

# TEMPLARS COURT

DO NOTHING -  
LIVE WITH THIS <sup>4</sup>



## PEGGY & JEAN A VIEW FROM THE CROSS <sup>7</sup>



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LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

# BLACK BITCH



ANNIVERSARY

# BITCH

LINLITHGOW'S NEWS BY LINLITHGOW'S PEOPLE

ISSUE NO. 84  
AUGUST 2021

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## MEET THE TEAM PAMELA & NEIL BARNES



The Barnes family moved to Linlithgow from Glasgow in 2010 after falling in love with the place. Their two-year-old, Maddie, was quickly joined by Isabel in 2011, and after 10 years living here, Pamela and Neil agree it's been a wonderful place to raise children, and get to know so many lovely people.

Both keen environmentalists, it wasn't long before they got involved with Transition Linlithgow as volunteers and latterly voluntary Trustees.

In 2016 Pamela started a campaign to save Linlithgow's local L1 bus service, which led her to becoming a Community Councillor. A year later she became a Community Development Worker with Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT), and among other things has spent the last five years helping progress one of the Trust's most ambitious projects - the West Lothian Cycle Circuit. She also helped with the community response to the Coronavirus crisis last year.

Pamela comments *"it's been such a challenging time for everyone. The community response was inspiring and really lifted my spirits, with community groups, churches and hundreds of local people coming together to help those in need. People's kindness and community*

*spirit shone through. I'm very proud to call Linlithgow home."*

Neil became a volunteer Trustee with LCDT in 2018 after persuading the Board to take on the Linlith-Go-Solar project. Neil currently works in energy services for Warmworks Scotland and has a real passion for 'all things energy', including renewables and helping people out of fuel poverty.

Neil says *"myself, and others involved in driving forward Linlith-Go-Solar, want our town to be one of the greenest in Scotland, eventually having 'net zero' carbon emissions, whilst reducing energy costs for local organisations and people and putting benefits back into our local communities, including education and work opportunities for young people."*

In his spare time Neil is a keen runner with Linlithgow Athletics Club, and Pamela, who plays the cello, is looking forward to rehearsals recommencing with Linlithgow's String Orchestra. And of course they also both enjoy delivering the magazine around their local neighbourhood!



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**22 SEPTEMBER 2021**

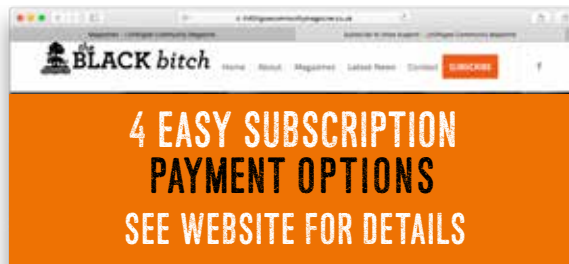
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**DAVID TAIT,  
EDITOR**

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLACK BITCH MAGAZINE



**What a quick summer it's been so far – I hope you have enjoyed this lovely weather and like me have taken the opportunity with the relaxed Covid restrictions to meet up with family and friends.**

It was good to hear recently from some new arrivals in Linlithgow who found the magazine with its mix of topics covering town heritage, current town issues and events (hopefully more soon!) to be especially interesting and helpful for new arrivals.

In this issue we complete our coverage of the sorry tale of McCarthy & Stone's Templars Court development, researched and prepared by the Planning Forum of Linlithgow Community Council.

Part 2 covers the period from April 2017 to present including details of McCarthy & Stone's failed appeal to the Scottish Government, missed opportunities to negotiate a successful outcome and a proposal to complete the project for which planning permission had been granted in 2013. It concludes with a plea to West Lothian Council to consider its position as custodian of West Lothian's prime heritage centre and visitor attraction and take action on behalf of the Linlithgow community. Failing

such action the town will be left with a gap-site-with-grass, as depicted in the artist's impression on the front cover.

As the worst effects of the coronavirus epidemic begin to recede it will be interesting to see the "new normal" emerge as time goes on. Will working from home, at least in part, take hold to become the norm? Will Linlithgow, long described as a "commuter town", accrue benefit from the free time gained by what could be a significant number of commuters no longer spending an hour or two every day travelling to and from work? Will more residents now take ownership of the problems that appear to be lowering standards – be that taking responsibility for town cleanliness as do West Lothian Litter Pickers, working with Burgh Beautiful to add to the number of community gardens around the town, looking to the future by supporting Linlith-Go-Solar, joining the Community Council to add experience and expertise to its growing agenda or join any one of the large number of community groups operating in Linlithgow.

As life returns to Linlithgow, on Saturday 14th it was good to enjoy some retail therapy on the busy High Street seeing people enjoying the sunshine around The Cross and meeting friends at pavement cafes

along the way. Also good to learn that the Linlithgow 10K will return later this year and that The Arts Guild, following the sell-out success of a short series of socially distanced performances, is now re-starting its normal winter series of classical music concerts in September (see separate schedule enclosed with this issue). Hopefully this will be the start of many more of the regular events and performances in and around Linlithgow.

**Finally, as always, a very big thank-you to all who help in various different ways to make the magazine possible. In particular to all our subscribers who give generously to help fund the magazine and allow us to plan for the future. We hope you find plenty items of interest amongst the topics we cover.**

Remember, if you value the magazine but are time-limited, one way of showing your appreciation and support for all that we do is to provide some financial support to help us future-proof the provision of local news – this can be a regular subscription or a one-off donation. For details of how to do this please refer to our website <https://www.linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk>

## Q. Would you like to help us out?

Many of us have embraced the outdoors more in the past year, and a lot of us have enjoyed noticing nature at an enhanced level because of our daily walks. If you enjoy a little walk and feeling that you've helped in the Community you might be someone who could help us out.

We publish 8 magazines per year and volunteers deliver 6,000 magazines to all households and businesses in the town each issue. Some simply deliver

to the houses in their own street, some take on two or three streets and we have a few who go above and beyond.

Sharing the load makes the task manageable but we still have space for more helpers. Please consider whether this could be you. The dates for delivery are published at the beginning of the year, so you can easily advise in advance if you are unavailable due to holidays etc. We are flexible but administratively it does require that you do your best to be free to deliver as many as possible. That could amount to as little as say 7 hours of your time over the course of a year.

If you wish to offer some assistance please email on [a.lead@gmail.com](mailto:a.lead@gmail.com) detailing the street you live in, whether you'd be willing to deliver in other streets close to your home, or whether you would deliver anywhere in town.

If you have any mobility issues please advise too as stairs are involved in some areas.

We look forward to hearing from you.



>>> For details and events visit **what's on** [www.mylinlithgow.com](http://www.mylinlithgow.com) <<<



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# TEMPLARS COURT GAP SITE PART 2

## 5 years of procrastination, inaction, missed opportunities and overt disregard of the Linlithgow community.

AFTER DEMOLITION OCTOBER 2013



The story of the Templars Court gap site began in the last issue of the Black Bitch which described the deal done between West Lothian Council and McCarthy and Stone, the granting of planning permission in 2013 by the planning officer without discussion at a planning committee, the £90,000 paid by McCarthy and Stone to West Lothian Council to avoid the construction of affordable housing on the site, the disregard by McCarthy and Stone of planning conditions to protect the visual character of the High Street and the demolition of the frontage building apparently without a building warrant. During the demolition process and the excavation of the foundation for the new frontage building, McCarthy and Stone damaged and destabilised the adjoining wall of the neighbouring building. Timber shores were quickly erected. A new foundation solution was designed by Blyth and Blyth, structural engineers, for the

frontage building and a building warrant was issued for this design. In the opinion of the Linlithgow Planning Forum, it is surmised that McCarthy and Stone considered that the new foundation solution made the development of five flats and two retail units unprofitable.

### Part two begins in April 2017.

Whereas McCarthy and Stone received planning permission in 2013 for a single development of 41 flats and subsequently marketed the development as such, the company now regards the development as being in two distinct parts, a profitable construction of 36 new retirement flats and a less profitable construction of five flats and two retail units. It is the latter part of the development which McCarthy and Stone do not wish to undertake. In April 2017 McCarthy and Stone appointed Jonathan Fair as regional managing director of McCarthy and Stone in Scotland. McCarthy and Stone also appointed Pagoda Porter Novelli as its public relations representative.

In September 2017 the Linlithgow Planning Forum were notified by Pagoda Porter Novelli that McCarthy and Stone had purchased the adjacent property damaged by the construction work in 2015

and had compensated the family concerned for their inconvenience and facilitated their move to an alternative home. McCarthy and Stone undertook to permanently repair the building. The Linlithgow Planning Forum were also notified that "the extent of the underlying rock and the ground conditions mean it is very unlikely that construction can proceed on the front building". This came as a surprise since buildings had stood on this site for several centuries and it is understood that a previous ground condition survey suggested that the site comprised a mixture of sand and gravel with bedrock determined at a depth of between 17 and 20m.

On 1 February 2018 McCarthy and Stone met with representatives of the Linlithgow Planning Forum and the three ward councillors. At the meeting McCarthy and Stone presented a programme which showed construction work to the existing gable of the adjacent property with repairs taking place between 16 April and 14 August 2018. McCarthy and Stone proposed that the remaining space should be landscaped as an "urban green square" and be adopted by West Lothian Council with ownership being retained by McCarthy and Stone.

In April 2018 McCarthy and Stone's planning application for the repair work described steel beams as bracing to the damaged gable secured by long bolts to structural members within the existing building. The gable to be faced with a render board finish to waterproof what was previously an internal party wall. In September 2018 West Lothian Council granted approval for the structural plans but did not approve the permanent render board finish. There followed a year of argument resulting in an appeal by McCarthy and Stone to the Scottish Government which was dismissed. Finally in August 2019 an email was received by the Linlithgow Planning Forum from Pagoda Porter Novelli confirming that a programme of works had been agreed. The email also confirmed that McCarthy and Stone were closing their Scottish operation and that McCarthy and Stone would be willing to sell the site to West Lothian Council for the notional sum of £1. In March 2020 McCarthy and Stone suspended all work on the structural repairs, due to the Covid lockdown, and it



was to be several months before the timber shoring could be removed.

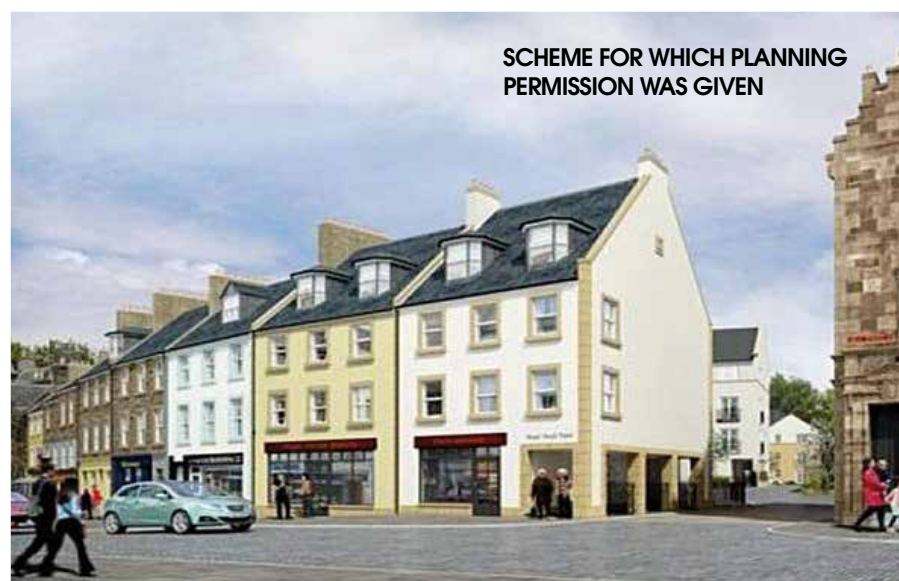
In July 2020, Linlithgow Planning Forum discussions with a housing association indicated that a mid-market rent flat development for the site would be financially challenging but were West Lothian Council to buy the site for £1 as offered and subsidise the development cost with the £90,000 received from McCarthy and Stone then a social housing solution might be possible. West Lothian Council, however, have confirmed that they are unwilling to buy the site. Further the £90,000 has been deposited in the housing account to construct new council housing as described in the strategic housing investment plan (SHIP); which does not include any provision for Linlithgow before 2026 and possibly not thereafter. Bureaucratic rules forbid any West Lothian Council spending on new social housing in Linlithgow over the period of the current SHIP.

So where are we now? In <https://www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk/linlithgow-high-street-update> dated 16th July 2021, McCarthy and Stone state *“After successfully completing Templars Court adjacent to the High Street in August 2015, it was not commercially viable for McCarthy Stone to develop the land in front of the development as we had originally planned. We offered the site to West Lothian Council for a peppercorn sum, but this was declined by the Council. We have since agreed with the council to tidy it up and to replace the paving and railings as a matter of urgency, ahead of its future sale. We will actively market the site once these works are complete”*. Marketing the site for a use other than that described in the 2013 planning permission would require a new planning application and the agreement of West Lothian Council.

In the context of the Linlithgow conservation area, the current gap site, being at the centre of the town and opposite the entrance to Linlithgow Palace deserves a building which replicates the former historic buildings on this site and complements the streetscape and street frontage of the High Street.



MCCARTHY & STONE REGARD THIS AS THE FINISHED PROJECT



SCHEME FOR WHICH PLANNING PERMISSION WAS GIVEN

There also appears to be little information about what is going to happen to the listed (category C), deteriorating, early 19th century building purchased by McCarthy and Stone. This handsome, but sadly neglected building must not be allowed to deteriorate any further.

*In the opinion of the Linlithgow Planning Forum there is only one practical solution; that West Lothian Council are proactive in facilitating a housing association to provide a mid-market rental development for up to 7 flats for the elderly, potentially releasing sorely needed family homes in Linlithgow.*

*West Lothian Council should accept the £1 offer from McCarthy and Stone and overcome their bureaucratic barriers to subsidise a housing association in the provision of a structural engineering solution which*

*enables a new building to adjoin the existing one as has been the case in previous centuries.*

**It is time West Lothian Council considered their position as stewards of the Linlithgow High Street and actually did something for the benefit of the Linlithgow community.**

Linlithgow  
Planning Forum

# FROM HYDROGEN TO HELIUM TO LOCAL PEOPLE POWER

**We are all literally of the stars. Every atom in our bodies originates in the hot cauldrons of outer space.**

And the most important star of all is our life-giving endless power generator - the Sun. As this immense nuclear reactor fuses Hydrogen into Helium, enormous amounts of energy flow towards the Earth and it's thin atmosphere, which trap and reflect this radiation to help keep the average surface temperature to 15°C, allowing our planet's great diversity of life to proliferate.

In this latest article on our local Linlith-Go-Solar initiative, we want to reiterate not only the vast amount of untapped energy that holds probably much of the solution to tracking Climate Change in the form of clean renewable energy, but also a great opportunity for Linlithgow to generate substantial community benefits for years to come - if we can harness our local efforts to exploit this source of energy to do good.

Step forward local business champion - **Mark Darragh** - owner of Playbugs and his new model railway business Rainbow Railways. Mark - local family man father of three took on the Playbugs business in the Autumn of 2018. Despite the recent challenges of Covid for the soft play industry - one of the hardest hit due to enforced closure - Mark believes that installing solar panels working in tandem with Linlith-Go-Solar, is a great way to cut his business energy costs and do something good for the planet at the same time.

Mark says: **"The recent estimates from the pre-designed Solar PV system from Linlith-Go-Solar, and with help from The Big Solar Co-op, indicate a potential saving of at least 10% year 1, rising to 40% year 25, compared to drawing from the grid. This could run into thousands of pounds over the lifetime of the panels. And all I will have to do is sign a few pieces of paper and pay a secondary quarterly bill."**

Linlith-Go-Solar/Linlithgow Community Development Trust and ONE LINLITHGOW are promoting phase 3 of Linlith-Go-Solar to local businesses, which Mark is supporting wholeheartedly in his role as Vice Chair of One Linlithgow, the local Business Improvement District Scheme set up a few years ago.

Mark explains **"We would love to hear from more local businesses and organisations in Mill Road Industrial Estate and elsewhere locally with suitable roofs like mine. This is a no brainer. Working together we can create a more robust offer and help scale up faster. Going through Linlith-Go-Solar means you don't have to raise**

**your own capital; local people and possibly some outside our town will get an ethical investment opportunity through a community bond or shares; and local businesses will benefit too. We hope to generate a bit of surplus on top so that we can put something back into local good causes as well. And it will also cut out carbon emissions. What's not to like about that?"**

Mark has other innovative ideas such as solar shelters for local schools, battery storage using excess solar to power LED street lighting and hosting energy education events in his premises.

***So if you are a local business owner or run an organisation that might have a suitable roof, then please come forward by emailing: [energy@trust-linlithgow.org.uk](mailto:energy@trust-linlithgow.org.uk).***

**Wouldn't it be great to do something meaningful in the run-up to Glasgow COP26, and create a sustainable green legacy for our town?"**

**Linlith-Go-Solar**



YOGA LINKS WITH JENNY

## YOGA AT LINLITHGOW BURGH HALLS

Postnatal Yoga with Baby  
Monday 10-11am

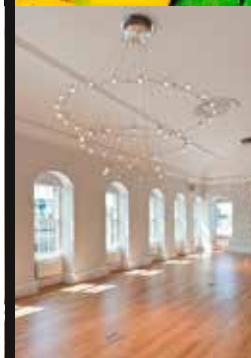
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## Folk fae Lithgae

### PEGGY DOWIE AND JEAN EDGAR



**Peggy Dowie (92) left, and Jean Edgar (90) right are near neighbours at The Cross. From their living room windows, they enjoy a grandstand seat for the numerous events which take place throughout the year at the town's historic hub, including the annual Riding of the Marches in June.**

The Cross holds many memories for them both. On leaving school at the age of 14 in 1943, **Peggy** worked for Janet Dowie, ladies' and children's outfitter at 83 High Street, overlooking the Cross, and later in the office of the garage next door, which belonged to the Scottish Motor Traction Co. Ltd (SMT).

*"I was Dux of the secondary pupils at St Joseph's school", Peggy told me. "I was offered jobs in Edinburgh, but it was war time and my mother said there were too many soldiers hanging about in Edinburgh, so I just had to take a job locally".*

**Jean** also worked in the SMT office when she left school in 1944. She later served in Henderson's baker's shop at 25 High Street and her current house is directly opposite what was the long-established newsagent, tobacconist and stationery shop, Adam Edgar, at 11 the Cross. Jean started there in the late 1940s, following on from her elder

sister. She hit it off with the young owner – also called Adam – who had taken over the shop when his dad passed away suddenly in 1946.

*"We were engaged on my 21st birthday", Jean told me "and married the following year".* By a strange coincidence, Jean's current flat at the Cross is on almost the same site where she and Adam first set up home in 1952.

Peggy and Jean were both born in Linlithgow and are very proud to be called 'Black Bitches'. Peggy's early years were spent at 241 High Street, up the close at the Cross Keys Inn – or 'Brady's' – as it was better known. Her family – the O'Neills – later moved to a new house in Preston Avenue and then to another new housing development at the West Port/Preston Road, where Jean and her family – the Robertsons – were near neighbours.

Jean has lived all her life in Linlithgow, mostly on the High Street and Merker Terrace. She has two sons Alan, now 67 and Malcolm, now 64. Peggy has had spells away from the town, including a stay in Macclesfield in Cheshire, as she explained:

*"When ICI took over the Regent Works in the early 1950s, I left my job at Lovell's Avon paper mill to go there. That's where I met my husband, Johnny, who was an engineer and came from Armadale.*



*We were married in 1960 when I was 31 and bought a wee house in Armadale. When ICI shut down, we got the chance to go to Macclesfield, like lots of other local people. We went down there in 1964 and that's where my second daughter, Fiona, was born. Johnny got the chance to move up to Grangemouth in 1969 and we finally came back to live in Linlithgow in 1975".*

Peggy and Jean really enjoy their lovely wee flats at the Cross, where they are handy for everything. With lots of family members living locally, they are never short of visitors. Both are looking forward to events resuming in the town and are keeping their fingers crossed that the spectacular torchlight procession and Carol Service will once again grace the Cross in November.

**Murdoch Kennedy**





## ONE LINLITHGOW BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



### CH NAILS

Courtenay Hamilton's passion for Highland dancing, which began at the age of four, has developed into a successful career, which has seen her perform at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, as far afield as Japan, and now run a successful dance studio in the Capital.

In a marked diversion, she recently opened up CH Nails within AJM Hair on Linlithgow High Street. But while the 23-year-old from Falkirk may have taken up a sedentary profession, she has no intention of hanging up her dancing pumps.

Said Courtenay, *"I have always been interested in the art of nails, whether it is getting them done for myself, or practising on others. Throughout the first lockdown I decided to take the leap, and book myself into a nail course with CND. where I was trained by a very talented woman in both nail enhancements and shellac."*

*"The skills she taught me bettered my understanding of nail anatomy, and how to make nails beautiful while also keeping them healthy."*

Courtenay said the "best bit" about her new job was that it gave her the opportunity to meet new people all the time, and hear their stories and experiences.

*"To people who know me I'm a social butterfly – I love*

*to talk, but I'm also a great listener. With every client at CH Nails time spent with them is all about them."*

Courtenay said that she was *"continuing to give classes at Hamilton Heel and Toe in Edinburgh, which she took over after the retiral of her teacher, who owned it. In addition, she also taught gymnastics, another passion of hers."*

She added, *"Teaching dancing is the most rewarding experience I could ask for. Helping people better themselves, and gain confidence. Seeing so many smiles at the end of a session is the best feeling."*

*Courtenay is on both Facebook and Instagram (@c.hamiltonnails). Her contact number is 07969 432517.*

### HIGHER SELF WELLNESS & BEAUTY

Sarah Goldie brings much more than experience and professionalism to her new wellness and beauty venture Higher Self, within AJM Hair on Linlithgow High Street.

She could scarcely be better placed when it comes to having the interpersonal skills to connect with clients of all ages and backgrounds in a completely relaxed manner - essential in the holistic treatments she carries out.



Said Sarah, *"After studying beauty in my younger years, I actually took on a job as a nursing assistant in Forth Valley hospitals. This then led to me branching off into social work, then into education. I've loved all the jobs, and I have a passion for working with people of all ages, from the very young to the elderly."*

Throughout all this time, she had kept her hand in beauty and wellness, with home appointments for family and friends, before re-entering the business professionally in 2016. She began working for clinics in Glasgow, eventually opening her own in the city after furthering her skills in the aesthetic side of beauty.



Like many parents, the mother-of-four found juggling the long travel to work every day with childcare responsibilities increasingly difficult. She decided to find a clinic nearer home, and continue working part-time in a Falkirk high school.

*"I intend to bring a very strong holistic approach to all I do at Higher Self. My diverse working background has equipped me with good interpersonal skills, and excellent bedside manners, which is important when dealing with matters of the body."*

Added Sarah, *"I offer holistic and wellness services from meditation massage to reiki healing, as well as all beauty aesthetic services. There's no 'girly feel' to the room, so both women and men can enjoy the services. I treat most skin conditions and complaints, and offer bespoke packages. All of my products are vegan and animal cruelty-free."*

Sarah can be contacted 07731 108873/01506 371143, or on Facebook, Instagram, or by e-mail: [higherselfclinic@gmail.com](mailto:higherselfclinic@gmail.com).

## HOME SMART WINDOWS

The term "family-run business" can often be used to give an air of reassurance about a company when its make-up no longer justifies using the description.

This certainly does not apply to Home Smart Windows, only recently established at Mill Road Industrial Estate, but with a family pedigree stretching back to 1995.

It was then that Ed Macaulay established his business with a mix of joinery work and double-glazing installations, and over the ensuing years built up a reputation for both the quality of his craftsmanship, and the standard of his customer service.

His wife Susan, who runs the office and showroom, has been involved in the business from the very start. She said they had decided to set up Home Smart Windows last year, but had initially worked from home because of the lockdown.



*"Our two sons Mike and Chris are both qualified joiners, and are both involved in the business. It felt like the right time for me to join the company on a full-time basis, and give up my employment in management in health and social care. My background and experience in both management and quality assurance have enabled me to use my skills to develop the business, and look after our customers."*

Ed said that Home Smart had built up a great team of reliable and qualified tradespeople, and were looking to recruit more locally. They provide a full range of home improvement services, from windows and doors to conservatories, sunrooms and garden rooms.

*"Our focus is always on our clients' needs. We evaluate their exact requirements, to ensure our service and products meet their precise needs. Our fully collaborative approach guarantees the perfect end result every time."*

One recent testimonial echoes the sentiments expressed in many others: *"Thanks to Ed and Mike for the windows, really pleased with them, made a huge difference already. The team are very professional and kept in touch throughout the whole process. I would highly recommend them if you want a company that is professional, reasonable and reliable."*

## ONE LINLITHGOW UPDATE

The "Beautiful Scotland" judging of Linlithgow took place on Tuesday 10th August. The fantastic work of Burgh Beautiful is apparent all over town, with the wonderful planters and hanging baskets. The community came together to remove graffiti, weed and tidy up the streets, and we feel that this truly deserves to be recognised. Thank you to everyone, who put out a planter of their own, or even just swept up/weeded around their premises. It really made a difference.



Results will be announced on 23rd September, and judges were effusive in their praise of Burgh Beautiful's efforts, so until then it's fingers and toes crossed...

On Thursday 19th August, Tom Arthur MSP, the Scottish Cabinet Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth, visited Linlithgow, alongside Phil Prentice, CEO of Scotland's Towns Partnership.

The visit was in recognition of Linlithgow's incredible resilience throughout the pandemic, its uniquely diverse range of businesses all across town (not just on the High Street), and the innovative approach of local community groups to collaboration and use of funding.

At time of writing, the visit has not yet taken place, but it's an honour to put Linlithgow in the spotlight, and to tell positive stories of a time that has been difficult for so many.

CCTV works are all booked in for 18th August, resulting in end-to-end High Street coverage. We have also completed preparations for camera installation at the Regent Centre and are currently awaiting approval from the landlord on a power usage agreement.

The July Loyalty Lottery has been drawn, and the winners united with their vouchers! Remember, if you're a participating business and vouchers are redeemed with you, just let us know at [office@onelinthgow.com](mailto:office@onelinthgow.com) and we'll buy them back from you with real money.



The business map at the Regent Centre has been fully updated, replacing the old out-of-date one that had recently fallen down, and we're now looking into suitable sites across town to install similar signage boards. Huge thanks to JMK (01506 847840) for pulling out all the stops to have it installed in time for the Beautiful Scotland judging – it was produced and installed within 3 working hours of being sent the image file. Hats off!

## DOORS OPEN DAYS: Explore sites across West Lothian and the rest of Scotland for free...

### New Format broadens access

In September, Linlithgow and the whole of West Lothian will again take part in this year's Doors Open Days event, Scotland's largest free festival of places, history and culture. Venues are working hard behind the scenes helping put together a programme of in-person and online events and activities.

Inspired by the success of Doors Open Days' first ever digital festival in 2020, which welcomed 184,000 virtual visitors from across the world, the 2021 festival will have both online and in-person events and activities. The combination of in-person and online events will enable more visitors than ever before to explore some of West Lothian's places and hundreds of others across the length and breadth of Scotland.

2021 marks the 32nd year of Doors Open Days. It is Scotland's largest free festival that celebrates Scotland's places, history and culture, new and old. Each September, the festival offers access to over a thousand sites and events across Scotland. The aim of Doors Open Days is to ensure that Scotland's built, and cultural heritage is made accessible to people living in and visiting the country.

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 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 event

since 2011 and are proud to be doing so once more in 2021.

Allan M Robertson of Linlithgow Civic Trust and the West Lothian Doors Open Days Co-ordinator said: *"It will be particularly pleasing to welcome visitors back into buildings for in-person events again this year so we can all reconnect with our neighbours and some of our local places after what has been a difficult and challenging time for us all."*

West Lothian's Doors Open Days festival will take place over the weekend of 11/12 September 2021. For more details of what is happening with Doors Open Days in Linlithgow, West Lothian and across the country as whole, please check out the official event website at [www.doorsopendays.org.uk](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk)

### COVID-19 restrictions

The Doors Open Days event organisers only encourage people to attend in-person events in accordance with the latest Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance. The events and buildings that will be open for physical in-person visits in September will ensure safe access according to the most current guidelines.

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

For more details on the activities of Linlithgow Civic Trust please 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. SCO47211).

### Allan M Robertson

Linlithgow Civic Trust and West Lothian Doors Open Days Co-ordinator

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## Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Election 2021 Nomination of New Members

The Community Council is non-political and meets once each month to ensure that the voice of local people is heard by decision makers at local and national level. If you have an opinion on local matters and wish to make a difference, then you should consider joining the Community Council. If you are over 14 and resident in the wider Linlithgow area you are entitled to stand for election. Further information is available on the website [www.llbcc.org.uk](http://www.llbcc.org.uk) or at the library. Alternatively, Google linlithgow community council. If you wish to talk to someone email [secretary@llbcc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@llbcc.org.uk) giving a name and phone number.

# STRANGERS BREWING CO.

**New brewery launches crowdfunding campaign to bring brewing back to Linlithgow**

**Strangers Brewing Co. is a new, sustainable microbrewery, based at eco-friendly market garden Narrowboat Farm.**

Whilst Linlithgow has a rich history of brewing and malting, we no longer have an active brewery in our town. That is all about to change, as Strangers Brewing Co. is in the process of launching a new microbrewery based at eco-friendly market garden Narrowboat Farm.



After finding space in an old vegetable shed on the farm, the brewery will start production later this year. The range will include craft-brewed lagers, pale ales, bitters, red ales, porters and stouts, and its hand-crafted beers will use local ingredients and take their flavours from what's growing on the sustainable farm and in the surrounding Scottish countryside.

Brett Welch, Founder and Head Brewer explains:

*"Our beers will take their inspiration from the seasons, and their interesting flavours from what is growing on the farm - so that might mean a summer ale with home-grown raspberries, foraging elderflower for a pale ale, or adding our own coriander seed to a wheat beer. We know that people appreciate great beer of genuine local provenance, and they'll be in good company here."*

The brewery aims to be sustainable; all spent grain and hops from brewing will be reused on the farm,

all packaging will be recyclable, and a new wetland habitat will be planted to manage drainage from the brewery. Taking its name from the Linlithgow town motto: "St. Michael is kind to strangers," the company also hopes to build a community feel to the microbrewery in line with that ethos.

Strangers Brewing Co. has launched a community crowdfunder to purchase the microbrewery equipment, and to help create the new wetland habitat at the farm. The microbrewery is offering rewards to those who pledge, including cans of the first brew this autumn, the chance to win a year of beer, and an option to become a 'Founder Member'.

The crowdfunder campaign has an initial target of £15,000 and a stretch target of £20,000 - the stretch target represents about half the amount needed to purchase microbrewery kit, fermentation tanks, fruit trees, and plants to create the wetland. There has been enthusiastic support for the crowdfunder so far, with supporters from Linlithgow, West Lothian and across the UK.

Brett comments:

*"We've been really blown away by the amazing support we've received so far. This is a great opportunity for people to help create something really special, and it is incredible to see so many people joining the Strangers Brewing community."*

In keeping with the eco-friendly market garden where it is based, many of the rewards on offer in the crowdfunder are designed with more eco-conscious consumers in mind, and include options to help buy:

>> Native wetland plants, to create a new wetland habitat which will increase biodiversity on the farm, as well as managing the drainage of water from the brewery

>> Fruit trees, to provide delicious, local ingredients for the beers and create habitats for birds, pollinators, and animals.

There are, of course, also rewards for beer lovers too, such as:

>> A prize draw to win a year's supply of beer from Strangers Brewing Co.

>> Founder Membership, limited to just 100 supporters, entitling the bearer to 10% discount for 2 years, 'first chance

to buy' each new beer, exclusive online tasting events and their name on the Founders Wall in the brewery

>> 6 cans of the first beer from Strangers Brewing Co. with signature Strangers glass

>> An invite to beer tasting events, both online and in Linlithgow

>> The chance to create an entire batch of your own signature beer.

Once the brewery is up and running, the beer will be available to purchase from January, 2022, with a monthly beer subscription via the Strangers Brewing Co. website. Discussions are underway about stocking beers in local shops too.

If you'd like to know more about Strangers Brewing Co. or the crowdfunder campaign, either scan the QR code, or go to [www.crowdfunder.co.uk/strangersbrewing](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/strangersbrewing).



**Note - the closing date for the crowdfunder is Wednesday, September 8th.**

SCAN HERE





# NEW PRESTIGIOUS TROPHY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ART COMPETITION

Linlithgow's two new works of public art, the sculptures of The Black Bitch and St Michael, have been widely admired since their installation in beautiful settings on the High Street and at Low Port.

Those behind the ambitious fundraising effort involved are now seeing their dream to inspire budding artists in local schools - while at the same time learning about the history of the much-loved insignia - bear fruit.

A striking trophy, representing The Black Bitch chained to a tree on an island on Linlithgow Loch, has been crafted by silversmith David Ramsay of Edinburgh jewellers Hamilton and Inches - after consultation with the two sculptors - is to be competed for annually by pupils at all five Linlithgow primary schools.

Ian Gibson, of Linlithgow & Bo'ness Rotary, one of the organisations involved all the way, said that local head teachers would be having an early meeting to decide on a common format for the art insignia competition from a really diverse range of options.

**"These include drawing and painting in various mediums, lino or woodcut, design on ceramic tile, or embroidery or cross-stitch.**

**Another option would be a greeting card or postcard - with profits from sales to the school."**

Further possibilities, continued Ian, included a model in clay or plasticine, 3D tiles (similar to those on display at Linlithgow Station), or a mug, vase, or plate. Final options included a photograph, banner, video presentation, or a photographic slide show.

**"Each Primary 7 winner will receive £100. The overall winning school will receive £300, the second £200, and the other three £100 each."**

Ian added that for the first year £300 each had been pledged by The Deacons Court, The Dyers, Linlithgow & Bo'ness Rotary, Linlithgow Round Table, and One Linlithgow BID.

Evelyn Noble, Chair of the One Linlithgow Board, described the trophy as **"marvellous, and very appropriate."**

**"We are delighted to be supporting such a worthwhile project. It will really inspire artistic creativity among Primary 7 pupils, and it will definitely encourage them to learn more about the historical background of the two public works of art and the rich heritage of the town they live in."**

Ron Smith, convener of Burgh Beautiful and member of Linlithgow Civic Trust - driving forces behind the realisation of the public art projects - said it was **"fascinating"** to see a core aim behind The Black Bitch and St Michael sculptures now becoming a reality.

**"We wanted to increase awareness among townsfolk and visitors of Linlithgow's amazing heritage, and there is no doubt this is being achieved. It's wonderful to see this being extended to pupils in our schools. What David Ramsay has given us with his splendid trophy will give further encouragement to pupils to be as creative as possible in the insignia competition."**

Councillor Tom Conn, who sits on Linlithgow Town Centre Management Group, and who has also been involved in the public art project from the start, described the new trophy as **"a wonderful piece of artwork."**

**"It's a fitting conclusion to the hard work and dedication of so many people over a considerable period of time. The**

**Black Bitch and St Michael sculptures, and their settings, are a wonderful enhancement to the town. Now our young people are being given the opportunity to feel much more a part of it all, and an incentive to learn more about why the sculptures are there."**

**"A wide range of possible options is up for discussion."**



LINLITHGOW  
ARTS GUILD  
DEDICATED TO LIVE ARTS SINCE 1988

## LINLITHGOW ARTS GUILD RESTARTS CONCERT SERIES

Following the sell-out success of its short series of socially distanced "Concerts 4 Summer Days", the Arts Guild is re-starting its normal winter series of classical music concerts in September.

A programme of 7 concerts has been booked, and a card listing these is planned to be enclosed with this edition of the BB. The Arts Guild hopes that readers will either retain these or pass them on to someone outside the town who may be interested.

The varied events include items for piano, strings, saxophone and harp, as well as an acted and sung lighthearted event entitled "Creating Carmen" which is expected to appeal to a wide audience. There are some changes from traditional venues, due to Linlithgow Academy Theatre being unavailable.

Half of the events will be in St. Michael's Parish Church, and the others in Bo'ness Town Hall. Hopefully the journey to Bo'ness won't be too far for Linlithgow audiences and the Academy will become available again in the future.

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*Joseph Pilates said*

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if it is completely flexible at 60, you are young."*

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# LADAS - 2021 GROWING SEASON AT OAKWELL



Courgettes

'Zebrune' shallots

Onions

Summer Cabbage

Leeks

*Some of the vegetables harvested from and growing at Oakwell allotments*



It seems to have been a great year for growing fruit and vegetables with plot holders reporting large crops and very few, if any, failures. We had a slow start to the growing season with a record 16 days of frost in April and later a very warm and dry July. However, plants are amazing things and respond well to the weather conditions.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Harvest Celebrations due to the Covid restrictions. One of the events in our celebrations is judging the best plots and if we leave it too late the plots are becoming empty as crops are harvested so they don't look at their very best. We are hoping that with the easing of Covid restrictions we will be able to hold our Harvest Celebrations again in 2022.

## Things to do in your fruit and vegetable garden in August

- >> Prune fruited summer Raspberry canes to ground level leaving this year's fresh green shoots, which will fruit next year.
- >> Sow Spring Cabbages for overwintering either in pots or in the ground in the second week of August.
- >> Plant Brassicas for autumn use or overwintering, such as Winter Cauliflowers and Kale, where Peas and Beans have been cleared. Make sure that you net them to prevent damage from caterpillars and Woodpigeons.
- >> Harvest Sweetcorn, Garlic, Onions, Shallots, Beetroot, Celery, French Beans, Runner Beans.
- >> Begin to earth up Leeks this month to give long white stems
- >> Second Early Potatoes will be ready for lifting this month.
- >> Watch out for blight on potato leaves at this time of year as a combination of rain and warm weather provides ideal conditions for this serious fungal disease. Brown patches develop on the edge of the leaves and spread. If you do see signs of blight on the leaves, cut the shaws (haulms, foliage) down and put them in the brown bin. If left, the spores will drop down onto the soil and infect and ruin the potato tubers. Potato blight is what caused the Great Potato Famine in Ireland in the 1840s.

## Potato Blight

Brown patches develop on the edge of the leaves and spread.



Linlithgow and District Allotment Society

# The Story Behind Christie Elliot

This is the story of a hobby that became a passion and finally an obsession. For the last 20 years I have been in love with coloured gemstones, buying rings to match the colour of my tops or to remind me of special holiday locations. Rings moved onto bracelets and ear-rings, all in the pursuit of finding unusual and unique gemstone jewellery.

As my passion for jewellery grew, so did my need to learn more about these unique wonders of nature and in 2019, I successfully passed the prestigious Diploma in Gemmology, allowing me to become a 'Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain'.

## So, what does this all mean?

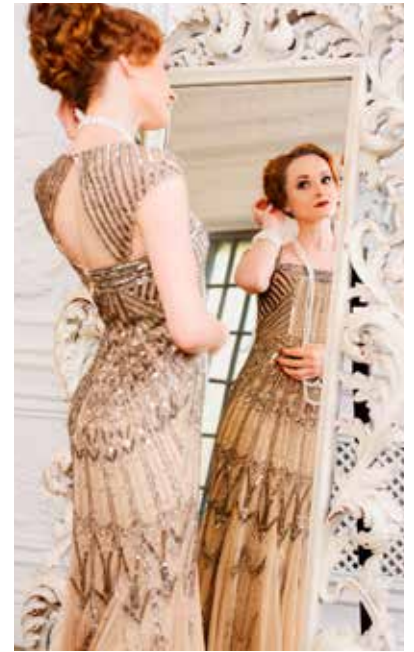
I wanted to know how to identify the right red or the 'blue' gemstone. Was the red gemstone a ruby, a garnet or a spinel? The blue gemstone could be a sapphire, an aquamarine or a topaz! Or were they just coloured glass! I wanted to make sure that the gemstone was natural and not an 'imposter' and I wanted to understand how to take care of and protect the gemstones in my jewellery. As a certified gemmologist, this is the knowledge and experience I bring to buying and selling these pieces of jewellery. Although it's an online venture, you can feel comfortable in the knowledge that all the pieces are tested by a qualified gemmologist with a personal love for jewellery!

Zoom viewing appointments can be booked via the website so that you can see the jewellery in more detail. If you live in the Linlithgow area then it's also possible to arrange a personal viewing to try on the piece before making a decision

## So where did the name come from?

Christie Elliot was conceived from a combination of my maiden name, Christie, and the maternal ancestral name from my husband's family. A family venture with some family history embedded in the name.

I've lived in Linlithgow with my husband and 2 sons for more than 20yrs. You may not know me as Christie Elliot but some of you will have definitely seen me over the years in local cafes, at the rugby pitch or jumping about at Xcite fitness classes! My website will reveal my name so go and have a look!



## Why buy vintage jewellery?

- It's unique and romantic - a little piece of history that's unique to you
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## WEB

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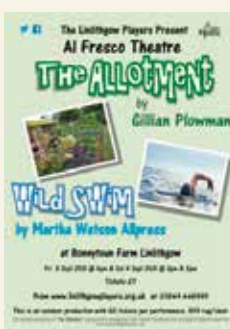
## 'THE PLOT THICKENS' FOR THE LINLITHGOW PLAYERS

Live theatre is back in Linlithgow with an outdoor production at an exciting new venue for the Linlithgow Players. Their Al Fresco Theatre event on 3rd and 4th September at Bonnytown Farm is a double bill of a one act play called **The Allotment** and a single performer piece titled **Wild Swim**.

*"Our productions often start with a germ of an idea that develops into a seed and once planted, the whole team is involved in its growth!"* said director Liz Drewett.

*"I'd read The Allotment, by Gillian Plowman some years ago and loved it – so when we started to think about emerging from lockdown, working out how and where we could rehearse and perform and what our audiences might enjoy, it was an obvious choice. It's a fun play with 5 strong roles for women, lots of humour and a deeper undercurrent flowing through it. Performing it in an allotment adds another dimension that I hope audiences will really enjoy."*

The pieces share a similar theme of women finding inventive ways to cope with events that life has thrown at them. In **The Allotment**, four women have created a fantasy allowing them to be who they want to be, forgetting their realities, until a fifth joins them and starts encouraging them to face the truth – with unexpected results.



In **Wild Swim** by Martha Watson Allpress, we meet Lauren who is persuaded to plunge into a frosty, muddy lake as a way of re-connecting with her Mum. It's a beautifully written, emotional piece that manages to explore loss with humour and is ultimately joyful and life-affirming.

Rehearsals are well underway, taking place mostly in gardens around Linlithgow.

*"Our neighbours have no doubt been a bit confused about the slightly odd things that they will have heard over the fence as we start to get into character! We also had a lovely evening down by the loch where we managed some of the rehearsal in beautiful sunshine before retreating under the Vennel flats when the heavens opened!"*

*"I guess over lockdown, people have discovered more about what is on our*

*doorstep and the value of neighbours and community. Performing these plays has encouraged us as a group to explore and find locations in Linlithgow. We really appreciate the hospitality of our hosts at Grow Wild, Bonnytown Farm and their willingness to support our production by allowing us to use their beautiful allotment site. And if you come for the Saturday matinee performance, you can pop into the farm shop to pick up some veggies too! We really hope as many people as possible can join us for what will be a unique piece of theatre in the afternoon sunshine or as the sun sets."*

Performances Friday 3rd September at 6 pm and Saturday 4th September at 2 pm and 6 pm.

Tickets (50 per performance) are available via the Linlithgow Players website [www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk](http://www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk) or if you can't buy online, please phone 07849 448999 to reserve tickets. Bring your own chair or rug and dress for the weather!

*This amateur production of The Allotment is presented by arrangement with Concord theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd [www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)*  
*This amateur production of Wild Swim is by arrangement with Nick Hern Books from the collection ISOLATED BUT OPEN commissioned by Papatango Theatre Company.*

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# LINLITHGOW'S LUNG - THE LOCHSIDE WALK

Bruce Jamieson



*A 1966 aerial view*

I like to think of our loch as Linlithgow's lung, a breathing space – especially for those who used it as a lifeline, a daily, circular walk, during the period of strict lockdown. In summer sunshine and winter snow, I tried to walk round it on a daily basis during the darkest days of the pandemic.



The aerial view at the top of this article was taken in 1966. Bordering the loch, in the foreground, the sunlit field is Lady's Park, a part of which was earlier used as communal grazing ground for the townsfolk's cattle. As such, it was called Calf Lea. Today, the land is held in trust

for the community and leased out to Lochview Farm to graze sheep. A project to develop the area as a community garden was once suggested and fairly recently, the local authority has intimated that it intends to issue a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire a strip of land in order to create a wider footpath along the western shore of the loch.

To the north of Lady's Park, was a plot of land, bordering the Bo'ness Road, which, in the 17th and 18th centuries, belonged to the town blacksmiths – the Rait family and later the Browns. Their forge was up Dogwell Wynd, so the plot of land on which they used to keep horses, prior to their being reshod, was called Dogwell Acre. Running down one edge of this field is the Mill Burn which flows out of the loch into the River Avon.

Looking along the North side of the loch in the 1966 view, what strikes you immediately is the lack of trees – traditionally not welcomed by Scottish farmers as they harboured pigeons which could eat their crops. Instead, fields stretch right to the water's edge. Most of the land belonged to Parkhead Farm and was Crown Property, leased out to farmers who used the fields for both arable and livestock grazing.



*Cows graze along the shore in the 1950s*

Still partly visible (and shown on the 1966 view) was a right of way (the Queen's Walk) which led from the Bo'ness Road to Upper Bonnytown Farm.

The small hillock to the north was called Michael's Mount and further east, at a spot opposite Linlithgow Palace, an archaeological excavation in 1919 uncovered a collection of 16th

and 17th century musket balls. The theory is that soldiers, stationed in and around the palace, practised their musket fire by shooting at a target set up across the loch. Further down, is an island called The Rickle – possibly the site of a lake dwelling called a crannog.

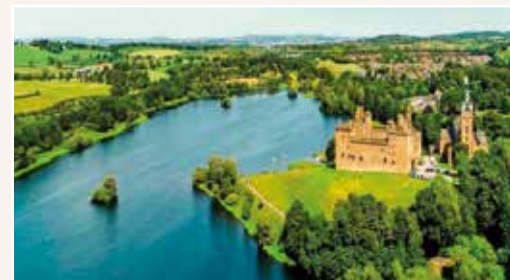


*A boatman in the north east corner of the loch, c 1880. Cormorant Island is in the background*

Cormorant Island is still used as a roost for the eponymous fishing birds and further to the east, there used to be another small island called Heron's Inch. The name obviously came from the fact that herons would roost on the islet. A local, amateur historian, George Arthur, once told me, in the early 1980s that since the year 1926 he had never seen a heron on the loch. At least one grey heron is now back and has been frequently spotted fishing along the shoreline. The, now vanished, island was created in 1830 during a prolonged period of freezing conditions when stones were carried out on horse-carts and dumped into the water.

The North side of the loch ends at the Hatchery Burn where the Linlithgow Hatchery Club (set up in 1884) released trout fry into the loch.

Further round is the Bonnytown Burn – sometimes referred to as the Hunt Burn – so called after the Linlithgowshire Hunt kennels which were situated at the entrance to Bonnytown House.



*A 2019 aerial view*

The line of trees along the north lochside was planted in an attempt to mask the sight and sound of the motorway, the M9, the "Linlithgow section" of which was first mooted in 1961 and



eventually opened in December 1972.

I had not long moved to Linlithgow in 1971 when I was quickly made aware of the controversy surrounding the road construction which was designed to alleviate the amount of traffic passing through Linlithgow which was situated on the main route, the A9, from Edinburgh to Stirling. (With the opening of the motorway Linlithgow High Street was downgraded to an extension of the A803.) Some would argue that the "by-pass" has been relatively successful, although the lack of a four-way Junction at Burghmuir has always been lamented. Whether the shelter belt of planting has done much to conceal or deaden the sound of motorway traffic is also debatable.

In the 1960s, heated debates occurred within Linlithgow Town Council with Councillors McGinley and Wade at the forefront. There were several objections to the original planned motorway route and changes had to be made to overcome (at least partially) the objections of several local landowners and environmentalists. One initial plan, to construct a motorway service station right on the lochside was, thankfully, dropped!



*An autumn aerial view*

This view, taken in the autumn, clearly shows the footpath along the north shore created by Historic Scotland. It also reveals that once the leaves are off the deciduous trees there is very little screening of the M9. At the top right, the wooded area is integral to the wildlife-friendly reserve which a former occupant of the cottage at 69 Blackness Road was anxious to preserve. Colonel Chambre (Chum) Ponsonby, often against considerable opposition, prevented a footpath being constructed along the south side of the loch through an area known as Bear Island.

Walkers have to take a short detour once they have passed through the field to the east of the wooded area. The field is called Fiddler's Croft and although the origin of this name is uncertain, several explanations have been put forward over the years. In early documents, no fewer than 18 different spellings can be found, including Feliliscroft (1335) Fethelcroft (1451) Fiddillariscroft (1458) Fiddillcroft (1537) and Fiddels Croft (1667). The name 'Fiddler's' does not appear until the early 19th century. Angus Macdonald, the author of "Place

Names of West Lothian" attributes the name either to the fact that the park is shaped like a fiddle - or that it belonged to a fiddler! I was always led to believe that the name originated in a word for a reed used for thatching - although I can find no reference to the use of this term.

The area was also occasionally referred to as Broom Field where that plant was harvested and crushed as winter fodder for cattle, and there does exist a 1567 document commanding the Keeper of the Palace to "labour and manure certain faulds (fields) of brume within the Palace grounds, to the east of the Pealis (Peel) for pasturing of our souveraine's meiris (king's mares) thairin." Was broom seed sown on this area of land using a simple hand-machine called a sowing fiddle?



*Below centre : Sowing seed using a 'fiddle'*

Even in the last 50 odd years, the walk around Linlithgow Loch has changed. The footpath, constructed by Historic Scotland, is in need of repair. The aged willow trees at the water's edge are cracking and collapsing. The shelter belt of trees along the motorway needs work. Further effort is required to care for the wildlife who inhabit what is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. And the blue-green algae problem still exists. But it is still a marvellous resource - the living lung of Linlithgow.



*Reed bed at Fiddler's Croft*



## BLACK BITCH

**HOURS:** Monday- Thursday 11am-12pm, Friday & Saturday 11am-1am & Sunday 12.30am-12pm

**LIVE MUSIC is BACK!**

Pure Malt playing in the bar on Sunday 29th August from 5pm  
Karaoke Night's will commence from 28th August from 9am- late and the last Saturday of the month there after.

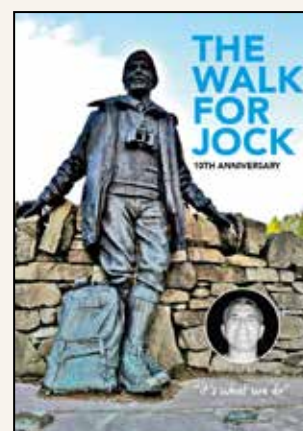
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**COMING SOON!!**

**The Walk for Jock 10th anniversary booklet.**

Containing a comprehensive guide to the West Highland Way from a jockers perspective, poetry, history, plus the "lockdown quiz"!!

Contact Davie:  
[twfj96@gmail.com](mailto:twfj96@gmail.com) or  
[deep.sea21@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:deep.sea21@yahoo.co.uk)



# GARY CLINTON, MUSIC TUTOR

## Grade 8 Exam

Music examination can be a peculiar thing. Whilst marking criteria exists for music exams there is undoubtedly a certain element of subjectivity involved. Additionally you never get full marks on a piece of music. Nobody ever gets 100%. At the end of the day it's a live performance and I don't think it's possible to say something couldn't have been played better. When we listen to our favourite albums we are not listening to the first take but rather the 4th or 5th (or 45th in my case sometimes!) and in fact what typically happens in this digital age is parts are constructed and edited together from lots of takes. So these considerations are why the recent Grade 8 exam results of one of my top students, Euan Millar (21, Mid Calder) is... let's just say... impressive.

## Student Diaries

Euan has been making the journey over the Dechmont hills to my home studio in Linlithgow since 2013 literally every single week of the year except maybe a short break for a family summer holiday. That attendance in itself is impressive, never mind what Euan has accomplished musically, and it shows just how much commitment and dedication is required to get good at something. However it's not all just about practice hours.

It's also about mentality, work ethic and being able to handle the pressure of live performance because at the end of the day, any musician worth their salt has to regularly go and perform well live – it's not enough to just play brilliantly in your own bedroom. This for me is an area Euan just 'has it' but what is also really nice about him is he is one of the most humble, well natured and friendly students I have had the pleasure of working with. I am going to reveal exactly what Euan has accomplished later – firstly let's find out why he loves guitar and what spurs him on.

## Interview

**Q1: 'What was your first guitar?**

**"Started out on a little ¾ scale acoustic and then moved to my first electric, an Epiphone SG, after I had got the hang of the basics."**

**Q2: What made you want to start?**

**"I've always been drawn to music, liking bands like Slade, AC/DC and Muse from a young age. My Dad also had an old acoustic that always sat in the corner of the bedroom that I was drawn to. I just wanted to make the same music as the guys I enjoyed listening to and once I**

Euan  
Millar



**started, I just couldn't stop. I still have so much more to learn which makes me continue to want to play guitar every single day."**

**Q3: What's the best thing about being a guitar player?**

**"I guess you could say the freedom. Playing guitar gives you the ability to entertain yourself, create new music, and express yourself in any way you see fit. It's like an extension of yourself that can offer you something new every time you pick it up."**

**Q4: Who are your favourite guitarists / artists?**

**"I love all the old and new blues legends, BB King, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, etc. But also, a lot country, metal, and other players. Recently I've got really into the playing of John Mayer and Mark Tremonti is another one that stands out - his legato style and right-hand attack are as good as I've ever seen."**

**Q5: Do you have any aspirations with guitar / music?**

**"I'd love to perform one day for a living. Although I'm at university studying physics, my dream is to be in a band. The thought of writing music, then performing it to people everywhere, and maybe giving them something to enjoy really attracts me. I'd see it as less of a job and more of a blessing."**

**Q6: Have there ever been times learning has been difficult or a struggle?**

**All the time! Whether it's learning a new style/technique, or trying to record a perfect take of a song there are loads of things that frustrate me. But that's part of the fun I guess, gives me something to chase down.**

## Rockschool Virtual Festival Will Rock You

Well chasing down a Grade 8 exam is certainly something Euan has accomplished. The Grade 8 is the highest level of private music examination and is the entry requirement for most universities and top music schools. Euan's result was 93% and this was not only the highest Grade 8 mark any of my students have achieved in 13 years of teaching – it's the highest mark at any Grade level. Other tutors I know were amazed too and in fact it wouldn't surprise me if it's the highest Grade 8 that Rockschoo (the examination board) have ever seen.

As I mentioned earlier, you can't get full marks on performing live pieces of music so you are always going to drop points - even after a brilliant performance. Rockschoo's threshold for 'distinction' (the highest banding) is 90%. It's incredibly hard - I mean really, really hard - to get this level so for Euan to be comfortably in this banding is a superb achievement and this was recognised by Rockschoo by inviting Euan to perform at their 'Virtual Festival' which is reserved only for their very top candidates.

By the time this article reaches you the festival will have taken place but you will be able to watch Euan's performance – which was recorded from his bedroom – via Rockschoo's socials so the best place to find it is there (@rslawards), or via my guitar tutor Twitter account as I'll be posting things there as and when. For me, Euan's story is an inspiration to anyone, of any age, to pick up guitar or an instrument. There is so much passion there but also he's not had it all his own way. He mentioned he feels it can be a struggle at times but it's part of the fun. So at the tender age of 21, with the highest level of the Grade 8 and a virtual festival performance broadcast to a worldwide audience already under his belt, plus a degree in Physics from Herriot Watt university...well... he wouldn't be the first musical physicist to make it in the music industry would he? Euan certainly doesn't seem under pressure to me - he's ready to break free.

You can keep up to date with Gary's tuition business through social media  
Twitter: @GaryGuitar4  
Facebook:  
garyclintonguitartutor





Constables **Chris Ashley** and **Peter Robertson** are the Community Police Officers based at Linlithgow Police Station, which is now located within the newly refurbished Tam Dalyell House at Linlithgow Partnership Centre, High Street, Linlithgow.

During the last month, Constable Ashley has been out on the high street with the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers educating drivers regarding irresponsible parking. Unfortunately, this issue is still causing problems for the high street and 11 fixed penalty notices were issued in the month of June. Please be mindful of local restrictions and signage to avoid falling foul! They 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 month, 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.

## DSDAS – A MESSAGE FROM POLICE SCOTLAND

Police Scotland's Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse aims to prevent domestic abuse by giving people the right to ask about the background of their partner.

It also allows concerned members of the public, such as relatives and friends, the right to ask about someone's partner if they are concerned that person has been abusive in the past.

You can submit a Right to Ask application if you are concerned about yourself or someone else.

Please visit [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)



## WARMER WEATHER



Please be mindful and speak to your children and young adults about the dangers of open water in the recent hot weather we have been having. Although tempting to cool off, these waters, particularly the Loch, Canal and Quarries present hidden dangers that even the most skilled swimmers would struggle in. Be safe and mindful around open water. Please visit [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)

## ONLINE SCAMS AND FRAUD

Over the past couple of months reports of online scams and fraud have been on the increase. These are becoming more and more sophisticated. Here are a few examples

- >> Courier fraud
- >> Identity fraud
- >> Online shopping and auction sites
- >> Romance and dating fraud
- >> Ticketing fraud
- >> Scam mail
- >> Computer software service fraud, banking, and card fraud

TAKE FIVE is a national campaign that offers straightforward and impartial advice to help everyone protect themselves from preventable financial fraud. This can be found on the Police Scotland website.

SO WHEN ONLINE BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY DECISIONS OR INVESTMENTS... TAKE FIVE

### STOP

Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

### CHALLENGE

Could it be fake? It's ok to reject or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

### PROTECT

Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it.



## BOGUS CALLERS / WORKMEN IN LINLITHGOW AREA

"Rogue traders" usually cold call, claiming to be workers offering to make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. They will charge over inflated prices for work that is often of poor quality or completely unnecessary. If you feel threatened, unsafe or suspicious of a caller then contact police immediately.

- >> Be on guard if someone turns up unexpectedly.
- >> Use a door chain or bar and keep it on whilst talking to callers.
- >> Always ask for identification.
- >> Do not feel pressured into agreeing to immediate work.
- >> Do not agree to buy from the first person who calls.
- >> Do not pay cash up front.
- >> Do shop around if you decide you need work done.
- >> Do report them. Don't ever feel embarrassed if you feel you have been the victim of doorstep crime.



Why not consider the council's Trusted Trader Scheme.



## TO CONTACT THE POLICE...

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

Alternatively you can email [westlothiancommunityeast@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:westlothiancommunityeast@scotland.pnn.police.uk) or through Contact us Service

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

Hopefully when we are through the pandemic the Linlithgow Community Police Surgeries will resume. We shall keep you posted.

# LINLITHGOW HIGH STREET – 400 YEARS OF CHANGE,

## PART 3 – CHANGES TO THE STREET

Laurie Alexander

### CHANGES TO THE STREET

The most significant change in the High Street over the past 400 years was the narrowing of its width between the east and west ports. At the end of the previous installment we saw that the building on the south-east side of Dog Well Wynd had advanced by 10 feet into the street. In the minute books I found many examples in the 1600's, where the town council had approved building into the street. Mostly the approval was to advance 'in line' with a neighbour (or neighbours) who had already extended forward, therefore the dimension was not given. However, I did find a few where the distance was given and this ranged from 10 to 14 feet. This applied to all parts of the street and by way of illustrating this, the street width at Hamilton's Land is examined in the following paragraph.

*(The earliest record found for a building advancing was dated 20.5.1430, when Robert of Levynstoun, burgess, was permitted 'to throw forward his tenement on the south side' by 10 feet.)*

Another major change took place c.1800, when the street level at West Port House was lowered to remove a nuisance 'hump' in the road. This is looked at in the second part of this installment.

### STREET WIDTH AT HAMILTON'S LAND

Hamilton's Land, fig 1, is an interesting example as it not only indicated that the frontage was carried forward by 11.5 feet, it also shows why the gables, of what was two separate properties, came into existence. The first part to advance (in 1630) was the gable on the right. It was another 44 years before the gable on the left was built, and, at the same time, the access stair was roofed over. The roofs of each building were originally parallel to the street - this can still be seen on either side of the central chimney. It was during this process of advancement that gables began to appear as part of the street frontage. Adding a gable was the expensive way to extend, and the cheaper option was simply to extend the roof downwards at the expense of visually losing a storey. This option can be seen on the west side of the Cross, which advanced by 16 feet (4.88m).



Fig 1



Fig 2

This is shown in a photograph, Fig 2, taken by Thomas Begbie (1840-1915). The extended part of the roof appears darker (clay pantiles) than the original roof at the top (slated).

On the south side of the street opposite Hamiltons Land, the frontage advanced by 11.5 feet, which, when added to the 10.5 feet on north side, resulted in a total narrowing of the street amounting to 22 feet (6.75m). This narrowing varied slightly at other parts of the street.

### HUMP IN ROAD AT WEST PORT REMOVED

The road level was originally higher between St John's Avenue and the Port at the west end, and the council decided it should be lowered. West Port House (the oldest surviving property in the street) was an early 16th century Laird's\* house which relates to the original street level. When the level was lowered c.1800, the extant high wall was vital as a retaining wall for the house.

*\* This was still occupied by a descendent of the Hamilton family in the list of the Burgh Roods for 1687.*

The montage (shown opposite) further illustrates how the floor levels of 293 High Street relate to the lowering of the street which had been done in two stages in 1791 and 1830.

*Between points A & B, the floor level relates to the houses on the east side indicating the earliest phase of this building.*

*Between points B & C, the floor level is much lower, showing that this part had been rebuilt after 1830.*

John Wood's 1820 map indicates a property in the B-C position which possibly belonged to a Mr Walker. On the 1856 OS Town Map, this part of the building was shown as a ruin (probably a result of the street lowering) but the 1897 OS plan shows that it had been rebuilt.

In the first part, I looked at the major changes that had occurred which had a direct effect on the appearance of the street. What I discovered from my trawl of the council minute books, was that rules had been applied to new building and alteration work, in much the same way as our modern system of planning and building control. For example the council ensured that each property owner was protected from issues as diverse as being overlooked, loss of daylight, and several other regulations that are familiar to us today.

We'll now examine one council rule which had a direct effect on the appearance of building frontages. This was that plot owners were responsible for the boundary\* on their west side as viewed from the street. A consequence of this was that buildings at the rear had to be built against this boundary, resulting in the access close being confined to the opposite end of the frontage. Of course, rules are often broken, and there are a few instances where the reverse is the case.

*\* Hawthorn hedge was originally used (to prevent livestock entering a neighbouring plot) and this was eventually replaced by stone walls.*





The former road level has been indicated by a broken yellow line.



North side of street

Boundaries are shown yellow and close position is indicated thus; **C**

Plot number 4 is 1.75 roods wide, sufficient width to permit a central access close

at the opposite end from the North side shown above, but this is because it is viewed from the street (both adhere to the rule re the West

My recollection (from the mid 1940's) is that the plots were part of a gap site, which remained that way until Brae Court was built. The aerial view, fig 3, indicates the 'gap site' and the inset image shows the original building frontage. The street plan shows that all of the plots had observed the council rule, consequently access closes are on the east side.



Fig 3

## CLOSES AND PENDS ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE STREET

The street frontage plan below shows properties in the north-west quarter (opposite St John's Avenue) which were replaced by the 1960's redevelopment. The plots demonstrate that the owners were responsible for the boundary on their west side, as can be seen by the position of the buildings at the rear. Consequently all of the closes are at the opposite end of the frontage. The second plot from the left (No 2) has an 'open' external stair at the rear providing access to the house at the first floor. Access at the rear was common and included enclosed turnpike stairs - these are easy to spot on the OS sheets, because they had rounded corners.

## CLOSES AND PENDS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE STREET

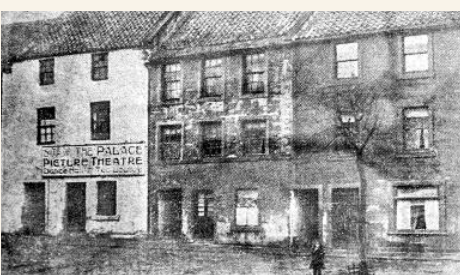
On the opposite side of the street, on the east side of the New Well Wynd, a similar arrangement is revealed - see plan below. The closes appear to be

boundary). The plan, dating to 1856, shows that all of the properties had advanced, (the minute book revealed this was by 1662).

In the 1664 list of roods, the plots I've numbered 1 to 3, are listed as belonging to a single owner called John Calder. The plot size is given as 3 roods, but it is the original single width plots that are clearly identifiable in this much later plan. John may simply have owned the three properties.



South side of street



Boundaries are shown yellow and close position is indicated thus; **C**

When the 1664 list of the burgh roods appeared, the roods marked 1 to 3 were in single ownership.

The original roods are still clearly visible on this, the first Ordnance Survey plan, indicating the layout was unchanged after 190 years.

NB: Examples of wider than normal burghage plots will be explored in the concluding installment.

This will appear in issue 85.



## THIS IS THE TIME TO BURY TREASURE!

**L**esley always likens spring flowering bulbs, like daffodils and tulips, to buried treasure. You bury them in the soil, in borders and pots, at this time of year and they appear as if by magic as flowering treasure next spring. We have our biggest selection of spring flowering bulbs in September, so if you want some treasure to bury you need to start planning now!



One of our favourite places for perennial tulips is in our mint barrel. Early dwarf Kaufmannia tulips had finished when the picture was taken, but the dwarf narcissus and the white and purple tulips made a great display. As their leaves die down, having 'refilled' the bulbs with next year's flowers, our spearmint grows up, hiding the leaves and giving us a harvest of fresh mint leaves all summer. Freeze handfuls of it in freezer bags to use all winter.



This jam jar of the daffodil Actea (a type of Pheasant's Eye) sits on the windowsill with a view out to the spread of Actaea bulbs in the lawn. A spread of the same variety makes more impact than a mixture of different daffodils. Actea is one of the last to flower in April and has a lovely fragrance – great for cutting and bringing indoors. After the flowers finish, allow the leaves six weeks to build up next year's flowers before you cut them down.



Many bulbs with single flowers provide great invaluable sources of nectar and pollen for pollinating insects during the spring. The bed at St John's Avenue has single tulips, daffodils and later the globe heads of Alliums, all adding to the annual feast for visiting wildlife.

A late surprise is this little dwarf species tulip Batalini Bright Gem that we have planted in the space between some stepping stones leading towards a slate sculpture. Suddenly at your feet these little gems appear and delight you on a late spring day. Where are you going to bury your spring treasure this month?



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# The Rotary Club of Linlithgow & Bo'ness

We did all this with your support



**SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES**

Our club, along with all other Rotary Clubs have now entered a new Rotary Year (1st July to 30th June 2022) with a new Rotary International Logo for this year and new aims to be of service both locally and internationally.

However, looking back we are proud of what we managed to achieve during the period July 2020 to June 2021.

Considering the circumstances with Covid lock downs etc, and not being able to have face to face meetings we still managed to assist a number of local and international organisations and charities.

Amongst them were donations to all the charities shown on this page.



**Shelterbox** - Rotary founded charity providing emergency disaster relief across the globe delivering aid and shelter to those who need it most.



**Impact Foundation** - Established a 'Covid Care Centre' in India to treat the poorest patients.



**End Polio** - Rotary launched the global fight against polio in 1985 and since then has helped immunize more than 2.5 billion children.



**Quiet Waters** - Help to overcome personal, relational and spiritual difficulties; enhancing their ability to cope with bereavement, trauma and loss.



**Kinneil Youth Band** - Encourage young people to play an instrument, become a member of the senior band and perhaps follow a musical career.



**Burgh Beautiful** - Making Linlithgow more beautiful.



A big thankyou to our members and supporters who helped raise the funds and make these donations possible.



**LYPP** - Support the young people of Linlithgow and the surrounding areas in all aspects of their development and foster a sense of 'hope' in their lives.



**West Lothian Foodbank**  
Provide emergency food and support to local people facing crisis throughout West Lothian.



**Bo'ness Flower Beds** - Making Bo'ness more beautiful.

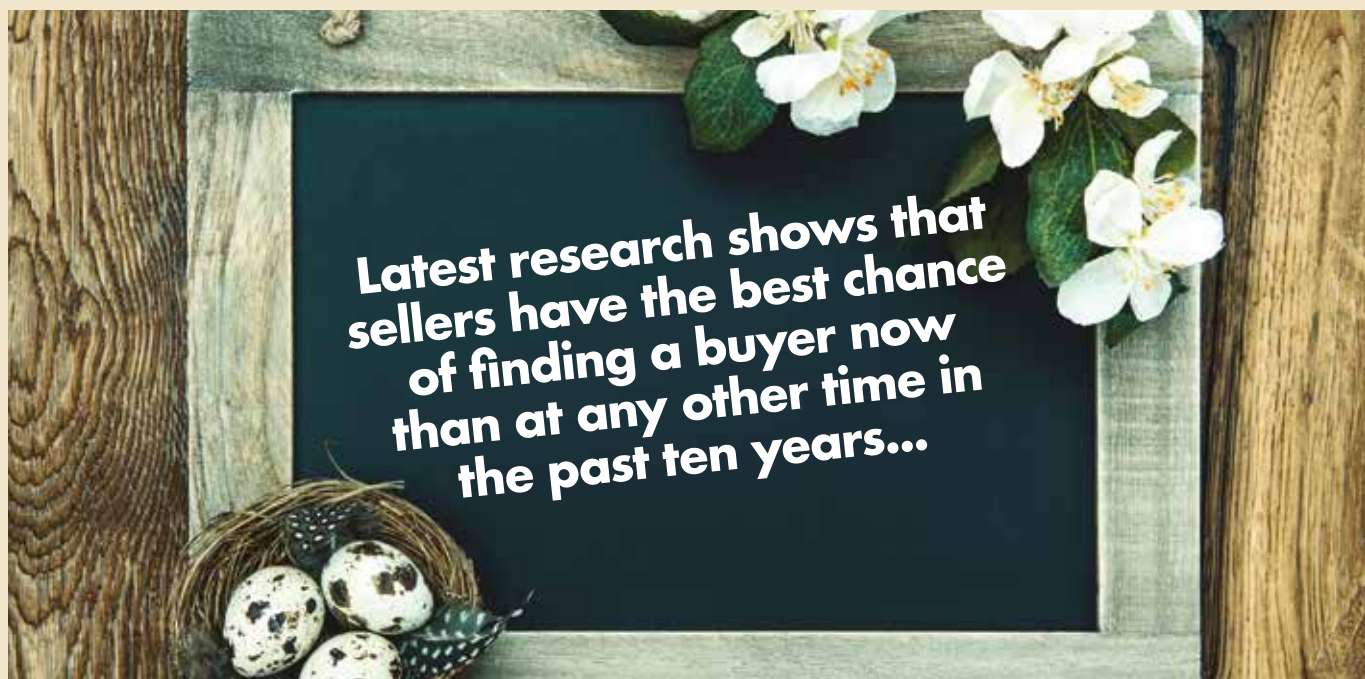
If you would like to join our club and become one of the 1.2 million members throughout the world giving something back to their communities then please contact us on our website at <https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/contact.php?ClubID=96>



**The Scottish Poppy Appeal** - Provide life changing support to the armed forces community in Scotland.



**Bo'ness Storehouse** - Provide emergency food and support to local people in Bo'ness facing crisis.



### The Housing Market

A recent report from Rightmove highlights the strength of the current housing market.

With record numbers of people looking to move, their latest research shows that sellers have the best chance of finding a buyer now than at any other time in the past ten years.

They compared 13 million property listings and tracked the journey of a property going up for sale, to it being marked sold subject to contract, and we have found that seven in ten sellers (68%) across Great Britain found a buyer between June 2020 and June 2021, which is the highest percentage recorded in a decade.

In comparison, just over half of properties up for sale successfully found a buyer between 2012 and early 2020, which highlights just how busy the market has been over the past year.

The hottest locations for sellers are all in Scotland, where 89% of sellers have successfully found a buyer, compared to 48% in London. The two top spots are the local authority areas of Falkirk and East Dunbartonshire.

Many Industry insiders predict the continuation of a strong housing market and upward pressure on house prices till the end of 2021 at least, beyond that opinions begin to vary.

### Heating Your Home

In previous articles we have touched on government initiatives to move to a zero carbon economy and the introduction of a ban on gas central heating boilers in new build properties from 2025 onwards, so we thought it might be worth commenting on possible alternative heat sources, specifically air source heat pumps.

They work by taking heat from the outside air and boosting it to a higher temperature using a compressor, kind of like a fridge in reverse. It is hoped that by using only electricity, ideally from a renewable source, as opposed to burning fossil fuels such as a gas or oil powered boiler, we can significantly reduce the country's carbon footprint. In theory they should use less electrical energy than the heat they produce. The pump absorbs heat from the outside air into a liquid refrigerant at a low temperature. Using electricity, the pump compresses the liquid to increase its temperature. The heat produced condenses back into water which is sent to your radiators, any remaining heat can be stored in your hot water cylinder.

That's the theory and presently the Government through the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) payments towards the cost of installing air to water air source heat pumps may be available, payments are made over 7 years though the scheme will close to new applications in March 2022, and it does not apply to air to air systems which use fans to move warmed air around your property.

### Some Points to Consider

>> An air to water pump typically currently costs £9,000 to £11,000 to install

>> Upgrades to pipework and larger radiators in your property may be recommended to allow sufficient volumes lower heat generated to circulate and provide the warmth required

>> Key to an efficient installation is the siting of the external fan to allow it to access sufficient volumes of outside air and a property needs to very well insulated and draught free as possible to make the air source systems both effective and efficient.

.....

*Figures courtesy of the Energy Saving Trust indicate that annual savings on heating costs range from £920 - £1,000 against an existing old storage heating system to £395-£425 against an older G rated gas boiler, based on an average sized four bedroom detached property. However, against a new A rated gas boiler there could possibly be an annual increase of £95 to £100 in heating bills, but of course you still have the potential for a carbon neutral heating system for your property.*



# THE DOLLHOUSE

## Summer Offers

Classic gel manicure and pedicure **£50**

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Three for two on all waxing

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**AUGUST PRIZE DRAW**

LIN GIN JULY COMPETITION WINNER  
**ANNE MARIE CLEMENT.**



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# A LINLITHGOW BRIDGE TRAGEDY

LORNE GRANT

**Remembering three best friends who went out to play on a summer's evening and never came home.**

It's my dad's fault, of course. While my life-long love of history might stem from the passionate teachings of Mr Jamieson during my time at Linlithgow Academy, my father was the one who used to drag my siblings and me around old graveyards when we were kids.

Since then, wherever I've been in the world, visiting the final resting places of fallen heroes has always been on my 'to do' list, whether enjoying a picnic with Francois Truffaut in the Cimetière de Montmartre in Paris, or hanging out with Johnny and Dee Dee Ramone at the Hollywood Forever in Los Angeles.

And yes, I know how weird this sounds, I do take solace in the fact that I'm not the only one – actually, far from it. Even the old burial grounds of Linlithgow witness such pilgrimages, as people come from far and wide to pay their respects to George 'Dod' Allan, Liverpool F.C. legend – the first 'Anfielder' to pull on the dark blue of Scotland.

But it's not just the headstones of the rich and famous that have a story to tell. While I am no longer a Lithgae boy, my dad's still here, and cutting through Linlithgow Cemetery in Braehead on my way to visit him one day, I glanced at an inscription on one granite memorial that took my breath away.

*In loving memory of 3 close friends*

**NIGEL ERSKINE**

**GARY McFARLANE**

**RONALD MURRAY**

*Tragically drowned 8th June 1959*

*All aged 11 years*

Now, I've lived in Linlithgow, on and off, for half my life, and I had never heard this story. So, what happened to these three best friends on that summer's day in 1959?

Work had begun on the new Linlithgow Bridge in March 1958. The original span had been built for horses and carriages, but not for the ever-increasing number of cars and lorries now thundering across it each day. It was expected to be completed by autumn 1959, at a cost of £164,000, and the main structure was in place that June, and was in the process of being strengthened.



To do this, the workmen had been using professionally constructed heavy rafts to float on the River Avon, inspiring many local youngsters to do the same, albeit on their own homemade versions.

That Monday evening, Gary and Ronald, both of Listloaning Road, and Nigel, of Kettilstoun Road, were playing on the water at the bridge on two such floats, borrowed from their friends. One of them jumped from the first raft to the second, capsizing both and throwing all three boys into the filthy depths.

The other young people on the shore could not reach them, so raced away for help. They met Jocky Muir, a long-time employee of Lovell's Avon paper mill, who was going door-to-door collecting for the upcoming Marches celebrations. He ran to nearby houses for help and recruited Thomas McGregor of Mill Road, who was a first aider. But by the time they arrived at the river, the surface was calm with no sign of the three friends. McGregor said, *"Tran down to the water side but could see nothing. The water was so dirty, it was impossible to see where the boys were."*

Police were soon on the scene, followed by the foreman of the construction squad and a crane man. All they could do was use grappling irons to retrieve three small bodies, caked in mud. Artificial respiration attempts were unsuccessful.

The boys had been inseparable companions. Ronald and Nigel were in the same class at Linlithgow Public School, where Gary had been dux the previous year, before switching to the Academy. It seemed fitting that, when buried on the Thursday of that same week, they should be interred in one grave, together.

The following Tuesday – Marches Day – Bo'ness & Carriden Band assembled in Listloaning Road to play a lament. Listening intently in the crowd was a near neighbour of the boys, Willie Alexander, who six years later, would become the head teacher at Linlithgow Public School.



The Avon tragedy remained with him, and he was a passionate advocate of children being taught how to swim for the rest of his life.

Two things strike me as I write this. The first is how quickly the boys were laid to rest after the incident, especially in the circumstances we find ourselves sixty years on, with the pandemic causing some funerals to be postponed for weeks. It made me think of my great-grandfather, who, 100 years ago, buried his four-year-old son in the morning and was back working down the mine in the afternoon.

The second is that, while some things change, others remain the same, as the hot weather led to our beautiful but dangerous Scottish waters taking a number of souls this summer.

As I've grown older, I've become more and more aware of my own mortality, I so much prefer to spend my time with the living rather than the dead these days – there will be plenty of time for the latter soon enough. But each time I cross the bridge over the Avon on the way home after visiting my old dad, I think of the boys – you're never truly gone as long as people remember you.

**P.S. I'm aware there will be Lithgae folk who are still around that knew Nigel, Gary, and Ronald, and I offer my sincerest apologies if this article has conjured up any unwanted memories. However, if you did know the boys and are happy to share your stories about them, I would love to hear from you.**

**A big thank you to Murdie Kennedy for sharing his wealth of local knowledge and helping to bring this sad tale to life.**





### REMOVE UNWANTED BLEMISHES WITH CRYOTHERAPY

Cryotherapy is for all skin types and offers the ideal treatment for the removal of unwanted skin blemishes.

#### WHAT SKIN CONDITIONS CAN CRYOTHERAPY TREAT?

- >> Skin tags
- >> Pigmentation such as, Sun damage / Age spots
- >> Cherry Angiomas / Blood spots
- >> Milia
- >> Warts
- >> Verrucae etc

We can treat children from 6 years+ for the removal of warts and verrucae with parental consent.

#### WHAT IS CRYOTHERAPY?

Cryotherapy is an advanced innovation that is a fast, effective, and safe for removing skin blemishes / lesions quickly and effectively.

Cryotherapy freezes the treated area killing the localised cells causing them to shrivel and die.

#### HOW DOES CRYOTHERAPY WORK?

The device emits a fine jet of Nitrous Oxide under high pressure, allowing us to work with millimetre precision. It destroys the tissue by freezing the intracellular fluid, forming ice shards and crystals which rupture the membrane destroying the cell.

Because of its accuracy it means there is no collateral damage to healthy tissue making it a very practical choice for clients.

#### HOW LONG ARE CRYOTHERAPY TREATMENTS?

The duration of the treatment time will depend on the surface area and the thickness of the lesion being treated. Typically, the procedure itself lasts from 3 to 30 seconds, so you can be in and out of the clinic quickly.

The overall appointment time can vary depending on the number of lesions to be treated so this can be from 15mins+

#### WHAT HAPPENS DURING TREATMENT AND WHAT TO EXPECT?

After an initial consultation, photographs are taken for documentation. The area is cleaned with an alcohol wipe and treated.

The device is held as close as possible to the skin lesion and moved quickly towards and away from it. This could be from 3 - 30 seconds, depending on the size and depth.

The treatment feels very cold that sometimes the brain is tricked into thinking it is hot. The overall sensation is a mild discomfort and completely bearable.

After treatment, a sensation like stinging nettle rash occurs. This sensation typically lasts 5 - 30mins.

The treated area will also display some mild swelling and redness, this typically returns to normal by the time the client leaves.

#### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER TREATMENT?

During the first few days a micro crust forms (think, tiny little scabs) and it may go darker. As the days pass, depending on what type of lesion has been treated it may either fall off or simply flake away leaving new fresh normal pigmented skin underneath. The healing time is 4 - 6 weeks.

Occasionally a blister may occur after treatment. If this happens the best thing to do is leave it as it is. Do not pop, poke or burst. This allows for protected healing to continue.

Throughout the healing it is necessary to apply (dab on) sunscreen of factor 30 - 50 on the treated area if it will be exposed to daylight. This is because the treated area becomes more sensitive and reactive to day light for 4 - 6 weeks post treatment. Wearing sunscreen will prevent the treated skin from the risks of hyperpigmentation (darkening of the skin) or hypopigmentation (lightening of the skin).

The larger the lesion in depth and size the more likely it is to require a follow up treatment. Warts and verrucae are most common to fall into this category.

#### WHAT DOES IT COST

CRYOTHERAPY TREATMENT (Face or Body)	CONSULTATION & 1 LESION £	EACH ADDITIONAL LESION (In the same appointment) £	FOLLOW UP TREATMENT & 1 LESION £	EACH ADDITIONAL LESION (In the same follow up appointment) £
<b>Cryotherapy</b> Skin Tags, Milia, Age spots, Sun damage, Cherry spots.	50	15	35	10
<b>Cryotherapy</b> Warts, Verrucae	60	20	45	15



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## ROSS MILLER TO STAR AT MINI FOLK FESTIVAL

Murdoch  
Kennedy



**Linlithgow's young piping sensation, Ross Miller, will star at next month's mini Folk Festival in the town.**

Ross had just released his debut album – 'The Roke' – when the pandemic struck, and he was signed up to headline the 2020 Linlithgow Folk Festival. Now he will provide an online concert on Friday September 10th at 8pm, and this will be the highlight of a reduced version of the usual five-day celebration of traditional music, dance, and song in the town.

The concert will feature some of the musicians who performed alongside Ross on his CD, which was on the short list for Album of the Year at the Trad Music Awards last December.

Over the last few months, the Folk Festival organisers have continued to plan in the hope that there could be some kind of event this year. They have now drawn up a programme, which includes an online Twinning concert, featuring groups from Linlithgow and its French counterpart Guyancourt on Thursday September 9th and two days of music centred around the Burgh Halls café and garden on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th. A special children's concert, called 'Weans' World' will take place on Saturday in the Rose Garden. Musicians will also be encouraged to play at various outdoor sights around the town, including beer gardens.

Announcing the plans for next month, Folk Festival Chair, **Neil MacDonald** said:

*"Over recent months, the Festival Committee has wrestled with the ever-changing regulations relating to indoor entertainment and Covid-19 in trying to salvage our annual September event.*

*Determined to put on some form of morale-boosting event to aid the return to normality, we settled on having a condensed presentation of music outdoors. We are grateful to the staff at the Burgh Halls and its café for their co-operation in allowing us for the first time to have two days of performances based there and the Rose Garden beyond.*

*In tandem with the concert for children in the Rose Garden, on-line concerts by the fabulous Ross Miller Band and our Town-Twinning partners, and some outdoor presentations around the town, we will indeed see a feast of music over 4 days.*

*I am so grateful as always to the unstinting efforts of the Committee and volunteers of the Folk Festival Association who have worked tirelessly to bring live music back to the town."*

Ross Miller is excited to be associated with his home-town Folk Festival again and told me:

*"I'm delighted that Linlithgow Folk Festival organisers are managing to hold an event this year. I'm looking forward to playing music for an appreciative audience again after what has been a very challenging 18 months for everyone. Here's hoping that next year we will be back to full strength with the festival we know and love!"*

Full details of the mini-Folk Festival can be found on the website [www.linlithgowfolk.com](http://www.linlithgowfolk.com) and on the Facebook page.

## WHISTLING FOR THE ELEPHANTS

### SANDI TOKSVIG

*At its heart, Toksvig has written a coming-of-age story about the main protagonist, a ten-year-old girl called Dorothy, and her journey of self-awareness and discovery as she moves gradually from the cosseted world of childhood, albeit a childhood more unusual and difficult than most.*

*"I was, for as long as I could remember, seeking something else, but I didn't know what. I couldn't see a fresh ocean of anything but I wanted to dive headlong into it. Even at ten I longed for desperate romance, nerve-jangling drama, or even just a minor vision from God."*

The story begins when Dorothy and her mother relocate – a little suddenly and mysteriously in the eyes of a ten-year-old – to join her father who is working abroad and has travelled ahead to set up the new homestead. Early in the narrative Dorothy reveals that her family are nomadic in their approach to life; always moving from one place to the next, never settling for too long in any one location.

*"Mother and I were...travelling. It was what we did. Always first class and always a long way. This is not a story about coming up the hard way. ...It should have been idyllic. It was, I suppose, an education of a sort. I could read a wine list and order any meal combination in perfect French by the time I was seven."*

Dorothy and her mother travel together on board the SS Hallensfjord over sea from Southampton to New York, a journey of just over one week, during which Dorothy is largely left to amuse and entertain herself. Her mother is a delicate creature, overwhelmingly lacking in maternal instinct, and spends the majority of each day reclining in her cabin, preparing herself mentally and physically for the social trials of dinnertime. Dorothy's colourful and open descriptions paint a vivid picture of her fellow passengers and daily routine of the ship.

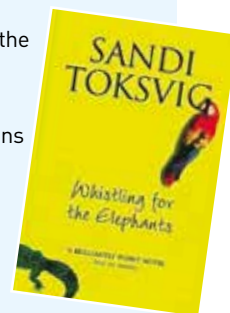
The novel is written entirely in a first-person monologue and is in the conversational, matter-of-fact tone of an intelligent, unindulged child. As a narrator Dorothy is beguiling and observant; we gain much more from her descriptive, factual account of life than she intends, creating an amusing double narrative for readers that works across multiple levels.

*"I spent most of my time [on the ship] pretending I was a spy,*

*but I don't think I was a very good one. In four days all I had worked out was that the lady in the Royal Suite was very kind to servants. One of the waiters visited her constantly and each time he came out he looked very happy."*

Dorothy's parents are equally 'hands off' in their parenting when they arrive in their latest hometown, Sassaspanek, a small town north of New York city. To Dorothy, at first glance, this small town has not much to offer in the way of friendships or warmth. After a less than positive start, the children of the town depart en masse for summer camp, leaving Dorothy once more to find her own way in life. The community of adults immediately surrounding the family are rather more absorbed in their own lives, loves and losses to be more than passingly concerned about the welfare of a young, lonely child.

For Dorothy, the magical essence of the story truly begins when she stumbles upon an old, run-down zoo on the outskirts of the town which is run by an eccentric group of women who live there in a delicate, blissful and completely unconventional harmony with the small collection of animals. There is much drama surrounding the homecoming of Artemesia the elephant. Gradually Dorothy uncovers more of the mystery and history surrounding the zoo's owners, and how they are intertwined with the residents of the town itself. Through the teachings and acceptance of the women, Dorothy begins to view a way of life beyond the one she has glimpsed thus far and visibly grows in self-esteem and self-worth in their company.



*Sandi Toksvig's novel is a thoroughly enjoyable, funny read with beautifully crafted characters and a real sense of time and place. There are many interesting passages of information about key figures in history and it is written using a charming, witty style meaning it will appeal to readers of all ages. There are also moments of harrowing, heartbreaking sadness – tragedies within the comedy – to give this novel an abundance of shape, intrigue and depth.*

**Lisa Nettleton**  
*Lisa Nettleton is a teacher and enjoys reading on her daily rail commute into Edinburgh*





Tillie is a 1 year 9-month-old Golden Doodle.

Tillie's family say they feel very lucky to have Tillie, describing her as the sweetest, cutest, MUDDIEST most loving family member.

Tillie makes her family smile every single day with her cheeky antics and makes them feel like the most special person in the world when they walk through the front door! She brings them every available sock as a present and loves to keep their faces nice and clean with kisses.

She loves to have fun in the garden chasing her ball, but her favourite activity is playing in the muddiest of puddles, followed by a big bath. Tillie has been known to enjoy luxury soaks when she sneaks in to steal her mums' expensive bubbly bath by being the fastest to jump in!

Tillie doesn't like the hot weather; she is very fluffy so it makes her tired. She loves to cool down in her paddling pool and has a great game of catching floating apples in there ... yummy!

The place you are most likely to find Tillie is on her favourite chair by the window, watching the world go by and having a little snooze. This is where she sees the postman who she sometimes shouts at but discovered that Raymond the postman will give her some hotdog if she sits nicely for him!

During lockdown Tillie missed the beach but luckily her family just need to say "Beecraigs" to her and they get a happy head tilt. She is the happiest of dogs sniffing around and finding muddy forest bogs to get into.

Like Tillie, many pets don't enjoy hot temperatures as much as their humans. Particularly pets with thicker coats and dark coloured coats which attract the heat very quickly.

The most common dangers in summer for pets are overheating, heatstroke, dehydration, exhaustion, burnt paws and intoxication.

## Be Water Savvy

Fresh water should always be available to your pet. There are many compact travel items which make it easy to take water on walks and for car journeys.

The beach is a common risk factor. Sea water has a high salt content which dehydrates dogs, and they can become very ill very quickly.

Blue-Green Algae, found in many natural open bodies of water, such as Linlithgow Loch, is extremely dangerous for pets - contact with their coat or if ingested can be fatal. Emergency Veterinary care should be sought immediately.

Water for pets to play in is an excellent way to keep them entertained and cool, just do so with caution. Staying home instead of going for a walk and using a paddling pool in the garden is an excellent way to keep cool and stay safe. Many foods will float whilst raw carrot will sink - a great way to raise the challenge and fun for pets to work out.

Freezing pets' toys and making pet food ice cubes keep them entertained and frozen Kong toys are a great tool for soothing and amusing teething puppies.

## Keep Checking

Check the weather forecast to work out what time of the day is most suitable for walking pets. Check tide times for beach trips, conditions for hill walks and be vigilant of extremes such as thunder or high winds.

Check pavements are safe when it's hot. If you cannot keep the palm of your hand on the pavement for 5 seconds it is hot enough to burn pets paws. Sand at the beach can also be checked this way.

Pets should never be left in cars, even if there is no direct sun. If you are concerned about a pet left in a hot car the advice for the public is to contact the police or SPCA. If an animal



Hello  
I'M TILLIE  
WILSON

in distress this is an emergency and emergency services should be called using 999.

Encourage pets to seek out shade by using mat work or placing their bed in a shaded area.

Cool mats are efficient in cooling pets but must only be used under supervision as the cooling gel inside is highly toxic if ingested. Raised beds help as air is ventilated from below and dry off wet pets after paddling.

If you are worried your pet is overheating, put some water on them slowly to avoid shock and offer them a drink. A damp towel to lie on can help however do not cover animals with towels as this will trap heat in. Dogs pant to sweat so check haltis or muzzles are not restrictive.



*If you have any concerns, the Westport Team is always here to help.*

*In an emergency call 01506 844165.*

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