inspired by the Bard's words as he settles into his new role as chairman of the Linlithgow Rose Community Football Club.

Alistair and his newly appointed committee have taken over the reins from long-standing officials Billy McAdam, Jim Gilfeather and Ian Atkinson, whose tireless efforts have seen the club progress from humble beginnings to its current pre-eminent position as one of the best run community football clubs in the country. The club has around 600 registered members, both male and female. These range from the five-year olds starting out in the Soccer School to the walking football section for the more mature enthusiasts, and include the flourishing referee and goalkeeping schools. The splendid 3G facility at the leisure centre acts as the base for the club's range of activities.

With the various teams returning to action after the summer break, the challenge for the new officials is to build on the tremendous work which has already been done by their predecessors and they are more than

willing to give it a go.

Alistair believes that so many different life lessons are learned through football. He told me:

"You've got teamwork, you've got friendship, you've got community, you've got learning how to deal with the highs and lows of what's coming up. If through football we can build those skills, then I think football's got a really viable role to play. I think the Community Club does that. A lot of the kids develop new friends, maybe friends for life. It gives that kind of spirit and that's the important thing".

"The whole aim of the club is to encourage football at every age group and make it accessible to all parts of the community. Everybody should be encouraged to find their own level and to get enjoyment from the game. The girls' and ladies' section continues to grow and the walking football has been hugely successful. There are other areas of the community that I would like to look at expanding to, in terms of involving them in football, and perhaps we can examine these when the new committee members find their feet".

A born and bred 'honest man' of Ayr, Alistair moved to Linlithgow when he was married in 2006. He met his wife when they were both working for RBS

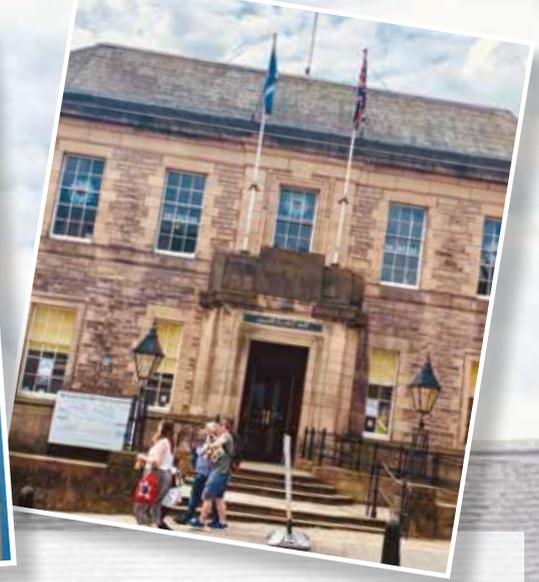
in Edinburgh, and they were attracted to Linlithgow because of its wonderful environment and reputation as a great place to raise a family. They live near Linlithgow Bridge Primary School, where Alistair coaches the very successful football teams. He is a keen runner and also travels regularly with his young son to watch Ayr United.

Like his predecessors, Alistair takes great pride in seeing the numbers of boys and girls around the town dressed in the maroon Community Club kit. *"There is an identity there and a feeling of community",* he says, *"and that fosters high standards".*

He is also greatly encouraged to see boys and girls, after their own games on a Saturday, going along to support the senior Rose FC, still in their kit. Alistair is very keen to further develop the already strong links between the two organisations and is greatly encouraged by recent developments, such as having Community Club players as mascots at senior Rose games.

**Murdoch
Kennedy**





ONWARDS AND UPWARDS FOR NEW MUSEUM

FAIR
14
Sept

Helen MacKenzie

Three months on from the opening of the new Linlithgow Museum and the team behind the project could not be happier with the results.

“Our visitor figures have increased a lot: we broke our season average a while back and then some!” says **Willie Morrison, Chair of the Linlithgow Heritage Trust**, the charity that runs the new museum. *“Taking the figures to the end of July, we are now running over 30% ahead of our whole season average for Annet House.”*

Willie puts the increase down partly to the museum’s new central location, which has not only increased the number of locals popping in, but has also made the museum more visible to coach parties being dropped off at the Cross.

“We have also just launched our new website and our volunteers are putting great effort into advertising the museum online and on social media,” adds Willie. *“Our community engagement programme has made a massive difference too.”*

The museum has run a number of community projects since it opened its doors on 19th April. Many of these involved local primary schools, whose pupils not only co-curated a display in the museum’s community space, but also created animations and took part in drama workshops and singer/songwriter projects.

The schools programme is set to continue in the new school year, with a project planned on the Second World War,

which will tie in to the Curriculum for Excellence. Other school events are in the pipeline too.

Adult engagement is also a priority for the museum. As part of this, the museum’s new **Community Coordinator, Julia Branch**, is working on five different reminiscence ideas, to be announced shortly. She is also organising an oral history project, looking at the brewing industry and social drinking in West Lothian. Volunteers are required, so if you are willing to share your memories of the distilleries, breweries and pubs in Linlithgow, then please get in touch!

On top of this, new displays are planned for the community space. **The Embroiderers’ Guild** is in the middle of preparing a display to celebrate its 25th anniversary, while other community groups have been in touch too. This means that the community cases should change every few months, giving repeat visitors something to look out for.

In addition, a series of **Winter Talks** is under development, following on from the success of a sell-out talk by **Hector Woodhouse and Norman Cummings**, on ‘Memories of the Marches’. Three new talks have been scheduled so far: for September, October and November.

The first of these, sponsored by Mill Lane Motors, Linlithgow, is a talk by Dr Callum Watson of the Bannockburn Centre. Callum is a Doctor of late medieval Scottish history and recently appeared on the Neil Oliver “Rise of the Clans” series. His talk, entitled *“Putting Linlithgow in its place - Linlithgow as a focus for Royal Activity in late medieval Scotland”*, will take place at 7pm on

Thursday 26th September at St Peters Church on the High Street. Tickets are £5 and can be bought from the museum. Tea and coffee will be served.

The museum is also taking part in the Doors Open Days, making the weekend of 14th and 15th September a big one for the museum’s volunteers. This is because 14th September is also the date of one of the museum’s major fundraising events: Linlithgow’s Autumn Antique, Vintage & Collectors Fair.

The Fair will be held at Linlithgow Academy on 14th September between 9am and 4pm. Tickets cost £1 at the door, with no charge for accompanied children under 14. Parking is free and The Coffee Neuk will be running a pop up café, supplying hot and cold food all day. Tea, coffee, soft drinks and home baking will also be available to buy.

“The money raised by the Fair is vital to help cover our running costs,” says Willie. *“It will help us run more projects, reach out to more groups and explain the history of Linlithgow to more people than ever before.”*



The Showcase is sponsored
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**YOUTH FESTIVAL
SHOWCASE.**

**MUSIC SESSIONS AT
SELECTED VENUES.**

FORTH STREET.

ST ROCH'S CEILI BAND.

BENEDICT MORRIS.

NORA DEVINE STAGE.

**SONGS & REELS
AT THE ROSE.**

**EMILY SMITH AND
JAMIE MCCLENNAN.**



from
11 to 15
SEPT

**YOUNG MUSICIANS TO THE FORE
AT MILESTONE FOLK FESTIVAL.**

LINLITHGOW FOLK FESTIVAL



The twentieth anniversary Linlithgow Folk Festival gets underway on Wednesday September 11th and the organisers have put together a packed programme for this milestone year.

Young musicians will be very much to the fore at the annual celebration of traditional music, dance and song in the Royal Burgh, which runs from the 11th to the 15th of September. Events will include the third staging of Songs and Reels at the Rose in the Rose Club, this year featuring the BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, Benedict Morris.

The amazing duo, Emily Smith and Jamie McClelland, will be headlining the festival and making a welcome return to Linlithgow.

Multi award-winning Scottish singer Emily Smith and New Zealand born songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Jamie McClelland have been making music together for over fifteen years. Having spent much of 2016 off the road (with Emily on maternity leave), the couple took time off to focus on writing new material. The fruits of their labours were two albums, the first of which Unplugged was released in April 2018. Unplugged features ten tracks, with seven previously unrecorded songs, including three preview tracks to their studio album coming out later this year.

The duo's new sound features originals by Jamie and reworked traditional material from Scotland and New Zealand, drawing on influences from the Folk tradition, Americana and beyond. With rich vocal harmonies, accordion, fiddle and sublime guitar backing, they are one of the most vibrant duos on the UK Folk scene today.

Currently touring under the name, Smith & McClelland, Emily and Jamie's Linlithgow concert on Friday September 13th will take place at the Rose Social Club on Braehead Road. They will be supported by FORTH STREET, a young seven-piece band who met at the Tolbooth traditional music classes in Stirling.

Linlithgow Folk Festival is firmly established on the traditional music scene and all the mainstay events will take place again. These include the musical cruises on the canal, the family ceilidh at the Vennel, the Hub at the Masonic Hall, the Bluegrass Concert and Gospel Session, and the outdoor Nora Devine Stage at the Cross. Among the whole variety of acts appearing on the 2019 Nora Devine Stage on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September will be the famous St Roch's Ceili Band from Glasgow.

The Festival has a tremendous reputation for encouraging and nurturing budding musicians and singers and the popular Youth Showcase will take place again this year at the St Michael's Kirk Hall. This event gives young performers under the age of eighteen the opportunity to perform right at the heart of the festival.

Full details of the Folk Festival programme can be found in the 12-page Folk Festival guide. Copies are available in local outlets. A comprehensive run down also appears on the Facebook page and on the website: www.linlithgowfolk.com.



EMILY SMITH AND JAMIE MCCLELLAN

A FEAST OF FOLK AT THE ROSE...

SONGS & REELS AT THE ROSE.

THURS 12TH SEP BENEDICT MORRIS
Featuring Benedict Morris, Pablo Lafuente and Ryan Murphy - three of the most exciting young musicians on the traditional music scene. Benedict Morris is the current BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year.
£8.00 at the door
8pm - 10.15pm. Doors open at 7.15pm.

FRI 13TH SEP EMILY SMITH AND JAMIE MCCLELLAN
The headline Festival concert will take place on Friday September 13th and will see the brilliant duo Emily Smith and Jamie McClelland, make a welcome return to Linlithgow. They will be supported by Forth Street, a young seven-piece band.
£12.00 at the door
7.30pm - 10.15pm. Doors open at 7pm.

SAT 14TH SEP OKEFENOKEE REUNION BAND
A special Bluegrass concert by the Okefenokee Reunion Band. They helped to establish the very strong Bluegrass element at the local Folk Festival and the organisers are delighted to welcome them back.
£10.00 at the door
8pm - 10.15pm. Doors open at 7.15pm.

Tickets online at: www.linlithgowfolk.yapsody.com
£10 at the door. Check Facebook for details.
Tickets also available at Far From The Madding Crowd, 20 High Street.

This event is proudly supported by the Black Bitch Community Magazine



A FEAST OF FOLK AT THE ROSE CLUB

sell-out performances on their Scotland/Ireland tour. Benedict is also the fiddle player alongside five times World Champion Irish dancer, **David Deaney**, in his show Velocity, which recently set Broadway alight, earning several five-star reviews.

Since being named as the **BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year**, one of Benedict's new projects has been a trio with **BBC Radio Two**

Folk Award winners, **Pablo Lafuente and Ryan Murphy**. They are currently working on an album, which will be released later this year.

traditional music classes in Stirling. With musicianship rivalling many of the top young acts on the Scottish Folk scene today, the band's youthful energy centres on the music traditions of the Stirlingshire area and beyond. Already making a fantastic reputation for themselves, they are only going to get better and better.

The headline concert will start at 7.30pm and tickets, priced £12, are available through the usual outlets.

THE FEAST OF FOLK AT THE ROSE CLUB

continues on Saturday September 14th with a special Bluegrass concert by the **Okefenokee Reunion Band**.

Sat 14 Sept

Forty years ago, there was very little knowledge of Bluegrass music in Scotland. Today, there is a thriving scene, with many great players. The

Okefenokee Band were pioneers for Bluegrass music in Scotland, if not the whole UK. They played at many events throughout the country, but then retired due to other commitments. When they decided to start playing again six years ago, they chose Linlithgow, because their first professional gig had been at the old Linlithgow Folk Club. They helped to establish the very strong Bluegrass element at the local Folk Festival and the organisers are delighted to welcome them back.

The Bluegrass Concert starts at 8pm on Saturday September 14th. Tickets are £10, available at the door and through the usual outlets.

The Linlithgow Folk Festival takes place from 11th to 15th of September.

2019 year marks the 20th anniversary and in an exciting new development, all the major concert events will take place in the Rose Social Club on Braehead Road.

The Feast of Folk at the Rose Club gets underway on Thursday 12th September with the third staging of **SONGS AND REELS AT THE ROSE**.

Thur 12 Sept

This year's event will feature **Benedict Morris, Pablo Lafuente and Ryan Murphy** - three of the most

exciting young musicians on the traditional music scene.

Benedict Morris, the current BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year, is making a huge name for himself, both at home and abroad.

He is currently part of a duo with Belfast-born guitarist, **Cormac Crummey (Bene & Cormac)**. Their debut album Wavelength was released in November 2018, when they enjoyed

SONGS AND REELS AT THE ROSE is proudly sponsored by the Black Bitch Community Magazine and gets underway at 8pm on Thursday September 12th. **Tickets are £8 at the door and can also be bought at Far from The Madding Crowd at 20 High Street.** Online booking is available through linlithgowfolk.yapsody.com



Fri 13 Sept

The headline Festival concert will take place on Friday September 13th and will see the **brilliant duo, Emily Smith and Jamie McClelland, make a welcome return to Linlithgow.** They will be supported by **Forth Street**, a young seven-piece band who met at the Tolbooth

Murdoch Kennedy





WHAT'S ON AT THE ROSE...

OPEN 7 DAYS

>> SAT 5 OCT

Three Course Dinner/ Cabaret Show, with Nicolas McDonald & Claire -Emma 7.30-12.30. £25pp

>> SAT 23 NOV

Top band Flipside (Malcolm Dougal & Dougie Orr) plus Chloe Foston (Carpeneters tribute) Three Course Dinner 7.30-1am. £25pp

Full Session Bingo at 8pm on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings. Live entertainment every Saturday and Sunday evening.

DOMINO COMPETITIONS on Wednesday afternoons

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Birthdays, Anniversaries and, for sadder days, Funeral Teas.

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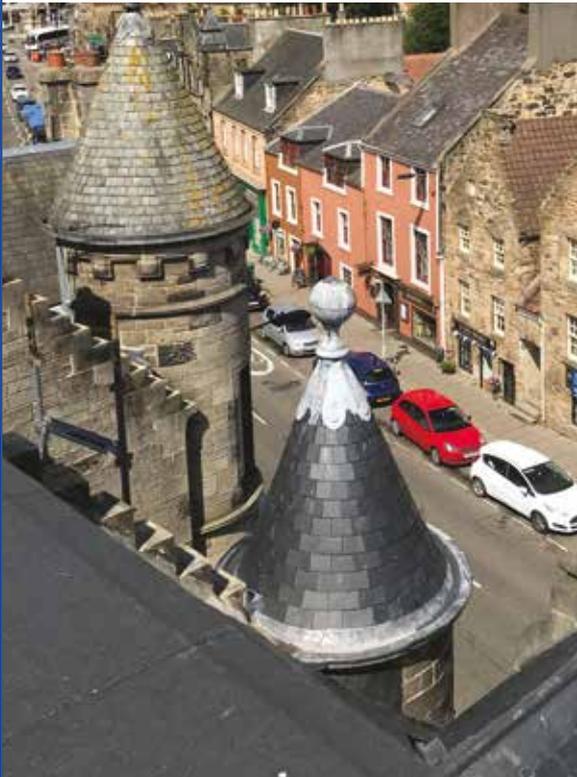
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XMAS 2019 AT THE ROSE

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JOIN US AT THE ROSE...

Family get togethers, groups of friends, office or work part - Linlithgow Rose provides you with a superb Christmas Party.

Dinner 7pm for 7.30pm. Carriages at 1am. Advanced Bookings - Tables will be reserved. Cost: £35 per person, (£20 non-refundable deposit required at time of booking. Balance by 30th Nov. Vegetarian and Special dietary needs can be catered for - please state when booking.

December 2019 Christmas Party Night Dates:

Saturday 7 December

SAFFRON, The elegant Saffron returns with her Motown Songbook and tribute to Diana Ross & Whitney Houston.

Mike Munro - Real Diamond Experience, Mike's excellent guitar work and superb sound and light show has travelled the UK and abroad showcasing his Neil Diamond tribute.

Friday 13 December

Johnny Lee Memphis - Elvis Relive the magic of Elvis as the award winning Johnny Lee Memphis presents his ultimate Elvis Show.

David John, Solo international artist - who has worked alongside producers Maddscientist, Heavy D, The Boys and 50 cent. He really is Mr Fantastic and a great entertainer.

Saturday 14 December

Trina Milne - Little Miss Diva Show A musical journey that includes comedy, big songs and will be sure to rekindle some memories.

Robert T Leonard - Tom Jones, It's show time with the authentic and vocally accurate tribute to the legend Sir Tom Jones.

Saturday 21 December

2 course Hot Supper Party £25 per person, **THE MIMICS Scotland's Premier Comedy Tribute Show** featuring hilarious impersonations that will have you in hysterics.

Monday 23 December

The ever popular Afternoon Party 1.30pm - 9pm. Xmas Lunch, Show & Tea Time Buffet £37 per person. **Nicholas McDonald West Lothian's very own X Factor Finalist. Joe Camay** The hilarious comedian. **Scotland's Finest! DYNAMIX Brilliant Duo.**

Hogmanay Bash

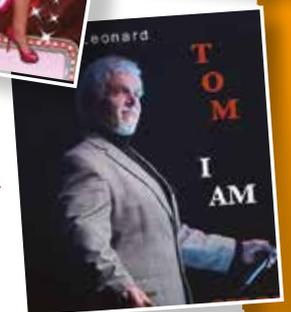
Tuesday 31 December

9pm - 2am

Traditional Scottish Hogmanay with music from 'THE HOMELANDERS' Scottish Piper leading upto 'the Bells' & Disco after 'the Bells' until 2am.

Admission by Ticket Only: £17 (includes Buffet).

ENJOY XMAS AT THE ROSE



Christmas Party Night Menu 2019

Homemade Lentil Soup
Farmhouse Pate with Oatcakes
Fresh Melon

Prime Roast Silverside of Beef
Roast Breast of Turkey with Festive trimmings
Homemade Steak Pie

All served with seasonal vegetables and potatoes

Peach Melba
Chef's selection of Gateau
Homemade Trifle
Tea & Coffee

Special dietary needs can be catered for - please state when booking.
All main meal options to be pre-ordered.



Linlithgow Gears Up for Active Travel Festival

On Saturday 31st August make your way to the Old Library at The Vennel for Linlithgow's first ever active travel festival – a celebration of all things walking, cycling and more. Organised by Transition Linlithgow, the Festival is kindly supported by Paths for All and The Climate Challenge Fund.

Running between 10am and 3pm, come along and take part in the wide range of fun, free activities, suitable for all ages. From a pedal powered scalextric set, where kids and grown-ups can challenge each other to see who can set the quickest lap of the day; to using pedal power to whip up a delicious smoothie on the smoothie bike.

Those over the age of 14 can have a free go on an electric bike, to experience the fun and ease of power assisted cycling.

Between 10am and 2:30pm bring along your adult or kids bike and let First Step's Dr Bike safety check your bike for free for you, and carry out minor repairs. If you're keen to learn how to do it yourself, come along at either 11:15am or 1:45pm where a mechanic from First Step will be demonstrating how to carry out minor bike repairs, such as how to fix a puncture.

It's not just about bikes – if walking is more your thing, then come and take part in a free guided Nordic Walk. Walking with poles in this way works out your whole body – not just your legs. Kay, the walk leader, will provide you with the poles and all the guidance you need before heading out on a guided walk along a section of Linlithgow Loch at 10:30am and 12pm. Not sure if it's for you? If you can walk - you can Nordic walk!

As well as the activities on offer, a variety of organisations will have stalls on the day, offering advice and support on walking, cycling and using public transport. These include Paths for All, Home Energy Scotland, Spokes, EasyGo Bikes, First Bus, Lothian Buses, Ageing Well at Xcite, and Cycling UK. There will also be lots of fun activities for kids to take part in, and free face painting too.

When you're done, you can put your feet up in our pop-up café, where Transition Linlithgow will be serving tea, coffee, soft drink and cake.

Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council (LLBCC) will also be holding a public consultation at 11am where you can come along and share your views on access to Linlithgow railway station, and any improvements you would like to see being made.

For more details call 01506 844182 or email contact@transitionlinlithgow.org.uk



Wendy Graham



Lochside Playgroup

Lochside Playgroup has been providing quality child care in Linlithgow since 1972. We provide a caring and stimulating environment where preschool children can feel safe, secure and happy.



Here are some of the benefits of attending our Playgroup:

Develop confidence

By spending time away from family and having fun through play, children can begin to explore the world outside their familiar surroundings and develop their confidence and independence. Each session has a maximum of twelve children, two paid staff members and two parent volunteers to ensure there is time available to ease the adjustment to the group and attend to your child's needs.

Learn new skills

Everyday is different at Lochside Playgroup! Activities, crafts, toys and books are rotated to ensure there is plenty of variety and stimulation for children's interests. There are also plenty of opportunities to practise life skills such as washing their hands, eating and drinking independently and listening to instructions from other grown ups.

Prepare for Nursery

For many children, playgroup may be their first experience of coming together in a group situation without their parents or carers. Lochside Playgroup is an excellent way to bridge the gap before children start nursery at 3 years old and ease the transition into the nursery setting.

Make new friends

Your child will begin to recognise their new friends and may even meet future nursery and school friends here too. We also welcome parents and caregivers to feel involved in the care and education of their child by joining the parent rota.

Develop social skills

Lochside Playgroup allows children to learn and practice important social skills that will aid their play and help transition into nursery. Skills such as taking turns, listening to instruction from staff and playing with other children are practised every day.

Establish routine

Each session follows a gentle routine of play, stimulating activities, snack, reading, movement and singing. The routine provides children with security to feel safe, relax and have fun. Attending Playgroup once or twice a week can also provide a great balance to the weekly routine.

Me time!

We understand the complexities in balancing childcare with other commitments such as other children, work and a never ending to do list! We also recognise that looking after an energetic toddler for a full day is a lot to ask of your family support. That's why we are uniquely placed as the only playgroup in Linlithgow to offer families 2.5 hours of childcare per day, Monday to Thursday, providing a great balance for families, stay at home parents, caregivers or grandparents.

Children can join the playgroup when they are 27 months. Sessions run Monday to Thursday 9:15am till 11:45am with a choice of one or two days, depending on availability. Each session is £8.50 per child including a healthy snack, paid monthly or by term. The playgroup follows the school term dates set by West Lothian Council. If you would like to register your child on our waiting list, please email lochsideplaygroup@yahoo.com

Lochside Playgroup Open Day will be held on Monday 26th August 9:30am till 11:30am at Low Port Centre. Please come along with your little ones to see the playgroup and speak with our staff.

Laura Newman



DOORS OPEN DAYS HAVE A LOOK INSIDE THE COUNTY'S BUILDINGS!

The weekend of 14/15 September 2019 will see the annual **Doors Open Days** event taking place in and around Linlithgow, and throughout West Lothian.

Doors Open Days forms part of Scotland's contribution to European Heritage Days, which sees over 25 million people from 50 countries take part annually, uniting our communities in a unique celebration of heritage in our own special ways.

Doors Open Days is now Scotland's largest free cultural festival. It celebrates the built environment and gives free access to around 1,000 venues across the country throughout the month of September, every year.

Doors Open Days is coordinated nationally by the Scottish Civic Trust with annual support from

Historic Environment Scotland and others. Local area programmes are co-ordinated by a network of local authorities, heritage consultancies, civic societies and heritage groups who are in turn supported by a large number of volunteers, businesses, community organisations and building owners.

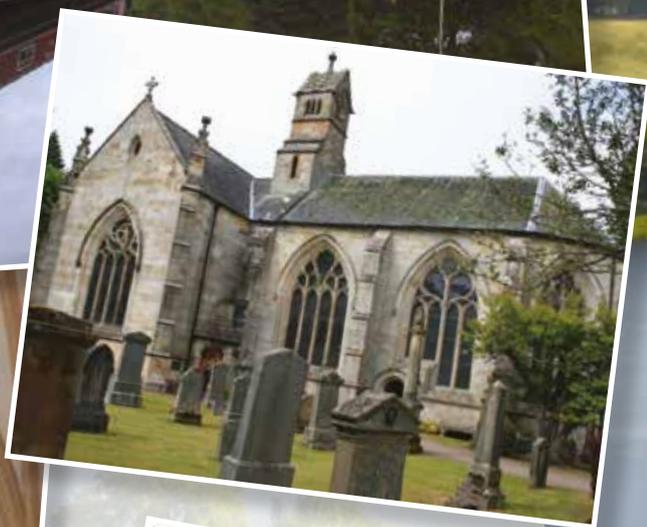
Linlithgow Civic Trust has organised West Lothian's Doors Open Days since 2011 and are proud to be doing so once more in 2019. We have a varied programme again this year.

There are a few of the regular participants this year including the **Crossview Studios and the Canal Centre in Linlithgow, Duntarvie Castle near Winchburgh and a number of ecclesiastical properties in and around Linlithgow including St Michael's Parish Church, Abercorn Parish Church and Kingscavil Church.**

Blackburn House in Bathgate makes a welcome return, as do Strathbrock St Machan's and Strathbrock St Nicholas' Churches in Uphall. Donaldson's in Linlithgow also returns to the programme.

There is also the new **Linlithgow Museum, opened in Easter 2019 having moved from Annet House to the new Tam Dalyell House (aka Linlithgow Partnership Centre) a short distance along the High Street. The dramatic 1960s Boghall Parish Church in Bathgate and the more traditional Category A Listed Kirk of Calder in Mid Calder are also back in the programme this year.**

Copies of the programme for West Lothian have been distributed in a number of venues around Linlithgow and throughout West Lothian. Pick one up and hopefully it will inspire you to take part. The programme can also be



downloaded from the Linlithgow Civic Trust Doors Open Days website at <https://lbt.scot/civic-trust>.

Please note that this year the Doors Open Days event in West Lothian coincides, as it often does, with the Linlithgow Folk Festival event. The overlap has been mutually advantageous – well exemplified on sunny afternoons when building visitors have mingled with the audiences at the various music sessions.

Coincidentally, the Doors Open Days event is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and Linlithgow Folk Festival is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Now if that is not an excuse for a cultural celebration I don't know what is!

For more details about the activities of the Scottish Civic Trust then visit <http://www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk/>.

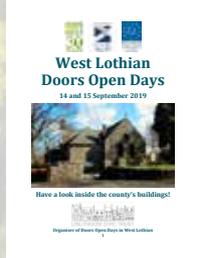
For more details on the activities of Linlithgow Civic Trust then visit <http://lbt.scot/civic-trust>. Linlithgow Civic Trust is part of Linlithgow Burgh Trust. Linlithgow Burgh Trust is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Scottish Charity No. SC047211).

Allan M Robertson

Linlithgow Civic Trust and West Lothian Doors Open Day Co-ordinator
E: perambulation@lbt.scot



open
14/15
Sept





LINLITHGOW GOLF CLUB

Attracting youngsters of all ages into the club

The recent call from the hierarchy of Scottish golf - echoed in other sports - has been “do all you can to get more youngsters involved.”

But at Linlithgow Golf Club they’ve been adopting this philosophy for some time, with the club doubling its junior membership in the last year.

The club is not resting on its laurels however, and is keen to get the message out that the club has an “open door” approach, and would welcome more members of all ages - and the community at large to its excellent clubhouse, which boasts stunning views over the course and beyond.

Liam Maguire, the club’s vice-captain, said everyone involved with the club wanted to see it shed any “elitist” image it might still have in the eyes of some locals.

“It’s a misconception, and really couldn’t be further from the truth. We pride ourselves on being a friendly and welcoming club.”

“Whilst we are obviously keen to attract more playing members, we offer a social membership at a minimal cost.”

Liam said the club had very much an “open to all” approach, and locals were welcome to call in and sample the fare at the clubhouse, or use its facilities in other ways.

“But what we want above all is attract youngsters of all ages into the club. We have a Club Golf scheme which provides weekly coaching for school pupils - I’m one of the volunteer coaches - and we’ve introduced weekly nine-hole medals so all our junior members have the chance to play competitive golf.”



Central to all that was happening at the club was the young club professional, **Calum Lawson**, who joined the club a year ago from Gleneagles, where he was the head teaching professional.

Added Liam, *“As well as being a first class coach, he has tremendous enthusiasm, and is proving a real hit with the youngsters.”*

Calum said that one of his main aims was to attract more younger players, and he was enjoying seeing the success of this push.

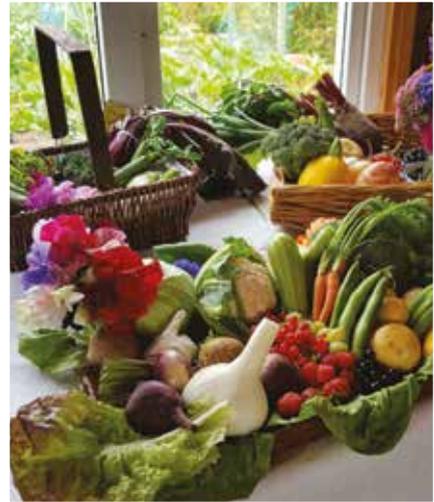
He added, *“I couldn’t agree more with what Liam said about getting rid of any “elitist” image we might have. And at £25 for a year’s membership for an 8-10 year-old, I don’t think we are pricing out youngsters from taking up golf.”*

John Smith



T. 01506 842585
www.linlithgowgolf.co.uk

Linlithgow and District Allotment Society (LADAS)



Oakwell allotments

Oakwell allotments has an elected committee, which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the allotment including the organisation of various events and carrying out periodic plot inspections. An annual general meeting is held in March each year.

We have a community hut, which as well as providing shelter from rain showers, is used for events such as our Gardeners' Question Time and competitions such as Pick of your Plot, Best Fruit or Vegetable and Best Baking using produce from your plot (no oranges or bananas!). It is also popular with children, whom we welcome to the allotment under the supervision of their parents or guardians.

There is a composting toilet and there are several standpipes for water, although it is a condition of tenancy that plot holders must harvest rainwater on their plot.

We have five wheelbarrows stored in the community hut which plot holders are welcome to use. From time to time woodchip is delivered to the site which can be used for creating paths. Each year we make a bulk order for seeds, fruit bushes, gardening accessories etc. from Kings Seeds under the National Allotment Society scheme. There is also a bulk order from Garden Solutions for compost and manure.

Members are granted a 10 percent discount on gardening items from the New Hopetoun Garden Centre on production of their membership and discount cards, which are made available to members.

One of the intangible benefits of Oakwell allotments is that there are great views over the northern part of West Lothian. It is increasingly being recognised that gardening and having an allotment is not just good for your physical health by providing gentle exercise in the open air but is also good for your mental wellbeing. Many plot holders have commented on how the allotment enables them to "get away from it all" and relax.

The plot sizes at Oakwell allotment range from 60 to 240 square metres. There is a waiting list for vacant plots at Oakwell Allotments near Philpstoun, West Lothian. If you are interested in having a plot you should contact our Membership Secretary, Ian Harkness, via our website on <https://linlithgowallotments.org.uk> and ask to be added to the waiting list.



Ours is not very long, unlike some of the Edinburgh allotments; I recently heard that someone at the Inverleith allotments had finally been successful in obtaining a plot after spending 13 years on the waiting list. It is a condition that to be granted a plot you must either live within a five miles radius of Linlithgow or have some other attachment, for example by working in the area.

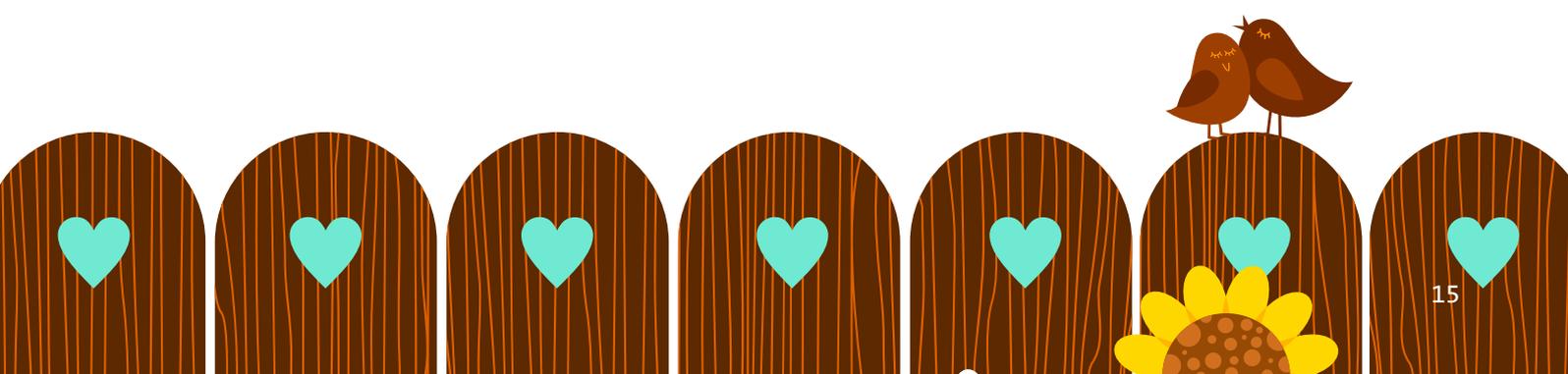
Harvest Celebrations

We held our 2019 Harvest Celebrations on Sunday, 28 June.

The weather forecast had been good for the day but, unfortunately, there were several heavy downpours.

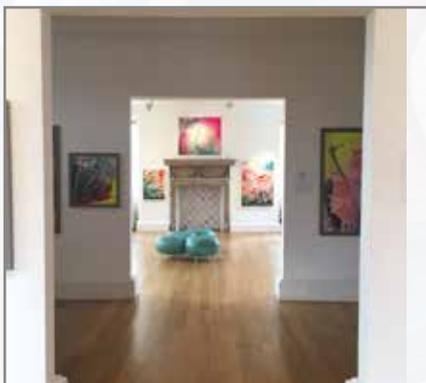
This did not dampen our spirits as we put up the gazebo to provide some shelter from the rain, the barbecue went ahead as planned, the judging of the best plots and produce was carried out and everybody seemed to have an enjoyable time.

Paul Taylor, Chair, Linlithgow and District Allotment Society (LADAS)



THE ARTS

I don't usually have space in my Arts page to write in detail about anything, but this time I'm hoping that a bit more detail about the current exhibition at the **Burgh Halls Gallery** might entice a few of you to visit this very vibrant and colourful exhibition. Appropriately titled "Coming Alive", this new body of work by Edinburgh-based artist Alice Boyle, has been created since the birth of her son in 2017. For many years she has sketched following her daily meditation routine, creating odd and often distorted creatures that come streaming to mind as soon as her pencil hits the paper. She then began to bring these characters to life – 'unborn creatures that are filled with all the same fears, passions and flaws as anyone else' she commented.



Inspired by the power of dreams, mythology and the collective unconscious she uses textures, vivid colours, shapes, symbols and layering techniques, aiming to stimulate the senses. Working with layers of plaster she makes spontaneous marks with various utensils giving her work a 3D

"COMING ALIVE IN LINLITHGOW"

quality. Many of the pieces may remind you of primitive cave drawings, and there's a naiveness to these pieces that may appeal to children. Give it a go – it's free.



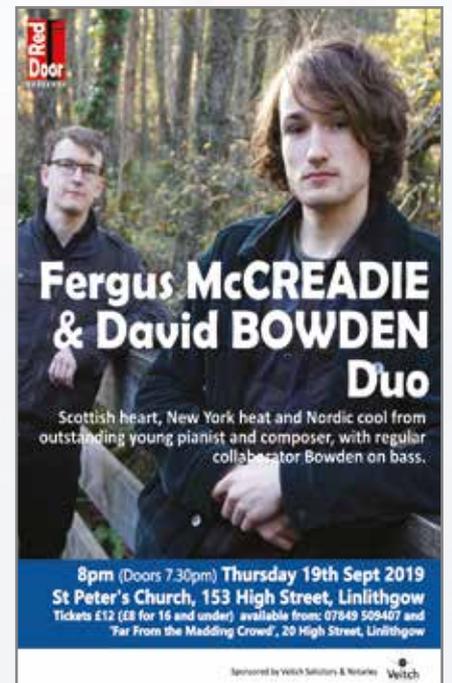
I was pleased to see that there were prints for sale at this exhibition, making the art more affordable for those who cannot afford originals.

Alice Boyle will share her thoughts on her journey of becoming an artist and the alternative route she took to do what, makes her, 'Feel Alive'. The talk is on Thursday 19 September from 6.30-7.30pm. Tickets, including tea/coffee and biscuits, are £5 per person. Booking essential on 01506 282720. The exhibition runs till October.



The Line Gallery

While in the mood, why not pop into The Line Gallery to see their latest exhibition. Ruth Nicol's current series of work, "Leith in Spring", promises to be colourful too, but with some images that you may recognise from trips to Edinburgh. It's on until 24 September.



Linlithgow Arts Guild & Linlithgow Film Society

It's that time of year when many organisations start their new session – there's still time to join Linlithgow Arts Guild or Linlithgow Film Society for a regular culture fix. Or if you can't commit to that why not try Linlithgow Jazz or Red Door events occasionally. The dates for Red Door are 19 September, 25 October and 7, 23 and 28 November. The first event, jazz piano with Fergus McCreadie accompanied on double bass by David Bowden sounds intriguing - Scottish heart, New York heat and Nordic cool!

Linlithgow Folk Festival & LAMP

Folk Festival tickets are now on sale, and tickets go on sale for the October LAMP production of Betty Blue Eyes, on 2 September.

Floral Art club & Embroiderers' Guild

If floral or textile art might be your thing why not join the local Floral Art club or Embroiderers' Guild - contacts are Anne Matthews on 842939 for floral art and linlithgowdistrictchair@embroiderersguild.co.uk for textile art/embroidery. If books are your thing Linlithgow Literary Lunches resume in September, and Far From the Madding Crowd have events lined up. Lots of things to think about.

Linlithgow Pottery

Finally, if you fancy treating yourself to some art but have little wall space left, why not go to the Linlithgow Pottery on the High Street. They are making room for their new range of pottery, glazes and sculptures (have you seen the hares?), with an end of summer clear out sale, running until all of the older pieces are gone.

Please do keep in touch so that I know what's going on - patswan@virginmedia.com. I hope you have time to experience some ART this month.



Pat Swan

patswan@virginmedia.com.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I dream my painting and paint my dream"

ART OUTINGS PORTOBELLO

ART WALK PARTY TAKES PLACE FROM 7-15 SEPTEMBER

I'm recommending something this time that I've never experienced but it's been on the to do list for some time.

Art Walk Party takes place from 7-15 September at Portobello. It's a community-based art event which involves art in houses/studios, art in shops, walks, film nights, artists installations in charity shop windows and generally 10 days of art everywhere. The website has lots of information and there are kids' activities too. End the summer with an arty trip to the beach.

BOOK REVIEW FIXED ODDS

WILLIAM MCINTYRE

Local author William McIntyre has produced the next instalment of the Robbie Munro crime series and, as is becoming usual for defence lawyer Robbie, it's an interesting mix of investigative cases vying for his attention in direct conflict with events unfolding in his personal life. Writer McIntyre clearly has a wealth of material at his fingertips, drawn from his own acclaimed career as a partner in a leading Scottish law firm, and by his own admission he embellishes on one of these in this novel.

In this, the fifth book in the Best Defence series, we find Robbie on the brink of fatherhood juggling an ever-busy home life with untangling the web of mystery that oft goes hand in hand with the world of crime. As ever, Robbie is perfectly flawed in his meanders

through life, and all the more endearing for it. His trademark wit, dry humour and observations are firmly in place with a few more shrewd observations from McIntyre's seemingly never ending supply.

"She's a pickpocket and a thief," I said. "She's not a murderer".

[...]Shannon had been caught with a pair of nine-inch scissors in her bag and we'd run a defence that she was training to be a hairdresser, and therefore had good reason to have them in her possession.

[...]Well I could hardly have you say she kept them in her handbag for cutting the price-tags off designer goods," I said.

Robbie is juggling seemingly juxtaposing cases with the only common thread being his clients, or witnesses, are less than forthcoming with their

assistance. On the one hand he is attempting to get to the bottom of a mysterious burglary where nothing is officially reported stolen yet harm seems to befall those who may know too much while on the other he finds himself unexpectedly thrust into the media glare of a high profile results fixing case representing the accused, snooker champion Oscar 'The Showman' Bowman.

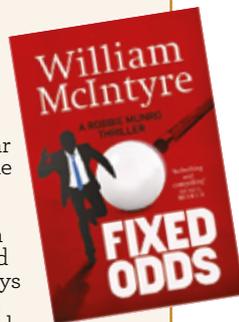
To the casual reader it is always interesting to gain an insight into any area of expertise for the author and McIntyre certainly follows the adage of 'write about what you know'. In addition to following Robbie's thought processes and investigations as they unfold we also get an opportunity to take a peek inside the courtroom and the psychological prowess and technique that underpins the esteemed role of the lawyer. It is here we find Robbie at his most creative and inventive with his observations sharp and reflexes fast. McIntyre also introduces a few new courtroom characters in this novel who must surely become adversaries in later instalments.

We will have to wait to find out.

Although the main focus of this novel is on the cases that Robbie is investigating it is satisfying for regular readers following the series to gain an insight into family life, with updates on Robbie's nearest and dearest and, as always providing their own blend of humour and insight into the cases he is covering. Readers familiar with Linlithgow and the surrounding areas will also enjoy trying to geographically pinpoint the path of Robbie's investigation trail.

Fixed Odds is a page-turner of a novel and contains a healthy dose of suspense, action and drama that will keep readers hooked until the very last page.

Lisa Nettleton
Lisa Nettleton is a teacher who lives in Linlithgow and enjoys reading on her daily rail commute into Edinburgh.





ONE LINLITHGOW BALLOT

Businesses the length and breadth of Linlithgow are beginning to take part in a crucial ballot, whose outcome will have a significant impact on the wider community as well as the businesses themselves.

The proposed One Linlithgow Business Improvement District (BID) would bring together the existing Town Centre and Mill Road BIDs, which are in their final few days after being voted in five years ago.

It would be the first BID in Scotland to marry up two existing BIDs, so after a successful ballot, other towns would look to the progressive, inclusive example we set. In addition, the One Linlithgow Steering Group

has extended the area significantly to bring in a mix of businesses of all types and sizes into the fold.

The existing BIDs, through an annual contribution paid by all members, and council funding, have achieved a lot.

We have contributed every year for the upkeep of the floral displays in the town centre. We have paid for business signage in both the town centre and Mill Road and distributed many fake-note and security kits.

Over £6,000 has been given away under the Linlithgow Town Centre Loyalty Lottery - all spent in the town. In addition, Mill Road now has CCTV and automatic number plate recognition, with a state-of-the-art town centre system about to become operational.

Without continued investment in Linlithgow, budget cuts at West Lothian Council mean there will only be limited funding available in future - many things we take for granted will disappear.

There would be no funding for the floral displays, no further business signage, no LED lights at Christmas, no CCTV, no business improvement grants, and no support for community groups.

We are excited about the future a YES vote would open up, and now await the outcome of the ballot with confidence.



PRAISE FOR ONE LINLITHGOW

One Linlithgow aims to do exactly what it says on the tin: unify the historic burgh and, through collaboration, deliver improvements for businesses, tourism, and locals through a range of initiatives.

There can be no better way to demonstrate the widespread support for the five-year project than by reflecting the enthusiasm among local businesses and other enterprises - not members of either of the current BIDs - to be part of it.

One of those is **Katie Hainey**, manager of Sainsbury's at Stockbridge Retail Park.

"Sainsbury's has always had a strong sense of social, environmental and economic responsibility, and an understanding that our success depends on society's success."

"With this in mind, I am pleased to support the One Linlithgow BID. It is only through working in partnership that we can continue to promote Linlithgow as a safe, clean and welcoming town for both local people and tourists alike. This will ensure the town and it's businesses continue to flourish."

Katie's views on partnership have been echoed by someone representing a totally different kind of organisation.



Liam Maguire, vice-captain of Linlithgow Golf Club, said the club had warmly embraced the chance to be part of One Linlithgow:

"We are 100% committed to do all we can to play a greater role in the local community. We see it as a key to getting more people, particularly youngsters, playing golf!"

Liam said it went much deeper than that, however, for all those involved in the club.

"By everyone working together it will be force that can deliver so much good for the whole town, and give a boost to Linlithgow as a tourist destination. It will be a force for good - for us it's a no-brainer."



TESTIMONIALS



"I'm all for One Linlithgow – the existing BID has been great for the High Street, and has certainly been very supportive and helpful to us since we opened. Even the

little things like the fake note kits are really appreciated. I very much hope we have a new BID for the whole town to continue helping bodies like the marvellous Burgh Beautiful, and keeping very worthwhile projects like the festive lighting going."

Catherine Lawrie, owner,
Du Vin Bouchers (High Street)

"When we took over our first premises, we had never been part of a BID before so we were curious as to what it was and if it would benefit our business. We discovered that the CCTV had been paid for by the BID contributions. We signed up to various training courses – including certified emergency aid training,

which was crucial for our business, and used the BID Improvement Grant to help us install internal CCTV and an entry system.



Sally is fantastic and keeps us constantly updated. We hope that as long as we remain in Mill Road that the BID will continue in the form of One Linlithgow."

Alyson Jamieson, co-owner, Linlithgow Distillery (Mill Road)

"Linlithgow Town Centre BID has certainly benefited me as a start-up business with the help it gave for improvements, and advice was always on hand. CCTV will be a huge improvement, and all that has been done improving the Christmas lights. I would



hate to see anything like this not being able to continue, or other potential benefits put at risk because we don't get a new BID."

Grant McMartin, owner, Mac's Sweets & Ice Cream (The Vennel)

"I'm firmly in favour of One Linlithgow and its objectives. I believe it supports retailers large and small, and its continued support will help ensure Linlithgow continues to thrive and develop, while retaining its unique character."

Drew Waldie, Manager, Tesco (Regent Centre)



MILL ROAD BID



Some summer!

Hopefully you have all enjoyed some sort of summer (regardless of the weather!). Mill Road BID has been busy preparing for the One Linlithgow ballot involving the whole town! At the same time, I have been finalising some Mill Road projects. We have now received the quotes for a lovely solid fence along the back of the estate between the motorway and the estate.

This should improve safety and security and remove the visible element and access from the motorway side.

What a lot of rubbish!

On some of my walks around the estate I have counted EIGHT different waste collection companies... that's a lot of vehicles in and out each week! So, to help improve the traffic in the estate, reduce costs for businesses and do our bit for the environment, we are working on a centralised waste contract. If this is something you would be interested in please take some time to answer some questions about waste for your business by using the following link:
<http://bit.ly/BIDJULY>



Sally McIntosh-Anderson
sally.anderson@linlithgowmillroadbid.com



DID WE TELL YOU EARLIER THAT GARDENING IS GOOD FOR YOU?

You may have heard that Lesley and I have transferred a majority holding of our shares in the garden centre to our wonderful team under an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT). Having nurtured our 'baby' for 40 years we didn't want to see it disappear and we wanted to guarantee future jobs for our team and not let down our loyal and delightful customers. At the same time we wanted to work a little less to give us more time to do all the other things we keep promising ourselves!



We will still be working at New Hopetoun Gardens for the next five years or so, but putting in less hours... a gentle run down to retirement. Our team can do all the jobs we do, but perhaps they'll let us pick and choose a bit which ones we'd prefer to do? Our fellow director Morag Macrae, pictured here with us, will be the main leader of the team. Gardening has certainly been very good to us over the last 40 years!



Spending a bit more time at home, especially in the garden is high on our list of priorities. We opened our garden again this summer for the charity Perennial – the Gardeners Royal Benevolent Society. Amazingly we had a dry day, with rain falling all around us and Morag, Tim and Jacqueline helped us with garden tours and catering, raising more than £1000 for the charity. Dougal has another two years chairing the charity which helps all those working in horticulture and their families in times of need.



Making some 'me' time is really important for all of us and Lesley loves to immerse herself in our houseplants with a good book, and Henry the cat of course. Many of the plants are really effective in removing pollutants from the air we breathe as well as looking really stylish. It is now well understood that being immersed in plants is good for all of us and green is a really effective colour for calming us all down.



Our final thought this month is to encourage you to have at least one last session in your garden before you shut down for the winter. Autumn is a great time for planting as the ground is warm and damp, ideal for getting new plants established before the winter and being ready to perform next Spring. We have an offer of free plant food when you spend £35 or more on garden plants this autumn to encourage you to get out into the garden.

Dougal Philip and Lesley Watson,
New Hopetoun Gardens

so much more
than just a
garden centre

www.newhopetoungardens.co.uk

NEW
HOPETOUN
GARDENS

AUTUMN PLANTING OFFER!
FREE BONEMEAL PLANT FOOD WHEN SPENDING
£35 OR MORE ON GARDEN PLANTS
IN SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER
AUTUMN IS THE BEST TIME TO PLANT!

THE THIN BLUE LINE IN LINLITHGOW



Constable Neil Hunter and Constable Andrew Murray are the two community officers based in Linlithgow Police station, which is now located within the newly refurbished Tam Dalyell House at Linlithgow Partnership Centre, High Street, Linlithgow.

We are keen to get involved in local community issues and want to hear your views and opinions on these issues. We will be publishing an article in the magazine every edition, covering ongoing community issues which we are keen to address within the ward.

There is also a public assistance desk at the station, which is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

POLICE SURGERIES

To find details of future Linlithgow Community Police Surgeries, please log onto [West Lothian Police Facebook page](#), [Linlithgow Facebook Page](#) or [Neighbourhood Watch Scotland](#) for future dates or alternatively check local press for details.

The public is invited to drop by, meet their local officers and chat through any concerns they have or highlight any areas they feel we should be giving further attention to. Alternatively if you want to discuss an issue, which may require more privacy, arrangements can be made to speak with you at another time at a police station or your home address. Alternatively you can email the Constables at - LinlithgowCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk
If we don't know then we can't fix it!

CALLING ALL LINLITHGOW PARENTS

Do you know where your children are in the evenings???

We have received several reports of large groups of young persons frequenting the "lagoon" area in the old quarry to the west of Avontoun Park with many being dropped off in the area by their parents.

There have been several thefts of wheelie bins reported and set on fire. Also numerous smashed alcohol bottles and lots of discarded cans in the area. There are also concerns about their personal safety whilst intoxicated in the area.

This behaviour is having a negative impact on the local community and there are also concerns regarding the personal safety of those involved.

Can parents please ensure that they are aware of their children's whereabouts and ensure that this worrying trend does not escalate.

The police would encourage parents to have an open discussion with their children, as to where they are going and what they are doing when out with friends in the evenings and check the contents of their bags/rucksacks.

Active parenting skills are required, to challenge and check on their children's whereabouts and encourage young people to make good decisions,

focusing on keeping young people and communities safe.

SHUT OUT SCAMMERS



It's never easy to spot a bogus caller, anyone can be a victim of household scams. Be wary of cold callers at the door, on the phone and when online. Help is out there, here are details of a few of the services available:-

Free message alerts from key info providers www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Want advice on your consumer rights? Go to your local Citizens Advice Bureau or call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 164 6000.

Are you a victim or witness to a crime looking for free confidential support call 0800 160 1985? To report a matter to Trading Standards call 0808 164 6000.

HOLIDAY HOME SECURITY

Almost half of all housebreakings occur when a flat or house is empty. Here are a few tips of things you can do before you go on your holidays:

- > Make sure your home looks occupied. Ideally ask a trusted friend or neighbour to look after it (collect mail, water plants, feed pets). Let them have the spare keys but don't put your name and address on the keys.
 - > Do not publicise your holiday on social media before or whilst you are away, it's not just friends and family that can view this.
 - > Don't leave your curtains closed in the daytime as this shows the house is empty. Use automatic switches to turn your lights on when it gets dark.
 - > Cancel regular deliveries such as newspapers or milk.
 - > Avoid discussing holiday plans where strangers may hear details of your absence from home.
 - > Cut the lawn before you go and trim back any plants that burglars could hide behind.
 - > Uncollected mail is a sign that you are away.
 - > The Royal Mail's "Keepsafe" service will keep your mail for up to two months while away.
 - > Consider leaving important documents and valuable items with other family members or a bank. Or lock them in a safe.
 - > If you normally leave valuable pedal cycles or similar items in your shed, consider putting them in the house.
 - > Finally, don't forget to lock all external doors and windows. If you have a burglar alarm, make sure it is set.
 - > Just before you set off, it's worth spending a couple of minutes checking that you've done all you had to do and taken everything you need with you.
- Oh and don't forget your passport and tickets and remember to have a great holiday!!!

PARKING IN LINLITHGOW

Police Scotland are disappointed to report that despite numerous appeals to the residents that inconsiderate parking is still

continuing to blight the High Street and surrounding streets.

Despite previous articles highlighting the congestion on the High Street, the selfish attitudes of drivers who wish to flout the parking restrictions that are currently in place to save themselves walking short distances or a few minutes continues.

Should the attitudes of these drivers continue then action will be taken against them. Please as a resident of Linlithgow if you do need to drive please do not be a selfish motorist, park legally and adhere to the parking restriction signs.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCOTLAND

We would like to take this opportunity to increase public awareness of the existence of **Neighbourhood Watch Scotland and their Alert system**. Police Scotland is one of many partnership agencies who are working alongside Neighbourhood Watch Scotland in order to develop and promote the Alert system.



This system allows users to receive alerts from Neighbourhood Watch and Police Scotland. Police Scotland can send an alert to all users who may be effected or who may have an interest in the crime. Scheme is used to alert the public about:

- > Crime Trends – recent crimes that have occurred in their area, housebreakings etc.
- > Missing Persons – Details of High Risk missing persons can be broadcast to specific areas.

Members of the public can register online. [Register at https://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk](https://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk) And follow the link to JOIN

SUMMER SECURITY

Ensure that cars are locked. Do not leave valuables in view within your vehicle. Ensure garden tools are put away and garden sheds are locked. Encourage your children to put their bikes away at night in shed or garage with lock applied.

101 101 is the new number to contact the police when it's less urgent than 999.

101 makes the police more accessible & reduces pressure on the 999 system.

You can get more advice on a range of topics on the Police Scotland website.

Alternatively you can email LinlithgowCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk or pop into the station and ask to speak to our Community officers, **PC's Murray and Hunter**.

Regards,
Your Local Community Police – Linlithgow
Website: www.scotland.police.uk
Twitter: [@policescotland](https://twitter.com/policescotland)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/policescotland



Sustainable eating and drinking

Lucy Purbrick



You might be surprised to know that what you eat and drink has a major impact on the planet. The way we farm, how far food travels, and its packaging all contribute - making sustainable eating and drinking appear a nightmare. But with a little adaptation of our daily habits anyone can make a difference.

First and foremost: reducing plastic, which the food and drink industry uses in copious amounts. Here are ten top tips to make tackling plastic pollution from Linlithgow easy:

1. Do some research into the different types of plastic, and how recyclable they are. Plastic recycling is a bit of a minefield as only certain types of plastic are recyclable and packaging isn't always clear on this.
2. Before recycling plastic, give it a quick rinse - otherwise it will be seen as contaminated and therefore not be recycled.
3. Instead of a pre-packaged lunch, try bringing a packed lunch. Sandwich boxes or any tub of the right size does the job well.
4. Don't forget a water bottle when you're out and about. Investing in a keep cup for hot drinks is also a saviour.
5. Whilst on the subject of drinks - either refuse plastic straws or carry a reusable one (bamboo is what we use but metal and glass are also popular)
6. If you want to enjoy an ice-cream then make sure to buy a cone, not a tub.

7. Similarly, a can rather than a bottle of juice is much better, as it can be fully recycled and back on the shelf in just twenty four days.
8. Bring your own bags whenever you shop for groceries. A couple of net produce bags are worth investing in for buying loose produce.
9. Look for options at the shops which have the least packaging/plastic.
10. If you buy fish or seafood, make sure it is MSC certified as sustainable - these fisheries don't allow ghost netting (abandoning fishing gear), which makes up 10% of ocean plastic.

Secondly, to help the planet, some people have recently become vegan. A year ago, my family introduced one vegetarian day a week and we are really enjoying trying so many new dishes which are tasty, fun to cook and healthy. So whether you want to go vegan, do what my family does, or anything in between, remember that whatever you can do can ease the stress on our planet's resources.

Finally, I'd like to draw your attention to the thriving local businesses in Linlithgow. Buying your food from them not only helps the local economy - it helps the planet. These shops often have less or no plastic packaging - from brown paper bags for bread to kale in a package made of seaweed. Local produce also has fewer food miles, lowering its carbon footprint. The producers will often be glad to tell you about what they sell. And to top it off, you can get exact quantities, minimising waste.

Overall I hope you'll challenge yourself to make at least one of these small changes in your daily life in Linlithgow.



LUCY PURBRICK BIO:

I am 17 years old and I'm in 6th year at Linlithgow Academy. I am passionate about wildlife, conservation and eco-living. I hope to study Zoology and to have a career in conservation so in the meantime, I do volunteer work with the RSPB, the Scottish Ornithologists' Club and storytime at 11am most Saturdays in Far From the Madding Crowd.

"LINLITHGOW LIVES"

If you have enjoyed Bruce Jamieson's articles on local history you will be glad to hear that he is about to bring out a full colour volume of some of the articles which appeared in the Black Bitch along with some new, specially researched and written features.

The book will be called "Linlithgow Lives" – a play on words, for the volume will feature both the lives of many residents, past and present, and will reflect the fact that Linlithgow does indeed live – through its rich history and fascinating heritage.

The book will seek to interest the reader in Linlithgow's colourful past and to answer some of the questions often posed by residents and visitors alike: why is the town's emblem a black greyhound; was a special viewing aperture created for lepers to view inside St Michael's Church; what happened to the town's oldest school; who is the Baron Baillie of Blackness; what is the tall, pointed monument on the hillside above the town; did Queen Victoria ever visit Linlithgow; who was Katie Wearie; which

Linlithgow minister lost two daughters to ice and fire; what was produced in Nobel's Regent Factory; what is the story behind some of Linlithgow's famous pubs?

These and many other local history topics are covered in the book's fully illustrated 48 pages. Generous sponsorship from two local businessmen, Alan Steel and Calum Paterson, and the expertise of designer Chris Hamilton, has enabled the full colour volume to be produced at the excellent price of £7.99

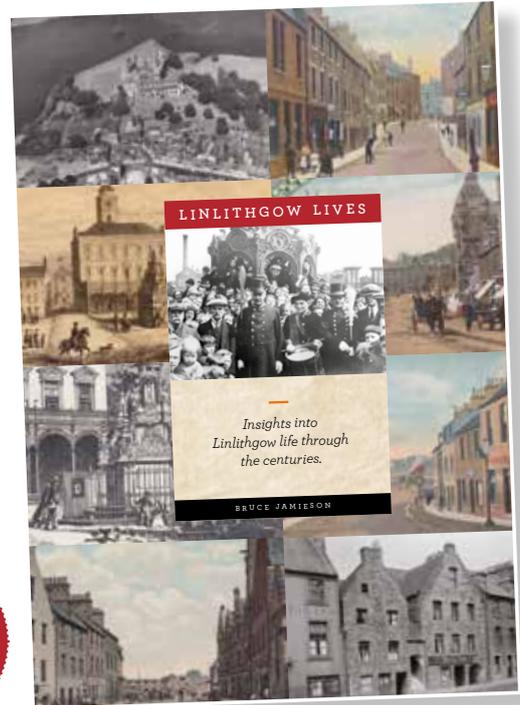
The book will be launched on Saturday, October 26th at a signing session in "Far From The Madding Crowd" (11am - 2pm) and at an illustrated lecture that same evening in St Peter's Church at 7pm.

Thereafter copies of the book will be available in "Madding Crowd", the Linlithgow Museum and Linlithgow Post Office.

£7.99

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LINLITHGOW ACADEMY INAUGURAL SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS



Whilst racing is enjoyed by many it is recognised that not everyone wants to take this path. Some are interested in being able to ski very well and to maintain their fitness. From the start of the new school term we will be offering Dry Land Ski Training (skiDLT) for Cluster Club secondary pupils and also children in P7. The sessions will take place at the Academy on Wednesdays from 4pm.

We have also started organising an assistant ski instructor course, to be held at Polmonthill. Level 1 of the course is open to 14-16 year olds who have been graded Polmonthill ski level 10 or higher. As part of the course they must learn how to teach skiing to others and to complete and pass a first aid course. The first group of Academy pupils have just passed their first aid qualification from the British Association of Ski Patrollers and will be working on their ski grading in readiness for the level 1 course. This will be held at the end of September and will be carried out over two days following which the candidates will have a period of time in which to fill out a log book of tasks, shadow instructors and have supervised delivery of lessons. The assistant instructors will eventually be helping with the Friday afternoon Primary Cluster lessons. Polmonthill will be the first club to deliver this new course. An examination takes place once all candidates are ready to be assessed. For Level 2, candidates must be a minimum of 16 years of age and on successful completion of the course they will be able to teach anywhere in the UK.

We are hoping to run these courses once or twice yearly depending on demand.

For further information please contact either Julia Miller at julia@enterpriseplus.com or Fiona Maxwell at feemaxwell@outlook.com.

Julia Miller and Fiona Maxwell



The team championships were attended by Linlithgow Academy, The Braes, Wallace High and Kilgraston. Teams of three skiers competed in dual slalom races for a magnificent trophy, which was donated by Polmonthill Snowsports Club. All medal winners were also presented with boot bags kindly donated by Craigdon. All teams had a fantastic day; many of those competing had never entered a ski race before but all enjoyed the experience. The results of the competition were as follows: Running a ski race is not as simple as it might look and we are indebted to Angela Anderson of the Glencoe Ski Club for her invaluable training session on how to run a ski race.

DUAL SLALOM RACES

GOLD
LINLITHGOW ACADEMY A

SILVER
LINLITHGOW ACADEMY B

BRONZE
WALLACE HIGH

Linlithgow Academy is looking forward to hosting next year's competition and pupils will be training hard over the coming months as they endeavour to retain the cup.

The general level of skiing amongst those taking part has taken a huge leap over the past 1-2 years. Gary Todd, the race coach, has introduced a benchmarking system whereby participants can track their progress. Twice yearly, participants ski down 2 types of set course, which are the same every time, and their times are recorded. As the skill and experience of the skiers increases then their time to ski the courses should shorten.

To complement the benchmarking, Gary has also started using a system of exercises called Skillsquest to help skiers improve their agility on the slopes. Each exercise is carried out and a score out of 10 awarded – thus leaving plenty of scope for improvement. Skillsquest was developed by the US ski and snowboard association and, as with the timed runs, Gary schedules in 2 of these sessions each year.

Towards the end of the summer term, after the stress of the exams, Linlithgow Academy skiers took to the slope at Polmonthill for their inaugural Ski Championships. In the individual section skiers were tested over two different types of course. The first was a slalom course, which has more turns and is technically harder. The second course was a giant slalom, which is much straighter and faster. Each competitor was allowed three runs on each course and their fastest times on each were added together to determine the winners. Many thanks to Specsavers Linlithgow for donating vouchers for polarised sunglasses, which were presented to the fastest boy and fastest girl, and to Craigdon Mountain Sports, Edinburgh, for donating race poles for the runners-up. Craigdon also supplied a fantastic new presentation podium.

INDIVIDUAL MALE

GOLD
Gordon Maxwell S3

SILVER
Struan Duncan S5

BRONZE
Ruaridh Duncan S3

INDIVIDUAL FEMALE

GOLD
Freya Lamont S2

SILVER
Leah Cameron S3

BRONZE
Sylvana Donaldson S2

ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT, COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE AND HAVING FUN!



Sunflower Entries

Have you grown sunflowers and coped with slugs and the vagaries of the weather? Have you grown a beautiful specimen or is it still growing?

Why not email a photo to bbl.comp@lbt.scot. Let us know the height of your sunflower, the ages of those involved. Is it a team effort or solo? And why should it get an award: for being the tallest, smallest, funniest... potentially the most pathetic? Some participants had early maturing flowers of considerable girth while others were less successful and either sadly blown over or eaten by slugs. Not defeated by such challenges then perhaps you too deserve a certificate to be presented at Burgh Beautiful's Autumn Fair. Do send in a photo with details. Email bbl.comp@lbt.scot or deliver to 29 Highfield Crescent, EH49 7BG by 21 September.



Autumn Fair - Saturday 28 September from 10am - 12.30 in St Michael's Kirk Hall

Come and see the display of Sunflower photos and the award of certificates at noon. Guess the number of sunflower seeds in a jar or the weight of a decapitated head!

There will be tea, coffee, juice and lovely home-baking plus Burgh Beautiful merchandise and jams and chutneys. Come and learn more about

- > *A Vision for Trees in Linlithgow;*
- > *Linlithgow Primary Schools' Mosaic Project relating to Climate Change*

It will be the last opportunity to buy Christmas cards designed by S1 Linlithgow Academy pupils for Burgh Beautiful.

Family Friendly environmental events

Friday 27 September 2pm - 4pm at the Cycle Ramp between the Union Canal and Leisure Centre

This involves clearing back and removing summer vegetation so that next year's flowers can flourish in unimproved soil. Have you noticed how careful management is increasing the diversity particularly on the uppermost triangle?

It is thrilling to see how a relatively uncommon plant, the beautiful pink Corncockle is making a come back and migrating from stony edging to stony edging. It is now producing substantial plants after the first year's rather pathetic specimens. The scattering of Yellow rattle seeds is also helping to reduce the amount of grass which can squeeze out wildflowers. Drop in for part of the time, improve your plant identification and help with the cutting back. **Wear sensible shoes and bring gardening gloves.**

Contributed by Roger Livermore and members of Burgh Beautiful Environment Working Group

Sunday 1 December from 10am - 12 at The Triangle by the Union Canal, west of the Leisure Centre

A big tree planting event is planned as this area of waste land is gradually made more interesting for wildlife and walkers alike.



Already the eastern boundary has been marked with a dozen standard trees, mainly sycamore but 400 small native saplings have been donated by the Woodland Trust and Alba Trees. These include hawthorn

and hazel, rowan and briar rose, oak and birch. The community is invited to help with their planting. Come and join in the fun and make a difference.

Note the date in your diary now!

WJM Linlithgow 10k - Pressed for Choice

Right: S3 pupils Esther Begarnie, Kinloch Law and overall winner Hannah Peachey (in centre).

Bottom: Previous winners Douglas Pascal and Lousie Murray show off the T-shirt printing press.



The competition to decide the design for this year's WJM Linlithgow 10k T-shirt has once again been hosted by the Craft, Design and Technology department in Linlithgow Academy. This year however there has been a little twist as, rather than providing final samples on paper, the finalists have been able to produce their designs directly on to a T-shirt. This was made possible as, after a few highly successful years, Linlithgow Athletic Club chose to donate a T-shirt press to the school. For those of a technical persuasion the model, chosen by the school, was a MosaicAL All in One T-Shirt Heat Press Machine.

This year around 140 entries were submitted and with so many great designs the 10k committee had a challenge to whittle this

down to a shortlist of 10 after which the first round of voting was carried out to determine the 3 finalists. The designs by Esther Begarnie, Kinloch Law and Hannah Peachey (all of whom are S3 for 2019/2020) came out as the top 3 and they were invited to put the finishing touches to their designs and printing them out through the MosaicAL press before final judging took place.

As previously stated, this was the first year that the pupils had been able to produce the actual T-shirt rather than a pictorial representation and this added a new dimension to the competition. All 3 T-shirts were considered exceptional in their own right but it was Hannah's design that was chosen as the winner and which has since gone into production.

Linlithgow Athletic Club would like to thank

the school for hosting the competition and the pupils for their creative designs.

If you would like to sport one of the T-shirts then please feel free to enter the WJM Linlithgow 10k, to be held on 6th October via <https://www.entrycentral.com/WJM-Linlithgow-10k>.

The Junior Fun Run will be held as usual on the same day, with entries available via <https://www.entrycentral.com/WJM-Linlithgow-Junior-Fun-Run>.

Volunteers are need to support both events. If you would like to be part of the team please e-mail in to linlithgow10k@virginmedia.com.



Graeme Lawson
Race Director, Linlithgow 10k



SING IN THE CITY

We are Sing in the City and the newest of our 16 choirs across Edinburgh, Fife and The Lothians started 5 months ago in the Linlithgow area. We meet in Bridgend Community Centre on Thursday evenings 7pm - 9pm and we are always looking to welcome new members. We currently have over 60 people who come and enjoy singing in a warm welcoming environment whilst enjoying all the social and health benefits that come along with singing. We have no auditions and absolutely everyone is welcome. If you enjoy singing that is all that counts. We don't use sheet music and many of our members have not sung since they were in school.

There is a big social and community aspect to our choirs and in the last 9 years we have raised over £110,000 for local Scottish charities through our shows, busks, choir cake bakes and other fundraising events such as The Edinburgh Marathon, abseiling off the Forth Rail Bridge and The Edinburgh Canal Raft Race to name a few.

There is nothing to lose by coming along for an evening and giving it a try because a trial night is absolutely free - the members are very welcoming and the emphasis is on having fun as well as being a great choir. We cover songs from all decades and genres so there really is something for everyone.

For more information please take a look at our website www.singinthe-city.com or

email: hello@singinthe-city.com to book in for a free trial night.

Elaine Dove,
Manager, Sing in the City
www.singinthe-city.com



LINLITHGOW PLAYERS

PLAYS AND WINE

Following last year's highly successful (and sold out), Plays and Wine evenings, The Linlithgow Players return to "tread the boards" this autumn, on Friday and Saturday, the 11th and 12th of October at Linlithgow Primary School.

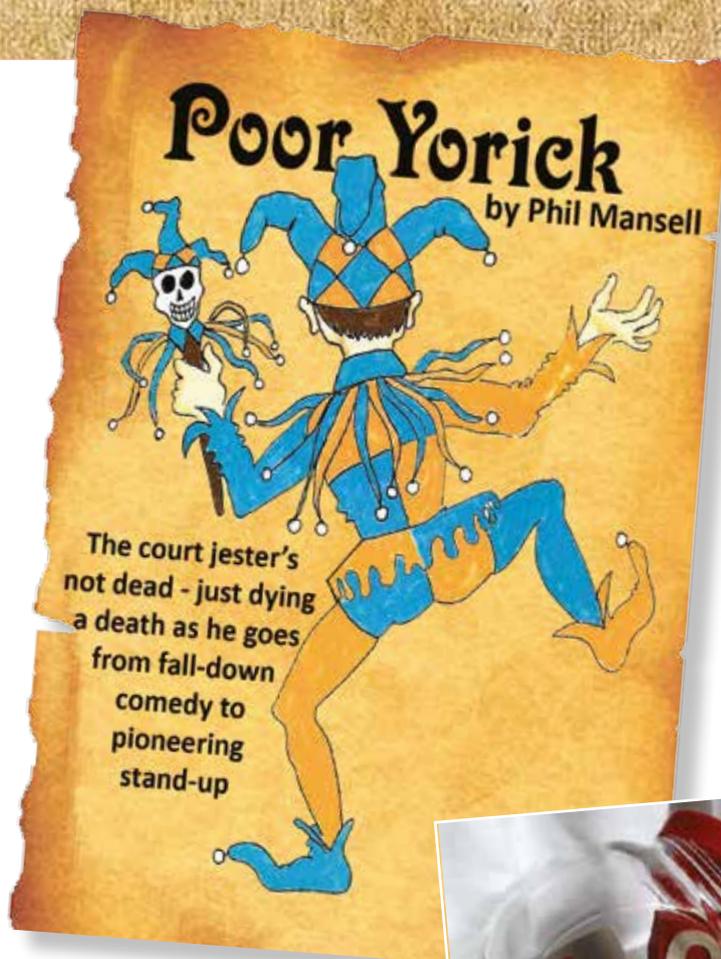
During these extremely sociable, popular and fun filled nights, the Players will entertain you with two One Act plays, written by the award-winning playwrights, Phil Mansell and Nancy Harris, along with a handful of sketches. While the laughs and drama flow from the stage, the audience sit around candle-lit tables, feasting on cheese, biscuits and nibbles. We'll even throw in a free drink. A licensed bar is on hand if one drink does not suffice.

If you think you couldn't possibly afford a night out like that, then let me ask you, how does £10 sound!?

In **Poor Yorick**, (by Phil Mansell), despite rumours to the contrary, Yorick, Hamlet's favourite jester, is not dead – in fact, he's on the road dying a death as he pioneers a new kind of comedy called "stand-up". When this fails, he is persuaded by his tavern wench girlfriend, Bess, to return to Elsinore and get his old job back.

But upon his return, he finds there have been many changes, and quickly becomes embroiled in Hamlet's ridiculous plans for revenge upon Claudius the king, with comic results.

Poor Yorick was a winning entry in a competition run as part of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Open Stages project in 2015, however a knowledge of the Bard, and his works, is not necessary to enjoy this riotous comedy.



Fri, Sat
11, 12
OCT

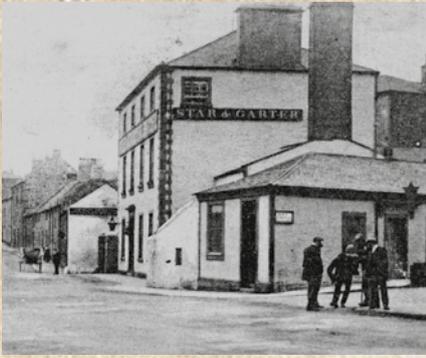
In **Love in a Glass Jar** (a comedy drama by Nancy Harris), two strangers, Eve and Patrick, have agreed to meet face to face in a hotel room outside Dublin having found each other on a dating website. But all is not as it might seem. The dynamic between them shifts and flows with sometimes painful but often comic results as they struggle to come to terms with their loneliness, each other and what Eve wants from Patrick.

However, while Patrick obfuscates and procrastinates, Eve would really just like him to get down to business!



Tickets are available from Far From the Madding Crowd, from our website www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk, or can be reserved by phoning 07847 735077. Doors open at 7pm for a 7:30pm start.





THE STAR AND GARTER HOTEL

Bruce Jamieson

The address Number 1, High Street, Linlithgow, is a prestigious one - and it has been home for over 170 years to the establishment known as "The Star and Garter". The building began life in 1759 as a private residence - a stately, Georgian mansion, consisting of six bedrooms and a grand ballroom. The building was initially in the possession of the Drummond family and it is their engraved marriage lintel which is now embedded into the wall to the left of the courtyard entrance.



The Drummond marriage lintel - perhaps from the original 18th century building.

In the early 19th century, it came into the hands of John Boyd of Woodside, an estate owner near Kingscavil and a local lawyer.



John Wood's map of 1820 shows John Boyd's property and Writing Chambers.

Boyd was involved in crucial events during his 11 years as Provost of Linlithgow. He officiated at the public hanging at the Cross of Ralph Woodness; he witnessed the construction of the Union Canal and the removal of the old stone crown from St. Michael's Church. Boyd was a

confirmed Tory but in 1829 he was replaced as provost by an equally steadfast Whig in the form of local distiller Adam Dawson. Boyd refused to attend Dawson's first Marches in 1830 and was duly fined the £100 Scots laid down by statute.

The enmity between the two gentlemen continued. In a Court of Session hearing in 1832, Boyd was accused by Provost Dawson of slandering him at a meeting in "Brown's Inn" when he called him "a liar, a known liar and an infamous liar". Boyd was successfully sued for £50.

The next bone of contention was the coming of the Edinburgh to Glasgow Railway. Dawson was in favour as he saw the benefits to industry whereas Boyd was opposed - pointing out that the construction of the tracks would destroy the garden behind his property. At the ensuing enquiry it was noted that "Mr Boyd's house is valued at £4000 and the proposed work would reduce that value." Boyd's complaint was turned down and not long afterwards the railway opened. Past Provost Boyd quickly sold his house and it became a railway hotel, ideally situated to offer accommodation and onward transport to users of the railway.

An 1847 invoice shows the inn belonging to James Burleigh who, in addition to running the hotel, also hired out Gigs, Droskies (four-wheeled carriages) and Job and Post Horses, kept in the adjoining stables.



An 1847 invoice for the newly named "Star and Garter Hotel."

In the 1860s, the building came into the hands of the Whitten family, one of whom, 'Innkeeper John Whitten' is buried beneath an elaborate headstone in the graveyard of St Michael's Church. A relative of the family, Sheriff Whitten, left a sum of money in his will to build an elaborate, wrought iron fountain outside the hotel.

Other 19th century publicans included John Maddox whose invoices advertised "Wines, Carriages and Post Horses" and T. M. Woodcock who was a great supporter of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt which regularly met outside his inn.



A meeting of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt - showing the stables on the left.

The group would also hold their Hunt Ball in 'The Star and Garter'. One such dinner in April, 1856, saw 80 members sitting down under the chairmanship of Major Sharp of Houston to pay tribute to the Master of the Hounds, Captain James Sandilands. It must have made a glorious show with everyone attending dressed in regulation attire of "white waistcoat, over-worn with blue coat with black velvet, turn-down collars and yellow buttons embossed with the letters LSH." If anyone turned up wearing the wrong dress code they were fined a gallon of best claret!



Linlithgow Band in 1891 at the Star and Garter. Note the 'heraldic' lamp bearing the Star's emblems - the motifs of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

Mr Woodcock declared in a Marches Programme of 1899 that his establishment possessed "First Class bedrooms, a commodious bar and a billiard room." Under his charge, the hotel hosted many local events including wedding receptions, church gatherings, political meetings and social occasions. While his business flourished, unfortunately Mr Woodcock's own health failed and on account of gout and rheumatism, he was obliged to accompany the hunt riding in his dog cart.



An invoice from Innkeeper Woodcock to the Town Council who dined after a visit to Lochcote Reservoir.

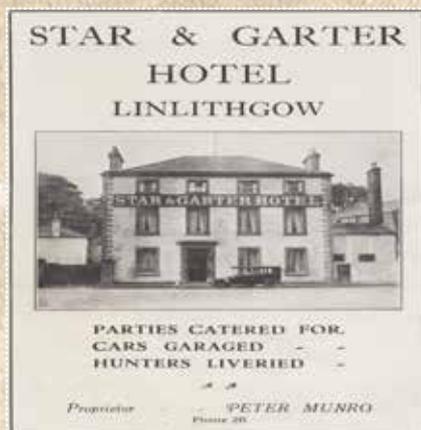
The hostelry continued to host many local events such as the annual Linlithgow Burns Club suppers.



An invitation to the 1909 Linlithgow Burns Supper

By 1921, the Star and Garter was being run by Mrs V. M'Minn, a widowed lady who advertised in that year's Marches Programme that she would give "every comfort and attention to all customers at moderate charges."

In the 1930s and 40s, the hostelry was run by publicans such as George Ebbs, Peter Munro and then the legendary "Miffy" Boyd. No one seemed to know his real name - he was always "Miffy" - apparently after a well known, 1920s, cartoon character. He was a tiny man, but a huge character: a town councillor with one abiding passion - the provision of a good water supply for the burgh. His lively personality attracted many organisations to hold their functions in the Star, including the Curling Club, the Bowling Club, the Cricket Club, and the Conservative Association.



An advert when Peter Munro was manager.

The hotel was then purchased by the Pearce family with Ronnie, the son of the original owners, running the pub in the 50s and early 60s. He was a well-liked figure in the town, a keen cricketer who played for the County team. Under his control, the public bar acquired some unusual, mock-Tudor beams and the lounge bar was equipped with a carpet bearing gaudy, golden trumpets.

In the mid 1960s, the Star became the property of local character, and town councillor, David Bryce, a "generous landlord" who held many excellent social gatherings on the premises. The "back lounge" became a favourite haunt of members of local groups such as, in 1970, the newly formed Linlithgow Rugby Club.

In 1975, the new owner, Hugh Keenan, did away with the old back room and in came a new restaurant called "El Rancho". Upstairs, "Bowlers Discotheque" emerged - an attraction to many of the younger members of the community.

The Star was to change hands again in the late twentieth and in the early twenty-first century - being owned firstly by a syndicate which also ran the Kaim Park Hotel in Bathgate and then by Bill Atkinson who upgraded all 15 bedrooms, consequently being awarded a three star rating from "Visit Scotland".

The adjoining public bar was sold off separately - firstly to a syndicate which included John Robertson, the Hearts and Scotland football player, and then to Ian Gibson who called it "Platform 3" (there already being two platforms in the nearby railway station.)

In the early hours of Friday, 15th October, 2010 disaster struck the 250 year old building when it caught fire. Over fifty firemen with ten engines attended the scene of the blaze which closed the High Street and the train station. By midday, all that was left of the place were the four, badly damaged walls. The interior had been completely destroyed by fire and water.



The Star in flames in October, 2010.

After lying derelict for many months, a local trust was formed to attempt to raise interest in restoring the building. Eventually, the building was bought by local property developer Ross Wilkie and his childhood friend David Kennedy. It was so badly damaged, they were able to buy it for just £160,000. However, it took them another £800,000 before they could open up in 2014. In time, they too sold it on and it is now in the hands of the Manorview Group - the new owners of an iconic building with a long and glorious history.

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyor (RICS), regularly surveys its members for their opinion on predicted future levels of transactions and price movements, and the most recent survey showed that the South East of England showed the weakest sentiment. Virtually all parts of the UK are expected to see some uplift in prices in the year ahead, but at the other end of the scale contributors in Scotland, the North West and the West Midlands returned the strongest expectation for house price growth over the next twelve months.

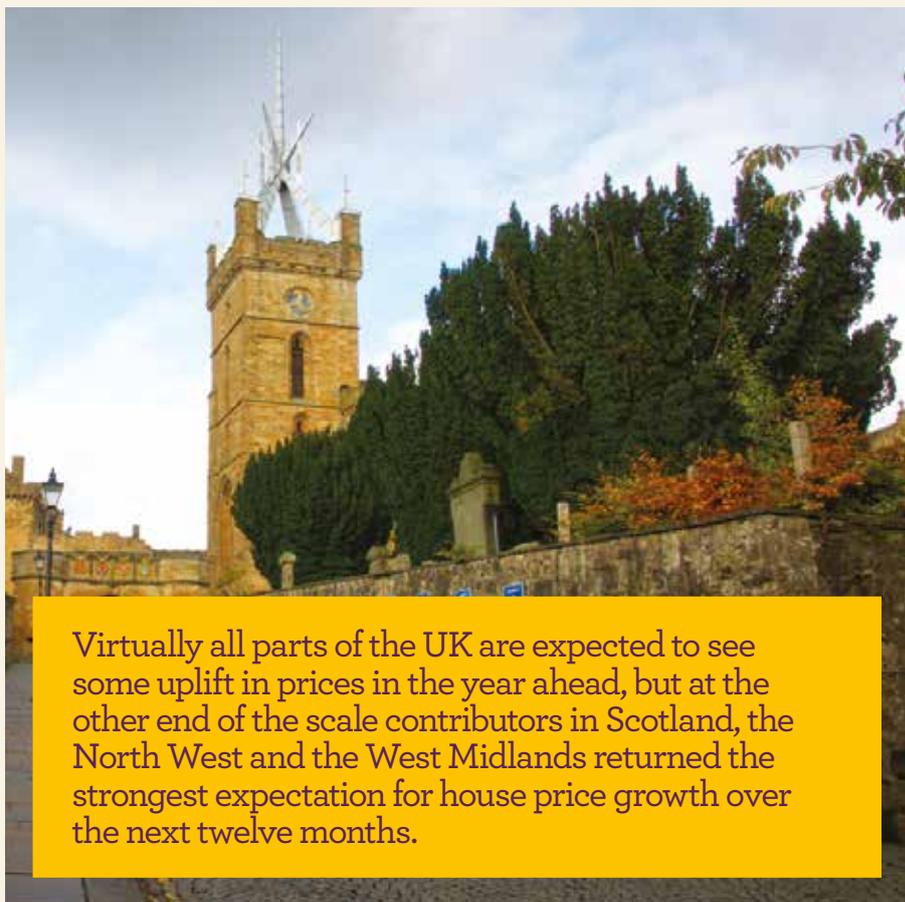
Figures just released by the Scottish Land Registry show that the average house price in Scotland in the second quarter of 2019 was £176,260, showing an increase of 1.4% on the same quarter in 2018.

In regards to the volume of house sales, the same report shows that in Scotland as a whole, the volume of property sold in the second quarter of 2019 rose by 4.7%, compared to the same quarter in 2018. In West Lothian the figure was 4.6%.

In our opinion, over the long term, the lack of supply will only continue to apply upward pressure on house prices. The population of Scotland has increased by 400,000 since 2001. As mentioned on this page in the last edition of the magazine, new house builders continue with a cautious approach and rates of new builds are still below pre-recession figures. Take into consideration other factors such as the fact that nearly a third of the population in Scotland live alone and we can only see demand outstripping supply for some time to come.

Buy First or Sell First

Before the financial crisis in 2008, as a rule, most people bought first, as the market was so strong and prices were rising rapidly, most sellers were, for the right offer, happy to sit back and wait for



Virtually all parts of the UK are expected to see some uplift in prices in the year ahead, but at the other end of the scale contributors in Scotland, the North West and the West Midlands returned the strongest expectation for house price growth over the next twelve months.

their buyer to go away and sell their existing property. Besides the idea of selling your current home with no idea where you might be moving to is uncomfortable for a lot of people.

In the immediate aftermath of the financial crisis this all changed. The standard advice from any good solicitor was don't accept an offer from someone if you know they still need to sell, because you don't know how long it will take them or whether they will obtain the price they need.

As the economy and the housing market have slowly improved there is more pressure to go back to how we bought and sold homes before the crisis. However, there are still many people who still sell first.

The consequence of this, is that buyers who still need to sell risk losing out on their next home to someone who has already sold.

If you are one of these people who still need to sell, you can improve your

chances of securing your next home by taking the precaution of getting your current home valued, before you start house hunting. A good agent should provide an accurate and realistic valuation as well as providing you with all the necessary advice on how to present your home to it's best, which often also helps you secure a quick sale.

Being able to say to the sellers of the house you are after, that you have already done this might just, in a competitive situation, make the difference and mean your offer will be seriously considered along with offers from people who have already sold.



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LINLITHGOW LADIES CHOIR

15TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT AT ST MICHAEL'S ON THE 29TH SEPTEMBER

Alison Train



Linlithgow Ladies Choir is fifteen this year. This impressive bunch of women have sung at the Albert Hall, the Usher Hall, sold out concerts and produced some beautiful music. I've enjoyed many of their concerts but I've never known how they got started. So I sat down for tea with founder member **Heather Laing** and long term member **Shelagh Bell** to hear how the choir was born and how they feel about the journey the choir has been on.

The choir started out as **Linlithgow Rugby Club Ladies Choir**. The male Rugby Club choir was already established but there was nothing for the women of the club to join. Heather told me; *"The ladies choir officially started because Gill Ferguson (who went on to lead the choir) wanted to join the men's choir and they wouldn't let her join. So she put the feelers out to wives, girlfriends and daughters of people in the men's choir to see if anybody was interested in joining a choir. I think we had about 15 people initially and my dad, Joe Lavery, who was the conductor of the men's choir, became the conductor of the ladies choir to start with."* This was in November 2003.

The first performance of the choir was at the Rugby Club Burns supper in early 2004 and the ladies were off and running. Shelagh told me: *"When we started, because there were only so few, it was pretty much unison singing to start with and then a couple of little bits of harmony came in. Then we got two parts going. Now we've got 4 sections; 1st and 2nd soprano and 1st and 2nd alto's."*

More recently **Kirsty Ball** has taken over as Musical Director. The choir has flourished and now holds two concerts a year and also performs at events in Linlithgow and for groups and organisations events on request, with a smaller concert party also available to fulfil engagements. The choir now numbers 80 members, with a waiting list constantly running. Heather feels that their success comes from the fact that the choir is a welcoming and caring community: *"It's all ages, all abilities, it's a true community choir. You don't need to be able to read music. You need an ability to sing in a choir and a desire to sing. We make sure that it's inclusive."* The choir raises money through its concerts and other fundraising and many local charities have benefited over the years. Giving back to the community in this way is one of the choir's fundamental aims

and this year's charity will be **Linlithgow First Responders**.

From their first solo concert at St Peter's Church, of which Heather recalls; *"There wasn't that many of us and we stood on the three steps and sang. You were beginning to feel that you were getting somewhere, that you weren't just a group of ladies who were getting together; you could actually make a decent sound"* they've come to their celebratory 15th anniversary concert at St Michael's on the 29th September.

The music that the choir will sing, reflects the musical journey that they have been on together. They will perform beautiful, challenging pieces to celebrate their years of learning and development. Hoping to please their audience is important as Shelagh says; *"Sometimes when you're in the body of it, you don't actually hear what you're putting forward. And it's not until you get that rush of applause when you think we must have done something really good there."*

Entry is by donation, with the choir not wanting to have affordability be an issue for anyone wanting to come along. So come along and enjoy a great evening. However with a Christmas concert planned for December 14th and other events in the town, we'll thankfully be seeing a lot of Linlithgow Ladies Choir. *"Onwards and upwards"* said Shelagh; to the next fifteen years and beyond.



LINLITHGOW LADIES CHOIR

15th Anniversary Concert

Sunday 29th September 2019, 7:00 pm
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Fauré Requiem
Haydn The Heavens are Telling
Vivaldi Gloria
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All welcome - entry by donation

[linlithgowladieschoir](#)

LINLITHGOW RUGBY MALE CHOIR

SING YOUR WAY TO A HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER LIFE

Across the world people sing in choirs. There are lots of reasons why and probably one of the least recognised or accepted is that it is a healthy activity. It is a fact that singing is good for you; especially in groups.

Religion and its followers figured that out long before you and I were born. Churches, Mosques and Synagogues were all packed full of people bonding; feeling better about themselves. Singing together.

These days, we like to back up our statements with research. Even though we know already. This is from the **Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health**. So what are the facts? Will you be healthier? Feel better? Make your town a better place if you sing in a choir? The short answer is yes.

There is evidence that choral singing means you are less likely to visit a GP or hospital. You also buy less medication over the counter. And, if you are a bit frail, you will benefit positively. There is even a theoretical boost to your immune system (salivary IgA goes up, fighting infection). Physically, singing "creates a sense of exercising systems of the body" - especially the lungs - and disciplines the musculo-skeletal system.

Any epidemiological research is tough to make stick (smoking was considered healthy for more than 400 years). So it is early days to suggest you will live longer. But you will feel better. Anxiety and depression ratings are shredded if you sing in a choir.

Maybe it's the tune, though we all have differing musical tastes and, of course, singing abilities. Maybe it's being with others. Maybe the laughter. Does it matter? Any way you look at it, it is easy to prove that members of a choir are happier and more relaxed than case-controlled peers.

Evidence demonstrates that choral singing engenders "a sense of happiness, positive mood, joy, elation and feeling high". More than that, singing gives "a sense of personal

transcendence beyond mundane and everyday realities, being put in touch with a sense of beauty and something beyond words, which is moving or good for the soul".

And what about the community aspect of the organisation? You have to start with yourself; but wouldn't it be good if you can help others too. The good news is that evidence is strong on "creating supportive friendships and constructive collaborative relationships". Oxytocin levels increase - hormonal bonding. That being in a choir gives "a sense of contributing to a product which is greater than the sum of its parts" is amplified by knowing that you contribute to the wider community through public performance. Now you feel energised; release it!

Linlithgow's Rugby Club Male Voice Choir is a perfect example of the previously mentioned benefits of choral singing. It has recently celebrated its 25th anniversary; quite an accolade for a bunch of guys whose original joint pleasure was playing rugby.

The group have, over the years, given a lot of pleasure to audiences in places as diverse as Crossford in Fife and China; with the added bonus of contributing to national and local charities while helping and supporting other local organisations.

The choir's most recent trip was in May of this year when they visited Langon in the Bordeaux region of France. This was their second visit to the local choir who have also been guests in the Royal Burgh.

Earlier this year the choir chairman, Chris Thomas, stepped down after more than ten years in the post and passed the baton to long standing choir member Peter Russell. Under Chris's leadership, the organisation has increased its membership and has improved its level of performance

Typically modest in his remarks Chris said: ***"I have thoroughly enjoyed my term of office and have some amazing memories to take with me. I will now be able to concentrate fully on being the best baritone I can be."***

Looking forward, the choir will be performing later this year at the annual Carol Concert in St Ninian's Craigmaiten Church on December 6 and the Rugby Club Burns Night on January 24, 2020.

One of next year's major events will be a concert in Linlithgow jointly with Morriston RFC Choir, one of Wales's foremost male voice choirs from Swansea.

If you enjoy singing why not come along and see if you could be part of Linlithgow Rugby Club's choir. They meet on a Monday evening in the clubhouse from around 8pm till 10pm and would make you very welcome. Check our website or phone Chairman Peter Russell on 01506 843062, or Vice Chairman Harry Lynch on 01506 884389.

Colin McGill



Images: Chris Thomas, left, passes the chairmanship of the Rugby Club Choir to Peter Russell.

Harry Lynch, Choir Vice-Chairman presenting a framed Linlithgow RFC shirt to Julien Perrot, President of Stade Langonnaise Rugby Club.

THE NEXT GENERATION AND THEIR FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

Susan Ralston, Virtue Money

My middle child has recently been offered her first job and with the offer came a mountain of paperwork for her to complete and that's where mother generally comes in.

"What's Death in Service" she asked, "do I want to join the pension scheme" (she's only 18) "and if I do what should I contribute?"

Things are so much more complicated now, when I joined the bank after leaving school, I was automatically enrolled in the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme which had the Death in Service element within it. To be honest I had no idea what a pension even was, but it was all taken care of for me.

Private sector Defined Benefit Pension Schemes are now a thing of the past and the age at which our children will be eligible for State Pension is being pushed up. Realistically they will probably be over 70 before they qualify, if it even still exists then.

Making sure our children save for their retirement and understand why they need to is paramount if we want them to be able to retire when the time comes.

How do they prioritise their money however, they have maybe passed



their driving test and would like a car? As much as we love them, we need them to have an eye on their future and start saving up for a deposit for a house. They're young though and want to enjoy their free time (can we blame them) they want to go to festivals and concerts and if your "young person" is anything like mine buy trainers!

I'm fortunate in as much as my child has opened a "Help to Buy" ISA and makes monthly contributions into it. Her plan being that by the time she's 23 she should have saved enough (along with the 25% bonus from the government) to look to purchase her first home.

We freely speak about money and my idea is to encourage all of my children to start saving right from the off, that way they don't need to think about it, it just makes sense to them.

There is a lot of information on the Money Advice Service website – Beginners Guide to managing your money and Managing your money using the jam-jar approach are just a few of the many articles available to view.

Your children may be considering university, speaking to parents in that situation, it can be an expensive business, have you thought about how you can either fund or help your child in that situation?



If you would like advise on your investments, pensions or protection needs then please contact me either by email at susan@virtuemoney.com or call me on 0345 04 3424 and I can arrange a free, no obligation, consultation with one of our advisers.

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This article is intended to provide a general review and opinion of certain topics and its purpose is to inform but not to recommend or support any specific investment or course of action.

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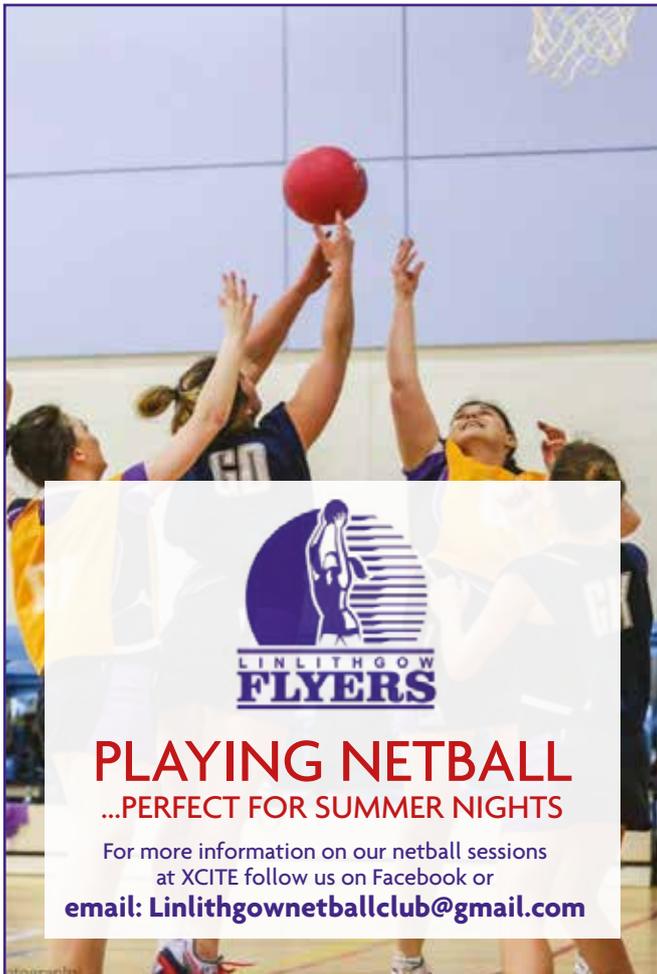
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GRANDAD CYCLES HEBRIDEAN ISLANDS FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLD EMMA WITH RETT SYNDROME

Linlithgow Grandad **John Henderson**, 73, has cycled 185 miles across 9 outer Hebridean islands to raise awareness and funds to fight Rett Syndrome.

His five-year-old granddaughter Emma was diagnosed with the neurological disorder as a toddler, meaning she cannot walk and is locked in a body which does not obey signals from her brain.

Researchers from Edinburgh University are working towards a cure for Rett Syndrome, by using genetic engineering to replace a missing protein. Experiments in a mouse made the symptoms of the condition go away. Human clinical trials are due to start later this year.

The UK charity ReverseRett was established in 2010 by families who wanted to contribute to the Rett Syndrome Research Trust, a non-profit organisation in the USA which believes in the prospect of a cure. So far the UK has raised more than £2 million. John is determined to contribute at least £1,000

to the cause, after taking on the challenge of cycling from the southern tip of Vatersay through Barra, over to Eriskay, then on to South Uist, Benbecula, North Uist, Berneray, then over to Harris and Lewis, finishing at the Butt of Lewis.

John said: *“As a family we believe it is important to highlight and support ReverseRett in any we can especially as a cure is in sight. The first clinical trial of gene therapy on a girl with Rett Syndrome is imminent. As ever funding is the key and we need to keep the donations coming in if we are to set our children free.”*

Rett Syndrome affects girls around the age of 12-18 months. It is estimated to happen to 1 in 10,000 children, and is rarely found in males. Children with Rett are unable to walk or use their hands, and often deal with breathing problems, feeding tubes, seizures, anxiety, gastrointestinal and orthopaedic issues.

Research has shown children with Rett Syndrome have no brain damage, and they understand more than their bodies allow them to show.

Emma was born a happy, healthy baby in October 2013, but John's daughter Alison and her husband Stuart noticed by the time she was 9 months that she had some delays in her development. Despite reassurance from their doctors, the family continued to seek medical advice and in December 2016 Emma was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome.

Professor Adrian Bird at Edinburgh University has been involved in research which has given hope that the effects of Rett Syndrome are reversible.

To donate to John's fundraising efforts, go to his Just Giving page at <https://justgiving.com/fundraising/johnhenderson73>



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Stuart from the Westport Veterinary Clinic tells us about some of his regular customers. This month it is Rex the 10-year-old Staffordshire Bull Terrier.

Hello I'm Rex

Rex's owner describes him as a happy boy, who's full of character and a little bit crazy! The Westport Team are always tickled by Rex's visits to the practice, each staff member receives a wonderfully happy, ecstatic individual greeting!

Rex just adores people and attention. Rex can require some convincing that not everyone he sees wants to speak to him especially as making eye contact is an invite to make friends.

Rex can be quite stubborn and strong willed, choosing the direction and pace of walks. This is usually fine however his owner says it can be frustrating if they have a specific destination to get to which is the opposite direction to where Rex thinks they should go. His stubborn streak extends to trying to get into the pet shop and various cafes even when they are closed. Rex can also be seen sitting at his owner's daughter's doorstep refusing to believe that she is at work!

Rex LOVES to sing, running off-lead, playing with a ball and going to the beach.

His naughty habit is his determination to drink canal water at any opportunity. His owner thinks he uses this naughty habit to his advantage by deliberately looking interested at it then running to sit in front of her for a treat for leaving it!

His favourite walks are at the Peel and along Linlithgow High St - mostly as he can make friends with people sitting on benches and at cafes at every opportunity - it can take a long time to get from one end to the other!

With senior pets, like Rex, it is important that owners adapt and change their care as they age. Older pets' bodies have different needs and changing to a senior specific food will benefit them.

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