

BLAZACK



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McCARTHY & STONE LEGACY?
P4.



GEORGE ALLAN FOOTBALL FESTIVAL P22.



LINLITHGOW'S MOONDANCE IS BACK P27.

BURGH BEAUTIFUL VOLUNTEER FOCUS P14.

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4 **Planning Forum**
Planning decisions probed

6 **One Linlithgow**
Promoting Linlithgow businesses. Highlighting initiatives within the town

8 **The Queen's Coronation**
1953 Community celebrations

10 **Gary Clinton:** *Budding music stars, commitment, dedication, passion*

12 **Linlithgow RFC Male Voice Choir:** *With guest choirs from Denmark and Wales at St Michael's*

14 **Burgh Beautiful** *Volunteers needed for our award winning public floral displays*

15 **LCDT** *How to 'pack in' single use plastic*

16 **The Linlithgow Embroideries** *New pop up exhibition dates announced*

16 **Book Review** *Sell us the Rope, historical fiction, Russia 1907*

18 **'History' to hide the hoardings**
Linlithgow Civic Trust progress improvements

19 **Folk Fae Lithgae**
Anne Wilson, new Gala Day Chairperson

20 **Repair & Reuse Café Launch** *Doors open May 13*

21 **Nobel's Explosives Factory Memorial**
Monuments to be restored

22 **George Allan Football Festival** *Local Primary Schools at the ready to show their footballing skills*

24 **New Hopetoun Gardens** *Camellias and Magnolias at the Italian Lakes*

25 **Stitch Matters**
Stitch and Textiles exhibition

Perambulation of the Marches *An invitation to attend*

26 **Linlithgow Link**
Linlithgow befriending service looks for volunteers

27 **Moondance is Back**
Fabulous charity night returns with fundraiser at Linlithgow Rugby Club

28 **Bruce Jamieson**
Anselm Adornes - 'Friend of Scotland'

30 **LADAS** *A day in the Life of an Allotmenteer, Tips*

31 **Skin Happy**
Bye, Bye Skin Tags

34 **Paul Rolfe Estate Agents** *2023 predictions for the housing market*



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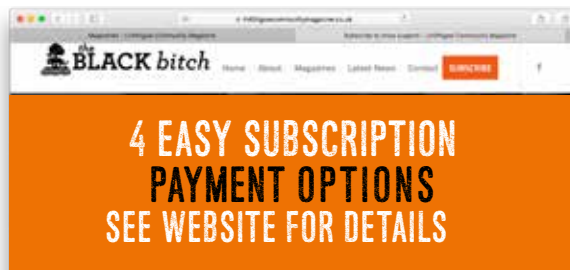
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CHANGING TIMES

In this issue we take a trip down memory lane back to 1953 to remind ourselves of the way things were 70 years ago in the year of celebration of the coronation of a new queen.

Murdoch Kennedy has been researching the festivities organised, and participated in, it seems by every part of the Linlithgow community and civic organisations.

In the early years of the second half of a century that had seen two catastrophic world wars with previously unheard of levels of casualties and destruction, Linlithgow emerged to put on a range of activities and events in and around the town that are scarcely believable in comparison to the present level of joint community engagement.

Murdoch's article, including interviews with those with first-hand accounts of their experiences appears on page 8/9. The amount of freely given voluntary input to a community-wide effort must have been immense on the part of Linlithgow residents and public officials alike. The contrast with present circumstances in what are considered to be "easier" times is striking. Murdoch's article is well worth spending some time on and asking ourselves why things have changed so much.

Mention of "voluntary input" takes us to a second subject of much current discussion amongst many of the town's groups which depend on the time and expertise of volunteers to undertake administrative roles in their organisations. In this issue, **Burgh Beautiful**, one of Linlithgow's most high profile, successful and

valued organisations sets out its stall in an appeal for those who appreciate the work they do to come forward to support the organisation for the next generation. Similarly another community stalwart, founded more than forty years ago, **Linlithgow Link**, reminds us of its roots and the much needed services it now provides in seeking to increase its team of volunteers.

With Local Government funding under ever more pressure volunteering is now quickly becoming a necessity rather than a "nice to have" extra. We will return to this theme in future issues.

A third subject of current interest is raised in the **Planning Forum's article** on what can be done to reverse the deteriorating condition of the High Street. The abandoned gap site at the front of the Templars Court development features in this article along with a response to questions that have been raised following the Forum article on the Deanburn Development in our previous issue.

Making a comeback after the prolonged Covid interruption is the highly successful **Moondance Ladies Night at the Rugby Club** raising funds for two breast cancer charities. Also making a return after the Covid break is the always popular **George Allan Memorial Football Festival** when primary school players engage in two keenly competitive 7-a-side leagues for coveted trophies at the Rose's Prestonfield Stadium.

Of topical interest during the present period of exile from Europe, **Bruce Jamieson's story of Anselm Adornes** a 15th century Belgian "merchant, diplomat and friend of Scotland" whose remains lie in an unknown grave under St Michael's

Church. Following a self-imposed ban on trade with Belgium he formed a diplomatic mission to Scotland to re-establish trading links and became a confidant of King James III and great friend of Scotland. His descendants retain active links with Linlithgow as Bruce explains in an intriguing article.

Other events to look out for are the annual **Perambulation of the Marches** held the week before the first Tuesday after the second Thursday in June - the main town event for centuries - **The Marches**; the **RFC Male Voice Choir** with guest choirs from Denmark and Wales; **Linlithgow Players** on stage with fun in the sun "Down Under"; at the **Museum, Stitch Matters** is holding an exhibition of their work and the **Civic Trust** returns to the same venue for a second chance to see the **Linlithgow Embroideries** - full details to be found in the magazine along with much else.

Finally, our thanks again to our subscribers and advertisers who make the magazine possible. The magazine cannot hope to supplant the role of local newspapers at their best but we can provide a level of cover that is otherwise completely missing. At its most serious for our town is its disconnect with "local" government with no serious coverage of the local decision making process and all that implies for the quality of life in Linlithgow.

If you have not previously done so please go to our website at **www.linlithgowcommunitymagazine.co.uk** and check the various options to make a financial contribution - whatever the value, every amount helps and is greatly appreciated.



>>> For details and events visit **what's on** www.mylinlithgow.com <<<



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SECTION 75 AGREEMENT EXPLAINED

“I STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY LINLITHGOW HAS LOST SO MUCH MONEY – WHAT IS A SECTION 75 AGREEMENT?”



Image: Alan Corrie

McCarthy & Stone’s legacy ?

The above comment was made following the article in last month’s “Black Bitch” magazine which described how Linlithgow could lose £956,280 following ill-considered planning decisions in connection with the section 75 agreement between West Lothian Council, CALA Homes and the landowner. This agreement had to be signed before planning permission could be given for the new housing development now under construction at Deanburn Road.

In this month’s article, we describe the purpose of a section 75 agreement and illustrate this regarding another project where Linlithgow has similarly missed out.

First, when does a Section 75 agreement arise?

An application for planning permission is decided either by a planning officer under delegated powers or by the Development Management Committee. A simple extension to a residential building is most likely to be determined by a planning officer alone, acting with delegated powers. For a large development such as that at Deanburn Road, a planning application is decided by the Development Management Committee of West Lothian Council and, if approved, will likely be subject to a Section 75 agreement. This agreement must be signed before planning permission can be granted and therefore before work can commence on site.

What then is a Section 75 agreement? In simple terms, it sets out under several headings the impact of the development on the local community and details the provisions to be made and, if appropriate, the sums of money due from the landowner/ developer to the community to pay for measures to ease the

problems caused by the development. Using the Deanburn Road development as an example, the Section 75 agreement requires amongst other things:

1. The provision of a minimum of 25% of the total housing units as affordable housing (complying with West Lothian Council planning policy for Linlithgow). It should be noted that CALA Homes in partnership with a housing association, on completion of the Deanburn Road development, will have provided 29 social housing units in Linlithgow, almost double the number of council houses provided by West Lothian Council or its predecessor in the town since 1975!
2. A payment of £100,000 to West Lothian Council for improvements to Linlithgow Academy (over and above the previously planned improvements and the sum below) to accommodate the new pupils from the Deanburn Road development.
3. £8828* to be paid to West Lothian Council for public art in West Lothian.
4. £5058* to be paid to West Lothian Council for cemeteries in West Lothian.
5. £112,950 to be paid to West Lothian Council for denomination secondary school infrastructure in West Lothian.
6. £259,200 to be paid to West Lothian Council for secondary school infrastructure at Linlithgow Academy (making a total payment of £359,200 including 2 above).
7. £956,280* to be paid to West Lothian Council for the west-facing M9 slip roads at Burghmuir and improvements to junctions in the High Street. This item is the subject of an appeal to be judged by a Scottish Government reporter and was the subject of the article in last month’s issue of the “Black Bitch” magazine.

* These sums are indexed to current building tender prices.

The question in last month's Black Bitch magazine follows the reasoning that the landowner/developer were willing, at the time of the granting of planning permission, to pay the sum of £956,280 for the benefit of the Linlithgow community. However, having since taken legal advice, they are now of the opinion that the condition as represented in the Section 75 agreement is unlawful and should be deleted from the agreement, on the basis that the M9 slip roads are not a solution to dealing with additional traffic problems caused by the new residents of the Deanburn Road Development.

In 2021, "Black Bitch" magazine issues 83 and 84 ran a two-part article on the debacle surrounding McCarthy and Stone's Templars Court development in the High Street. Part 1 described the granting of planning permission in 2013 by the planning officer acting alone without discussion at a planning committee, the disregard by McCarthy and Stone of planning conditions to protect the visual character of the High Street, the demolition of the frontage building apparently without a building warrant and the refusal by McCarthy and Stone to complete the High Street building as described in the planning permission.

As a part of the Section 75 agreement dated 9th April 2013, the planning officer agreed that the payment of a sum of £90,000 by McCarthy and Stone to West Lothian Council would offset the otherwise required inclusion of affordable housing in the development. On 1st February 2018, a director of McCarthy and Stone met with representatives of the Planning Forum and the three ward councillors. It was clear at this meeting that McCarthy and Stone was prepared to repair the gable of the adjacent building which they had damaged and remove the unsightly timber shoring, but do nothing else. In August 2019, the Planning Forum received an email confirming that McCarthy and Stone was closing its Scottish operation but would be willing to sell the gap site to West Lothian Council for the notional sum of £1. West Lothian Council officers stated that, although they were aware of the offer, it was never formally received by the council.

During the past three years, various initiatives have been pursued by the Community Council and the Planning Forum including a potential agreement with a housing association to develop seven residential units for mid-market rent for older or infirm people. Two problems remain. West Lothian Council seems reluctant to act on the offer by McCarthy and Stone and buy the site for £1. West Lothian Council is refusing to use the £90,000 (now worth £140,000) to subsidise a housing association development which would resolve the problem of a prominent gap site in the centre of the town.

In conclusion to this article, it is worth reflecting that the Scottish Government reporter dealing with the latest planning application relating to the Deanburn Road development may reiterate Government policy that a Section 75 condition is unlawful if it requires a landowner/developer to pay for an improvement that has little to do with the impact of the development on the community in which the development takes place. If it is unlawful, then where does that leave the Linlithgow community in respect of previous Section 75 agreements, particularly the £90,000 paid to West Lothian Council by McCarthy and Stone for affordable housing? Also, what about the legality of provision of items like numbers 3, 4 and 5 listed above from the Deanburn Road Section 75 agreement, which do not seem to specifically relate to Linlithgow?

A section 75 agreement is there to protect the community in which development is taking place from the consequences of that development. It seems that Linlithgow loses out from a lack of proper application of that protection and begs the question – where does the Section 75 money go?

[Linlithgow Planning Forum](#)



FROM
1
JUNE

FUN IN THE SUN WITH THE LINLITHGOW PLAYERS

The ladies from the Hull fish-packing plant are back! And this time they're taking us 'Down Under' for the trip of a lifetime.



We last met Pearl, Jan, Linda, Shelley and their boss Joe in 2019, when The Linlithgow Players performed Ladies' Day, the first play in a trilogy by Amanda Whittington. The lucky four won half a million pounds on the horses at Royal Ascot and now we're seeing them spend it as they travel to Oz for four weeks of fun in the sun.

The comedy follows the fab four as they fly off to meet Joe in Sydney, but all is not as it seems for the intrepid travellers: Shelley is still desperate for male attention, Linda seems intent on giving her winnings away, Jan is anxious about her tummy and finding toilets and Pearl is looking for salvation... but why? As with many of Whittington's award-winning plays, there are loads of laughs, but some conflict too. All of the women have their own hidden realities, anxieties or heartaches which bubble to the surface and threaten the camaraderie of the group as they go 'walkabout'.

As they travel up the Gold Coast and across to Uluru and then back to Sydney for the Mardi Gras, the ladies meet some larger-than-life characters, all played by Les Fulton and Derek Elsby.

"There's a lot for us to get our teeth into," said Les. "My main character is Joe, but I transform into a flight attendant, a hippie bongo-playing beach bum and an outrageous drag queen called Koala Bare". Derek on the other hand is our surfer dude, as well as a billy-boiling bushwhacker and Koala's side-kick, Bondi Bitch! Derek adds "Whittington's ask of the male actors is both a challenge and a gift, with opportunity to create some wildly flamboyant and contrasting characters – when I read the script I knew immediately that I wanted to be involved."

Director, Sue Vizard summed it all up: *"We are having fun putting this play together, moving from bushfires to airports and from beaches to campsites. We even throw in a show-stopping song and dance number too! In essence it's a funny play with lots of heart, about connections, belonging, love, living life and taking opportunities when you can."*

And don't worry if you missed Ladies' Day – although this is a 'what happened next', it is also a stand-alone play, no prior knowledge is needed. So if you fancy joining the Ladies Down Under, you're in for a bonza night. Fair Dinkum!

The Linlithgow Players perform Ladies Down Under by Amanda Whittington at Linlithgow Primary School from 1st – 3rd June, 7.30pm.

Tickets £12 are available at www.linlithgowplayers.org.uk or box office 07849 448999. Bar available. Not suitable for children under the age of 12.



This Amateur Production is by arrangement with Nick Hern Books.



OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Spring is often associated with new beginnings. However, they are not usually as big a new beginning as **West Port Vets** have had this year, moving their practice from their long time home in Preston Road to a state of the art facility in Mill Road Industrial Estate. On our visit, what impressed most was not only the new amount of space, but also the care taken to make the vet visit for a pet as stress free as possible. However, we should not forget all the other great pet services available locally. **Mackie and Brechin** on the High Street are the other long time veterinary practice in the town.



Thinking of other services, **Dogstar Grooming** are helping to keep our pets smart, whilst **Lothlorien** are working hard with pets and their owners to help with animal behaviour.

For those extra essential supplies, don't forget we have **Pets at Home** at Stockbridge. We don't need to travel far to keep our pets well catered for. In this edition, we are using the space to highlight the new **West Port Veterinary Clinic** and to give some thought to what we should be doing for our pets just now.

Above: Karen (right) and Danielle (left) of Dogstar Grooming. The dogs are Bailey-Blue and Riley.

WEST PORT VETS OPEN NEW CLINIC

On 21st February 2023 Westport Veterinary Clinic opened their new Linlithgow premises in a large unit located in Mill Road Industrial Estate. The new practice premises has been converted into a state-of-the-art veterinary surgery, housing the very latest facilities and equipment. It also has on site customer parking and easy disabled access.



Increasing from 2 consulting rooms, the new practice has had seven consulting rooms installed, offering a significant increase in vet and nurse appointment availability as well as hosting a wide range of veterinary services.

Westport Vets now has an additional specialist dental suite and an increase from one to three operating theatres - one for routine surgeries, another specifically built for orthopaedic surgery and one dedicated to feline only surgery. Along with an in built pharmacy dispensary; on site laboratory; radiography and diagnostics room and digital dental x-ray facilities.



The practice has been specially designed to keep stress to a minimum for patients. The new design has a spacious reception with a large waiting area with separate spaces for cats and dogs.

In addition to those dedicated areas, they have built new walk-in kennels for large dog breeds to best accommodate the full range of pets under their care.

Some of the consulting rooms also have direct outdoor access available. Although the practice has spacious waiting areas and options, the direct access to consulting rooms allows them to support nervous or anxious animals, as well as best support owners with a dedicated bereavement space for times when private access in or out of the building may be preferred.

The building premises also contains large spacious areas with opportunities to host future CPD events, training sessions and organized talks for veterinary professionals with endless possibilities in hosting client and community evenings and events.



WESTPORT VETERINARY CLINIC DIRECTOR AND SENIOR VET STUART MCMORROW SAYS:

"We've been in our small practice for such a long time and been bursting at the seams as we've been getting busier and busier, bigger and bigger. We want to maintain our standards and we felt that if we stayed in the same place we weren't going to be able to maintain that."

"The dedicated cat floor is still getting work finished so isn't ready to open just yet however the Cattery itself has been completed so our cat patients have their own (cat only) accommodation when they are in with us."

"The move has also created lots of new jobs, so far we have hired three new vets, an additional receptionist and doubled the cleaning staff hours to manage the changes and are looking to hire a vet care assistant. We will be looking for more nurses and vet care assistants and increasing our team of vets in future."

"We will have an official open day, probably in May, and we are hoping to get our charity partners The Dogs Trust heavily involved with this event."

The new Westport Veterinary Clinic practice is located at Unit 42, Mill Road Industrial Estate in Linlithgow - disabled access and parking on site available.

PET SMART FOR SPRING

We all love our pets and want them to be in the best condition they can be. One of our local businesses is **Dogstar Grooming**, who have kindly shared some great tips to help us out.

Based at 4 Braehead Business Units, **Dogstar Grooming** offers a professional and caring grooming environment for your dog. **Karen and Danielle** are passionate about making your furry friends look and feel their best.

As most dog owners know, grooming is a year-round commitment, but there's lots you can do at home between grooming visits.

HERE'S OUR TOP TIPS:

>> Get your dog used to grooming - start early, we like puppies to have their first visit at 12 weeks, (as long as they are fully vaccinated).

>> Avoid tugs/matting by brushing and combing your dog regularly between visits to the groomer.

>> Use the correct brushes/combs for your dog's coat type and length.

>> Regularly check your dog's skin, eyes, teeth, pads and ears.

>> Schedule regular grooming appointments.

If in doubt ask your groomer – they should be able to advise grooming equipment suitable for your dog and suggest a grooming schedule that will keep your dog's coat in tip top condition.

TIME FOR CHOCOLATE – BUT NOT FOR ALL!

West Port Veterinary Practice has kindly helped with some tips for this season of eating lots of treats and getting back outside in good weather – all to keep our pets safe and healthy.

SPRING DANGERS OWNERS SHOULD BE AWARE OF:

Chocolate contains a compound called theobromine which can be deadly to cats and dogs. This is because unlike us, they can't metabolise theobromine effectively.

Some doses can be fatal to pets.

Chocolate poisoning causes lots of pet emergencies every year - if your pets consume any chocolate you should contact your vet ASAP. Time is vital when pets ingest (or have contact) with toxins.

Common symptoms of chocolate poisoning include:

Vomiting, Diarrhoea, Lethargy

Urinating more, Irregular heartbeat

Tremors, Fitting/seizures

Another common toxic item for pets is artificial sweeteners, in particular Xylitol. Xylitol is found in many sweets and chewing gum and is used in many preservatives such as peanut butter. Because of this we recommend only giving your dog doggy peanut butter not human peanut butter.

Easter treats, including hot cross buns are also toxic to pets. Anything containing sultanas, raisins, dried fruit, lemon zest and nutmeg are all toxic to animals.

Some flowers, shrubs, wild plants and mushrooms can be extremely dangerous, so it's important to be aware and it is the owner's responsibility to ensure your garden is pet safe.

Plants that are common during the springtime which are toxic to pets:

Lilies (particularly toxic to cats, if a cat gets any on their fur and then licks their fur it can cause fatal kidney failure)

Daffodils, Azaleas, Amaryllis

Tulips (...to name but a few)

Anything (plant or flower) which grows from a bulb is not safe!

The Dogs Trust has a great guide on their website for a comprehensive, detailed range of UK toxic plants.

If you do happen to notice any signs of poisoning or if you suspect your pet may have been in contact with any toxin contact your vet immediately. Time can be a lifesaver.

Veterinary care is always available to owners 24/7.

Locally we have both West Port Veterinary Clinic, and Mackie and Brechin. Make sure you have their number handy, both for daytime and out of hours, in case of emergency.

LATEST NEWS LINES:

Tony l'Anson has just been appointed as the BID Manager. Bringing experience working in Milngavie too, Tony is focused on bringing value to all levy payers across Linlithgow and addressing issues that will improve the town as a place to do business.

Linlithgow Distillery announced big news during the last month, as Ross and Alyson have decided to retire. Don't worry – the distillery is definitely staying open and is currently up for sale.

Mill Road Industrial Estate will shortly see some contractors around, working on behalf of One Linlithgow. This will be to renew some fencing, update and improve signage and do some landscaping. We look forward to sharing the updates.

The cycle circuit at Xcite, West Lothian Leisure, now looks virtually complete and we are excited for the opening. Linlithgow Community Development Trust tell us there are some final items to complete, and checks to take place, with an official opening planned late in May. Watch their social media for more details.

McGill's who run some of the bus services through the town have recently announced an update to their services. There are opportunities to provide views in a consultation currently, run by West Lothian Council, about bus services, and also a petition has been raised by a West Lothian resident about poorer services. Buses are part of the way we get customers to our businesses, so please do put your views forward, to help us have continued good public transport connections.

LINLITHGOW MEMORIES OF THE 1953 CORONATION



The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth on Tuesday June 2nd 1953 was marked by a number of events in Linlithgow.

In the weeks leading up to June 2nd, school children were presented with commemorative gifts from West Lothian County Council Education Committee. Junior pupils received an inscribed gold-rimmed glass beaker and a tin of sweets, while older pupils were given propelling pencils and dictionaries. In Linlithgow, the Town Council gave all pre-school children a mug and sweets and these were handed out at the Burgh Halls. Parents had to take the child's ration book with them when collecting the gifts. The Town Council also offered senior citizens a gift of five shillings.



On the Sunday before the big day, there was a service in St Michael's Church at 11am, attended by organisations and civic leaders from all over West Lothian. **Linlithgow's Provost, Mr David Morrison**, wasn't there, however, as he had been invited to the Coronation in Westminster Abbey and was already on his way to London.



At 6.30pm, there was a youth rally in the church.

On Monday June 1st, two Coronation Balls took place in the town – the Town

Council Coronation Committee's Ball in the Burgh Halls from 8pm to 2am and the R.C. Parochial Ball from 9am to 3am in Queen Margaret Hall.

Both events were described as being "large and gay"

The refreshment department at the Burgh Halls, under the capable supervision of **Mr Ian McKay of the West Port Hotel**, was up to his usual high standard. At Queen Margaret Hall, **Mr Pat Brady of the Cross Keys Inn at 243 High Street**, gave equally satisfactory service.

Coronation Day itself was a public holiday. There was a church service in St Michael's at 9.45am and the town's bells rang out. Most people seem to have stayed indoors to listen to the proceedings on radio, while some were lucky enough to watch it through the new medium of television. St Michael's Hospital announced that it had 60 places for members of the public who wished to view the Coronation there, while the **Bonsyde Hotel** offered:

LUNCH

TELEVISION VIEW OF THE CORONATION CEREMONY

AFTERNOON TEA, HIGH TEA, AND DANCE.

For fifteen shillings!



The **Cross Keys Inn** proudly announced that it had a TV installed.

There was a peaceful atmosphere about the street and the town bells rang out to mark the moment the Queen was officially crowned. **Provost David Morrison** sent the following message to the new monarch:

"The citizens of Linlithgow and district send you their full and sincere expressions of loyalty and support on the occasion of your Coronation"

About 1pm, **Linlithgow Pipe Band** appeared and made its way to the Mains Maltings Housing Scheme, where some of the residents had organised a Children's' Gala and Crowning of the Queen ceremony.

The band marched to 50 Braehead Road, the home of **Miss Nan Pudney**, who had been chosen as the **Coronation Day Queen**. Nan and her retinue paraded around the scheme, ending up in Hamilton Avenue, which was bedecked with flags.



Provost David Morrison

A stage had been erected there and Nan was crowned by **Mrs Merker, wife of Councillor Sandy Merker**, who lived in the adjoining Stewart Avenue. After the crowning, an estimated 180 children of all ages were regaled with tea and other refreshments. Younger ones were given a commemorative crown piece, others got mugs or pens, along with sweets and the more senior girls were presented with head scarves. Exactly two weeks later at the Marches, all the main characters from the **"Wee Coronation"** rode in the procession on a decorated lorry and were captured for posterity on a film commissioned by the Town Council.



At Preston Park, a party was organised for the children, who had a most enjoyable time and each received a gift. A similar function took place at Hamilton Park.

While these street parties were going on, the sporting fraternity witnessed a game of football between **Linlithgow Rose and West Lothian Juvenile FA** at Prestonfield, which the Juveniles won by 3 goals to 2.

At 6pm, the **Kinneil Military Band** from Bo'ness arrived in the town and played up Bo'ness Road, down the High Street and



along to the Cross. The band's first public engagement had been at the 1859 Linlithgow Marches and they had led the procession for many years. 1953 would be their last year. The historic decision to move away from woodwind instruments and have a brass-only configuration was taken later in 1953 and led directly to the formation of the Linlithgow Reed Band. At the 1954 Marches, the new **Kinneil Colliery Silver Band** proudly took their place at the head of the procession.

At 7.30, the main Coronation celebrations got underway at the Rose Garden, where an estimated largest-ever crowd enjoyed a Scottish Country Dancing display, under the leadership of **Miss Young and Miss McCluskey**, and a **Highland Dancing display**, with **Miss Barbara Cunningham** at the helm. **Kinneil Military Band** and **Linlithgow Pipe Band** both played selections.

The natural amphitheatre of the Rose Garden proved the ideal setting for the music and dancing displays and the big crowd later had the chance to perform themselves on the Peel, where a sizeable dance floor had been laid out by the Ministry of Works. Here, to music by **Mr Young's band** and records amplified by the Council's broadcasting apparatus, large numbers enjoyed themselves and gave enjoyment to the spectators who lined the high ground.

As dusk fell, the **Boys Brigade** led a torchlight procession from the Gas Works into the Peel, where they took part in torchlight figure marching, which included the formation of E.R. in fire. This was very well received, especially by those standing higher up. **The BBs were joined by the Linlithgow Bridge Scouts, the Linlithgow Girl Guides and senior pupils from the Academy.**

Afterwards, the Town Council fireworks display took place with the outstanding feature of a floodlit Palace in the background. Three islands on the Loch were also lit up.

The local Scout groups lit their bonfire on Cockleroy, to compliment those on the Bonnytown Hills, Binny Craig and the Knock and this was a fitting climax to a memorable day.

Murdoch Kennedy

With thanks to Anne Corr, Betty Coupe and Martine Stead

MUSIC & REFLECTIONS...

Music Buds

As we reach exam season for many of my senior guitar students it often signals the end of a journey. It's fairly common for students to start lessons at primary school age and stay until they leave high school. Occasionally though some do stay on if their university or college is nearby but mostly it's time for them to move on. Sometimes they go onto to study music and I can always tell, over the years, which ones are going to be continuing music, whether it's the playing side, technology side or even the business side. In these students have 'the bug' and in this month's article I'd like to talk about a budding **S1 student Eddie Rose** who has all the attributes of a young lad who may very well be following a musical path, after high school.



Eddie Rose

Eddie Rose (12, Bo'ness Academy) started lessons with me in September 2017 when he was only 7 after getting a guitar for his birthday and I'd say he began like almost everyone does at that age. At 7, the real passion for music hasn't started yet. That's not usually until the formative years when suddenly, bands become very cool and a real obsession with guitar and music begins. So Eddie started learning some classic guitar riffs, how to read music, how to play chord progressions and ultimately worked his way towards the 'Rockschool' syllabus choosing 'Hoochie Coochie Man' by blues legend Muddy Waters as his first piece, at age 9. Then Covid hit, the lockdown hit and online lessons started. However Eddie just continued working away, steadily, not really showing a crazy desire for music but by now, a committed young boy who was clearly interested in music because at this point we were around 2 1/2 years into lessons.

Roughly half way through lockdown Eddie completed the 'Debut' Rockschool book with an 85% Merit pass in his mock exam via Zoom which is a really excellent mark indeed. I am always really impressed when students as young as Eddie get through a musical grade because a huge amount of work goes into it. Eventually Zoom lessons ended and everyone got back into my home studio, the kids seemingly 1 foot taller and then there was a couple of hiatuses for Eddie due to personal reasons but importantly, he always reappeared. And it was great to see him when he was able to attend and he ultimately got through the Rockschool Grade 1 book, achieving an 86.5% Merit pass towards the end of November 2022 which was another exceptional mark. It was around this time I noticed changes in Eddie.

Bits N Bobs – Emerging Artist?

Now in S1 at Bo'ness academy Eddie was quickly becoming integrated into the music department, making himself known to his teachers as a player and someone very keen on music. Eddie formed a band with new friends in his music class and they began giving up their lunchtimes to rehearse after brokering the usage of music department rooms to jam in. **Along with Eddie on guitar, 'Bits N Bobs' are completed by Noah on the keys, stickman Cameron, Lewis on the bass, Olly also on guitar and frontman Oliver leading the line – a fantastic young vocalist.**

Live Shows!

The young musicians decided to learn 'Seven Nation Army' by The White Stripes, 'Highway To Hell' by AC/DC and 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' by Nirvana and amazingly were ready to play a gig at the



end of last year at their school, which went down a storm. Eddie's Mum **Gemma** sent me videos and I was really blown away. What an incredible achievement for these young boys to do all of this, off their own back. What amazing commitment and dedication fuelled by sheer passion for music.

The reception was so good, more gigs followed, one at Bridgeness Bowling Club and very recently, at the end of March, a 3rd show at Behind The Wall in Falkirk and again, Mum Gemma sent over videos and both her and myself were extremely proud to see what an incredible job Eddie and his bandmates have done.

I think this is a real story of inspiration for many, whether it's young or adult players. It shows what we can achieve if we have the passion and the drive. I think the experience Eddie has gained through this, so young, really sets him up for more of the same in the future. Playing in bedrooms can only get us so far and going out to perform live is a huge step and totally smashes the glass ceiling for exciting things to happen on live circuits, within local music scenes. There will no doubt be more school shows in the future, new songs – perhaps even original pieces - and the more a band go out and play, the more opportunities come their way.

Finally let's hear from the main man himself. Well done Eddie, incredible work so far!

Q&A WITH EDDIE ROSE

**1: Who is your favourite band?
Queen.**

**2: Do you have a favourite guitarist?
Brian May**

**3: What was it that made you want to start to play guitar?
I got a guitar for my seventh birthday and started getting lessons shortly after that.**

**4: Do you have any musical aspirations?
I'm hoping to start writing my own songs to perform with my band.**

**5: What is it that drives you to pick up your guitar every day?
I love to play my guitar every day to improve my guitar playing and learn new songs.**

Feel free to contact me via my details below.



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





How to use your pension pot wisely

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LINLITHGOW RFC MALE VOICE CHOIR ARE PREPARING FOR THEIR FIRST MAJOR CONCERT SINCE BEFORE THE PANDEMIC.



Let's hope that spring has sprung at last. As the green shoots give us all hope of an impending summer, so the members of Linlithgow RFC Male Voice Choir are preparing for their first major concert since before the pandemic.

Voices are once again being trained, new songs are giving the singers opportunities to learn great tunes and a whole host of arrangements are being knocked into shape.

The concert, planned for **Saturday, May 20, 2023** will include two guest choirs. St Michael's Church will be alive and ringing with music from **Morrison RFC Male Choir from Wales** and **Septimus Choral Society from Svendborg in Denmark**.

Linlithgow's own male voice choir received a boost recently. **Jim McGuigan**, the musical director explained: *"We conducted a recruitment campaign last autumn with a view to increasing the number of singers available to us and we were all delighted by the response. We now have more than a dozen new members who are all practising hard to create an even more accomplished sound, allowing us to increase our range and offer a well-polished selection of music to suit all tastes."*

"This concert, our first for about four years, promises to be a memorable event. Our guest choirs are first class and can be relied upon to complement our own performance. As always, we are working hard to achieve the best performance possible to welcome back our faithful audience."

Morrison RFC Choir is steeped in the tradition of Welsh male voice choirs from the city and county of Swansea.



second year, the Choir, among other things, goes on a cultural trip abroad to spread the Danish choir tradition.

This year Septimus are touring Scotland and as well as the Linlithgow concert they will be singing in St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh.

Morrison RFC Male Choir were founded in 1979 and have around **74 choristers on their books**. They plan to bring around 40 singers to perform in St Michael's.

The choir members, who follow in the much lauded tradition of Welsh choirs, are from an area which covers Morrison, Neath and Swansea.



Septimus is a mixed choir from Svendborg in Denmark who will also be singing at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh during their visit.

Septimus is a Danish choir for mixed voices and comprises around 50 members, mostly from the town of Svendborg and the surrounding area. The choir was established in 1984 by Niels Bro Bystrup. In 2013 Ole Kongsted took over, since which time the choir has added to its classical repertoire of choral music a selection of music from the past as well as the world premieres of contemporary choral works.

Two years ago the choir had a major success with **Vivaldi's Gloria** having previously performed **Händel's Messiah**, **Bach's Christmas Oratorio** and **Fauré's Requiem**. In the summer of 2022 their new conductor, **Erik Jacobsen**, took over from Ole Kongsted and continues with the choir's familiar style.

Their repertoire spans mostly classical music and Danish songs. Throughout its lifetime, the choir has given many concerts in Denmark and abroad. Every

As well as singing traditional Welsh hymns, popular songs and music from the shows and films, the choir has been working to increase its repertoire with items written specifically for them by local musicians and their musical

director. The hope is that they will broaden their appeal and interest a much younger audience than previously.

In the past the choir have hosted concerts with special guest singers which have included Sir Bryn Terfel and Dame Shirley Bassey. They had a great success on their 40th anniversary when the line up included the popular crossover trio **BLAKE**. The choir has also represented Wales at the InerCeltique Festival in Lorient, Brittany And they have toured extensively in Brittany, Ireland and Germany.

As with many choirs, **Morrison RFC** are a community choir and as a registered charity they work closely with all their local agencies and provide help and support to local charities and organisations.

If you would like to join Linlithgow Male Voice Choir please feel free to contact: Peter Russell (07812 575717) or Gerry McLean (07722 107067) or visit our Website and Facebook pages: www.linlithgowrfcmalevoicechoir.co.uk. www.facebook.com.





Linlithgow Rugby Club - Male Voice Choir



Morrison RFC - Male Choir



Septimus - Mixed Voice Choir

Three Choirs for a Tenor

**Our guest choirs will be from
Wales & Denmark. So come and join us!**

**Proceeds from the Concert this time will go
towards the 'Aspire' appeal to help repair the spire
of St. Michael's Parish Church.**

CONCERT VENUE

7.30pm, Saturday 20th May, St Michael's Parish Church, Linlithgow

TICKETS

£10 (£5 for children of primary school age)

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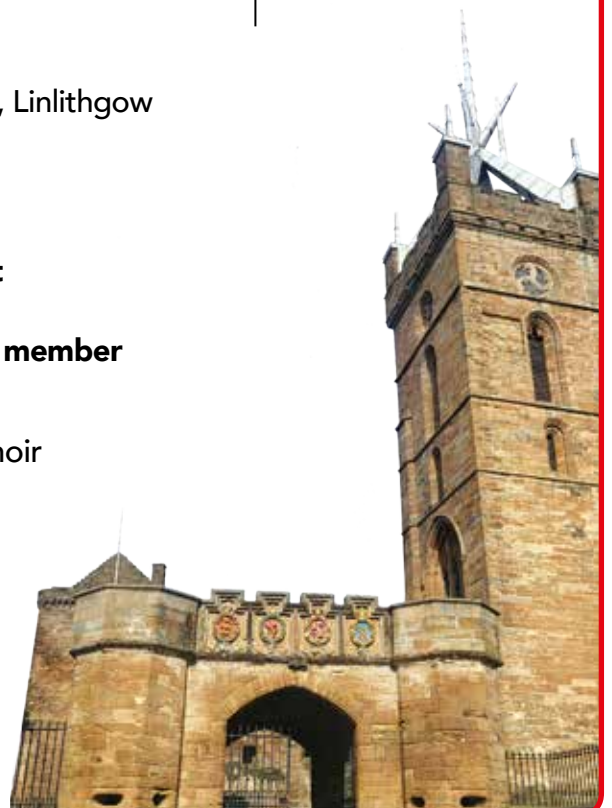
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Contact us:

Peter Russell:
07812 575717

Gerry McLean:
07722 107067



YOUR TOWN NEEDS YOU!



Burgh Beautiful needs more volunteers to keep the group's valuable work going – or activities may have to be drastically curtailed.

Local organisations are having increasing difficulties in attracting volunteers who are willing to take on a degree of responsibility, and at the moment, Burgh Beautiful depends on the efforts of a few people. Spreading the load would make a huge difference, while ensuring work is sustainable for years to come.

Burgh Beautiful takes care of all of Linlithgow's public floral displays - including watering and some grass cutting, as well as tree planting, wildflower meadows, public art, liaison with other groups, publishing a Floral Trails booklet and other promotional work, entering competitions for the benefit of the town, and all its own fundraising.

Even if you personally can't assist, please

consider recommending to friends or relatives that they help out, if you think they might be interested. Volunteers can take on as little or as much as they can manage. And they don't need to be horticulturally talented - there are admin roles available. Ask a friend to take on a role with you, so you can split the responsibilities. Just please come forward if you can.

The following roles need to be filled. Please contact bbl@lbt.scot if you feel you can help with any of these positions.

- >> **Committee members** - to spread the load of administrative tasks
- >> **General fundraiser** - to organise events and activities such as quiz nights, calendar sales and promote our fundraising efforts
- >> **Sponsorship co-ordinator(s)** - to look after our charity's principal source of income. Record keeping, numeracy and correspondence skills required. Two or more people could share this role if preferred
- >> **Leader, Youth Working Group** - to involve children and young people in our activities, including working with schools and youth groups
- >> **Labourers/Gardeners** - to help with heavier gardening tasks such as digging, laying rockeries etc. Some experience required.

Beautiful Scotland 2023

Following Linlithgow's success in last year's Britain in Bloom competition

– where the Royal Burgh got a Gold award – we have been invited to compete in this year's Beautiful Scotland competition.

Given the hard work put in by volunteers last year, taking on a huge amount of extra work to get the town up to a decent standard, the Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow committee has decided they are due a well-earned rest.

However, Linlithgow will take part in a 'non-judged' category, so will still benefit from the support and resources of **Keep Scotland Beautiful**, be recognised with a Certificate of Recognition, and have opportunities to put in submissions for some of the discretionary awards and attend the award ceremony.

Convenor **Ron Smith** said: *"There was a strong feeling that promises from West Lothian Council were not fulfilled last year. It was painfully obvious at the Britain in Bloom awards ceremony that other competitors benefited from a higher level of commitment from their local authority.*

"Some of the English entries were led by paid staff of town or parish councils – which of course we don't have here in Scotland.

"However, Linlithgow remains very much a part of the Bloom family. I have already attended a get-together with Scotland's 2023 Britain in Bloom finalists and we will likely host a delegation from Milngavie in Bloom this summer."

Donna White
Burgh Beautiful Linlithgow

CURRENT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES WITH BURGH BEAUTIFUL

General Fundraiser

We are looking for somebody to take charge of general fund-raising activities (apart from established major activities which already have their own current co-ordinators). This work would include organisation of events like quiz nights, activities such as the sale of calendars and duck race entries, organisation of occasional can collections and promotion of any other fund-raising activities that come to mind. **Email bbl@lbt.scot if you are interested.**

Leader, Youth Working Group

This position is about engaging children and young people in Burgh Beautiful activities, including working with schools, children's voluntary organisations and groups like LYPP, encouragement of children's gardening projects at home, schools and elsewhere, and involvement of children in environmental projects, particularly with regard to litter issues. **Please email bbl@lbt.scot if interested.**

Sponsorship Co-ordinator

We very much require one or more trusted people to co-ordinate Burgh Beautiful's sponsorship scheme - our charity's principal source of income. Currently all done by our



convenor, this would involve:

- >> **maintenance of registers of sponsors and of payments received**
- >> **organisation of sponsorship renewals every autumn including personal correspondence with all sponsors**
- >> **organisation of publicity to attract new sponsors**
- >> **maintenance of waiting list of those interested in sponsorship**
- >> **maintenance of sponsorship list for inclusion in Floral Trails booklet etc.**
- >> **ordering and design of sponsorship plaques; organisation of their installation**
- >> **dealing with occasional sponsorship enquiries.**

Skills and attributes needed include high levels of competence and accuracy in

record-keeping, numeracy and correspondence skills, ability to use Microsoft Word, experience in emailing and preferably good local knowledge and contacts. **If you think you could help out with this, please contact me at bbl.chair@lbt.scot**

Labourers/Gardeners

We do need folk who can provide assistance with heavy gardening tasks such as digging, cutting back vegetation/hedges, carrying heavy hanging baskets or laying slabs or rockeries. Past heavy gardening experience and some horticultural knowledge would be preferred. **Please email bbl@lbt.scot if interested.**

Committee Members

We desperately need more committee members to spread the load on ongoing administrative tasks currently undertaken by the convenor, so that succession can be assured. **Again, please contact bbl@lbt.scot if you would like to help out.**





We are all by now aware of the impact single-use plastics are having on our planet. Thanks to inspiring champions of our natural environment, such as Sir David Attenborough, we've seen footage of discarded plastic packaging littering our oceans and landscapes.

Whilst there are products that will likely be packed in plastic for some time to come, there are many that have plastic-free alternatives. Let's have a look at how you can make smart, green choices when it comes to shopping locally...

JUST SAY NO!

There are several shops in our town where you can buy produce without the need for any plastic at all. **Grow Wild Organics (Bonnytoun Farm)**, **Fruttivendolo (211 High Street)** and **Complete Health at the Millstone (159 High Street)** all have loose fruit and vegetables for you to buy and put directly into your shopping bag, with paper bags offered as an alternative. As well as saving you money, buying only the quantities you need rather than a larger multipack can reduce your food waste. In the supermarket, loose goods can be chosen over pre-packed bags of fruit and vegetables. Many supermarkets are also supplying re-usable produce bags in which to place the loose goods.

With the introduction of the Scottish single-use carrier bag charge in 2014, we have been encouraged to use alternative bags made from either more substantial reusable plastic, canvas, or jute. Keeping a 'bag for life' in your pocket or bag is a wonderful way of ensuring you're never caught out! Packable nylon bags are available in many of the shops on our High Street - check out the fabulously colourful ones at **Far From the Madding Crowd! (20 High Street)**.

(RE)FILL YOUR BOOTS!

Some household products can be refilled locally, cutting down on the manufacture of more plastic as well as reducing transportation costs. **Complete Health and Grow Wild Organics** can both help you out with many household and personal care refills. From shampoo and shower gel to anti-bacterial spray and even toilet cleaner, simply take a container to be refilled. Most standard containers can be used many times before they need to be replaced.

A number of loose food items can also be re-filled at **Complete Health**. Paul and Sandra are happy to fill your containers with flour, sugar, coffee, rice, or any number of other ingredients, cutting down on single-use packaging. Spice jars can be topped up too, keeping your flavours fresh! And there's no need to buy more than you need with each refill priced by weight - another opportunity to reduce your food waste and shop to your budget.

It's not just your groceries that you can refill. Opting for a refillable water bottle and travel mug will cut down on a lot of single-use plastics. Once you've taken them out with you a few times it'll become habit to grab them before leaving the house. Double walled bottles and cups also come with the benefit of keeping your water cold or your coffee hot! Doing this can also save you money, with some local cafés offering a discount (**The Coffee Neuk - 11 The Cross**) or extra loyalty points (**Costa - 68 High Street**) to those who bring their own cups.

GIVE IT A NEW LIFE

It may be difficult to avoid single-use plastics altogether but fortunately it's easy to recycle in Linlithgow! Our kerbside green bin service can take many different plastic items (a full list can be found on the **West Lothian Council** website) and **Tesco** and **Sainsbury** both have bins at the entrance to gather soft plastic packaging for recycling. Some tricky-to-recycle packaging can be collected via the **Terracycle scheme - the EH49 Hub on the High Street** can help to advise what is included.

Together with the passing of waste-busting laws (including the Single-use Plastic Products (Scotland) Regulations in 2022) and the environmental commitments made by many local businesses, we can all play our part in reducing the amount of plastic pollution in our precious environment. Scan the QR code for a list of all recycling points in Linlithgow.

Lindsey Campbell

Linlithgow Community
Development Trust



Linlithgow Embroideries

Encouraged by the overwhelming success of the previous pop up exhibition of the Embroideries, when over 300 people visited in two days, a second Exhibition is now planned.

This will be on June 2nd, 3rd and 4th and held in one of the large Partnership Centre meeting rooms as well as the Community Room in the Museum, from 10 am to 4.00pm on the Friday and Saturday and 1.00pm to 4.00pm on the Sunday. The embroiderer **Christine Anderson** will be present, as well as members of the Project Team, all of us happy to discuss the work and answer questions. The Exhibition is free (although donations are very welcome!) and there will be coffee and tea for those who wish to linger and share memories. We hope to have available recordings of some of the stories gathered from older members of the community about life in the High Street in the 1950s.

Please tell as many people as possible as we wish to involve the wider Linlithgow community in this unique and fascinating project.

We continue to work hard raising funds to protect and preserve the Embroideries and now have a PayPal Donations facility for people to use securely.

Paypal link: https://www.paypal.com/donate?campaign_id=UWKYFHEM9MRBz

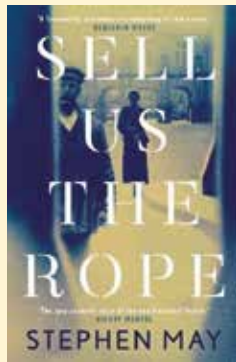
Marilyne MacLaren

Convener of Linlithgow Civic Trust

FROM
2
JUNE



SELL US THE ROPE STEPHEN MAY



“The 5th Congress of the Russian Social Democratic and Labour Party opens with singing. Three hundred voices rise in a bruised lament for the fallen. The unrest that began two years ago has seen hundreds shot down in the streets by government soldiers, others suffering judicial murder after hurried trials. Thousands of ordinary citizens have been injured and thousands more still imprisoned or in exile. No surprise then that this is a song full of blood.”

Stephen May's fifth novel centres around the 5th Russian Communist Party Congress in 1907. A young Stalin – ambitious, calculating and materialist – arrives in London and drives the narrative of the novel forwards through his meetings, liaisons and embroilment in the various plots and dalliances that orbit the Congress.

The novel is set a decade before the Russian revolution and it is clear that May has carefully chosen the Congress as the melting pot for a meeting of ambitious minds and passionate ideals. Stalin – who is known throughout the novel by his comrades as Koba – gathers alongside Lenin, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg and Maxim Gorky, amongst others, building alliances which will be influential for future historic events.

“At the registration desk, Koba, Shaumian and Tskhakaya line up behind a group of women delegates who are cheerily discussing how to make bombs from household items such as sugar and weedkiller, and how best to protect your clothes while you do it.”

In Stalin, May creates a layer of personification where we understand his revolutionary motivations, alongside acts of compassion, mercy, humour and even a carefully measured, clandestine romance. His burgeoning edgy, calculating political agenda is played out through a complex web of conversations full of double meaning, subtle baiting and suspicion with members of his own party and also undercover spies for the Okhrana.

May interjects humour and empathy into the novel, in clever juxtaposition to the weighty political agenda dominating the Congress, through his focus on young Stalin's encounters with an urchin named Arthur – a broker for safe, clean city lodgings – and also through his tense, cat and mouse encounters with Dr and Mrs Bunin, international employees of the Tsar's secret police.

“[Stan]... explains that Koba can't really go back to Tower House anyway. 'Gaffer doesn't want you. Nate, the cadger you beat up, he's a steady bed. Pays for a kip all through the summer... Gaffer says you got to look after your best clients.' 'Even if they're thieves?'

The boy says nothing. Rolls his eyes. Everyone's a thief, his silence says. Everyone takes what they can. Whatever they can get away with. Way of the world.”

The novel also dramatises the relationship between Stalin and Elli Vuokko, a female lathe operator and delegate from Tampere, Finland. Elli is passionate, articulate and tough. She possesses both intelligence and beauty, making an impression on many comrades. May wryly notes that revolutionists such as Elli – females – are not remembered through history in the same manner of her male counterparts.

“Hardly seems fair. He lives on forever. There are statues, monuments, museums. Her grave is unmarked. He haunts the dreams of millions. Her ghost appears to no one.”

In Sell us the Rope, May has created a fascinating work of fiction which adds shape, motivation and colour to figures that are known to us in a historical capacity. It is creatively written and cleverly conceived, containing a narrative emboldened with pace and energy, which shines an intriguing spotlight on characters that are by their very nature shadowy and expert in the art of subterfuge and mystery.

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





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History to Hide the Hoarding

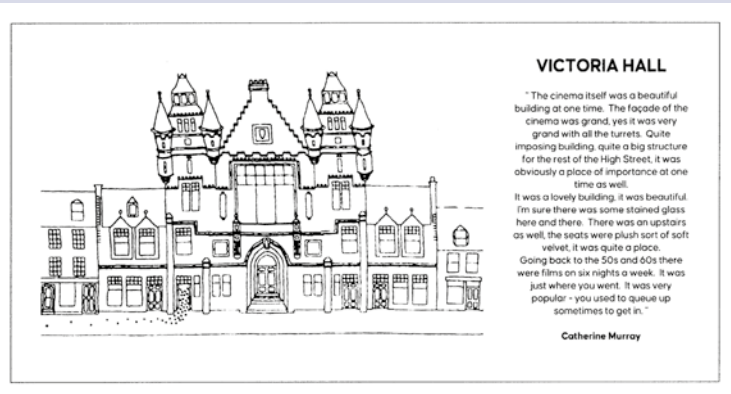
For far too long, the High Street has been blighted by the unsightly grey-painted hoarding at the Victoria Hall gap site. The Scottish climate has now played its part and much of the plywood is coming apart. With no early prospect of development of the site, **Linlithgow Civic Trust** is planning a significant improvement to the hoarding's appearance which will also prevent further deterioration.

A line of printed panels of durable composite material – each 2.4 metres wide by 1.2 metres high - will be mounted along the length of the hoarding, centred at eye level, to mask the peeling laminations. Behind these panels a protective capping will prevent any further rainwater damage to the plywood sheets.

So – what will these panels depict?

The original idea was a series of monochrome images including an old map of the High Street, an even older plan of the Palace and several pen and ink drawings of significant Linlithgow buildings - mostly sketched by **Ron Smith, Convenor of Burgh Beautiful** – all keyed to the town's Heritage Trail.

However, **Evelyn Noble of One Linlithgow** then suggested black and white photographs of short sections of the Linlithgow Embroideries, lovingly hand-stitched by Christine Anderson during the Covid lockdown, which capture the buildings of the High Street as they were in the late 1950s. The panels will feature a significant building within a short section of the streetscape brought to life by a relevant anecdote - taken from Linlithgow Museum's Oral History project which is collecting the memories of the town's senior residents.



It is hoped to obtain much of the necessary funds for this project from the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Town Management Group. These two alternative proposals were put to their meeting at the end of March when the Embroidery based design was selected. The Trust is now in process of fully costing the works to present at the Group's next meeting at the end of this month.

Linlithgow Civic Trust



Image: Martine Stead



**FOLK FAE LITHGAE
ANNE WILSON**

The plans for this year's Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Children's Gala Day are now all in place and rehearsals will get underway next month.

Anne Wilson has moved up from secretary to chairperson and is very much looking forward to the big day on Saturday June 17th, when Queen-Elect, **Katherine Kendall** will be crowned by Mrs Katrina Cochrane in the wonderful setting of the Peel. Anne has been involved in the committee since 2015, carrying out a number of roles. She told me:

"My daughter, Kelly-Anne was twice in the Gala Day, as a Flower Girl and Mary, Queen of Scots and offering my help was something I had always wanted to do when my children were older, but I never quite got round to it. Liz Parker invited me along to a meeting one night eight years ago and my first job was bookings co-ordinator."

**SAT
17
JUNE**



A registered childminder for the last twelve years, Anne is usually to be found looking after the fairies on the Gala Day and some of the children even call her **"The Fairy Godmother."** This year will be different, however, as Anne takes her honoured place at the head of the procession.

Anne hails originally from Bo'ness and moved to Linlithgow when she was married in 1988. As a youngster attending Kinneil Primary School, she was steeped in the traditions of the Fair and was a Maid of Honour in 1980. Her auntie **Margaret** was Queen in 1955 and met the real Queen when Her Majesty visited West Lothian in July of that year. Anne's Dad, **Simon Martin**, was the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) branch secretary at Kinneil Colliery and the Fair was always the highlight of the year for him and the whole family. Anne believes that we are all very privileged to live in a part of the country that has so many strong local traditions, which unite the various communities and help to bring people together.

The Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Gala Day has become much more of a spectacle in recent years and Anne and her committee are constantly looking for new ideas to keep things fresh. This year, the procession will get underway an hour earlier, at 11am, and this will allow time for more activities to take place in the Peel after the crowning ceremony. Included among the events will be **"Linlithgow's Got Talent,"** featuring pupils from the local Primary schools and a performance from local teenage

singing sensation, fourteen-year-old **Freya Nicholl**, who was a finalist on **"The Voice Kids"** on ITV at the end of last year.

It costs well over £20,000 to stage the Gala Day and fundraising events are organised throughout the year. A major fundraising drive is taking place in the coming weeks, as Anne explained:

"We are distributing envelopes with this issue of the Black Bitch Magazine and hope that people will be able to make a donation. Every little helps! Envelopes will be collected between April 30th and May 7th. People can contact us via our Facebook page, and we will make arrangements to uplift. Alternatively, they can be handed in to Linlithgow Travel at 3 The Vennel and we will also have a stall at the Regent Centre on the two weekends. We would be grateful for anything that people could give. No amount is too small!"

Murdoch Kennedy





Lets share our skills repairing old items with the new 'Repair and Reuse café.

The Repair and Reuse café is an extremely exciting project that will be coming to Linlithgow on May 13th when the Linlithgow Community Development Trust will open its doors to this new initiative.

This is an inspiring opportunity within our community that focuses on helping locals to mend their broken/unwanted items. Ranging from old appliances to textiles and electrical items. Located at the EH49 Hub (old library), this monthly event welcomes anyone and everyone who wants to save money on purchasing new things and, with the help of skilled volunteers, they can make it possible for the item to be reused.

The Development Trust will also be hosting an **Edinburgh Remakery Tech Donation box** at the Hub from 3rd-24th May to coincide with their first Repair and Reuse Café. People can stop by to drop off their old tech devices to be repaired and passed on to avoid waste and pollution rising from disposal in landfill.

The project is being led by Lindsey Campbell (LCDT) and staffed by volunteers. Additional skilled volunteers are being sought to help with fixing and mending. Skills which would be useful include, darning, sewing, fixing appliances and a knack for DIY. The volunteers would share their skills so that the visitor can learn for next time and in future save money by not having to replace an item. If the Repair and Reuse Café is unable to fix something they can still help by passing you on to local providers/a local business that can help.

Fast fashion has one of the most detrimental affects on our carbon emissions resulting in 92 million tons of textile waste, ending up in landfill and 10% of global CO2 emissions each year. The Development Trust's project is going to positively impact our environment and help to combat this fast fashion trend. The project would like to hear from people with a skill set in mending/textiles. This could be as simple as repairing a hole or replacing a button on an older item of clothing. By fixing our clothes to be worn again or up-cycling them for other uses, we are able to reduce the amount of clothes that we buy, helping

to reduce excessive consumerism that pollutes our planet.

As well as the Repair and Reuse Café opening in Linlithgow, there are also other similar projects opening all over Scotland including Glasgow, Edinburgh and Falkirk. Last year during COP26 the Scottish government made a very exciting announcement. In cooperation with Zero Waste Scotland funding was announced for a national network to support the expansion of the number of sharing libraries (tool library's, but also things like musical instruments, toys, games) and repair cafes in a project led by **Circular Communities Scotland**. For more information visit edinburghtoolibrary.org.uk. All of the Repair and Reuse Cafes share a common objective - to create a more circular economy.

So what is a circular economy exactly? To put it in simple terms, a circular economy is an economic system based on the regeneration and reuse of materials or products, to extend their working life in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

What if you're not a DIY fanatic? There are so many other ways to get involved with the Repair and Reuse café that will have a major impact on our community. Donations are always welcome, to help with this project and lots more exciting ones to come in the future. In addition to this, if you have any old clothes, electrical appliances, furniture or household items, consider if these things can be up-cycled, donated or perhaps even used for other projects before throwing them out. By attending one of The Development Trust's monthly events you can speak with skilled volunteers and get information on how your used item can be fixed or repurposed. Maybe you have a jumper that you once loved but now just takes up space in your wardrobe, with the help of the Repair and Reuse Café you may find it can become 'good as new'.

This new creative project is something which allows us all to consider more often whether something can be reused. By sharing our DIY skills we can create a pro-active community helping others to consider getting creative with something that they believe has no purpose, thus helping to reduce the impact that fast fashion and over-consumption has on our environment.

NOTE THE DATE
Repair and Reuse café, EH49 Hub
6-7 The Vennel
13th May 10-12.



Sophia Barr

Linlithgow Marches 2023 Events and Parades

- 5th May Golf Tournament
- 13th May Street Fair
- 2nd June Eve of the Marches Dance
- 3rd June First Deacons Night
Procession leaves West Port at 6:30pm
- 4th June Day at the Races
- 6th June Summer Showcase
- 9th June Crying of the Marches
Procession leaves Star & Garter at 11am
Provost's Wrestling Dinner
- 10th June Second Deacons Night
Procession leaves West Port at 6:30pm
- 13th June Marches Day

For more information on any of our events please contact deacons court.events@gmail.com or follow us on our social media

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New Life for Nobel's Explosives Factory Memorial

Those of you who shop or take refreshment at the **Regent Centre** will have noticed the poor state of repair of the stone monument, and the unkempt overgrown condition of the planting, in the raised bed nearest Blackness Road. **Linlithgow Civic Trust** has obtained permission from the Centre's owners to adopt, improve and maintain the bed, including carrying out much needed repairs to the monument.

The monument commemorates both the erection of the Regent Factory for the Nobel's Explosives Company Limited in 1902 and the opening of the present Regent Centre on the site some 81 years later. Buried beneath the monument are a time capsule dating from the opening of the factory and two more – one from 1983. The Regent Factory, a major employer in the town, was used for armament production during both World Wars. Most of the workers were women known as munitionettes, but the yellow hue of their faces, caused by exposure to sulphur, gave rise to the nickname 'canaries'. A recently formed facebook group – **More than Mary** - aims to explore Linlithgow's women's history and has selected the munitionettes as their research project for April. (www.facebook.com/groups/morethanmary)

The plan is to clean the monument's stonework, fully restore the original pink granite plaque and replace the eroded sandstone plaque with one of dark grey granite and silver lettering. In addition, a deep layer of topsoil will be renewed



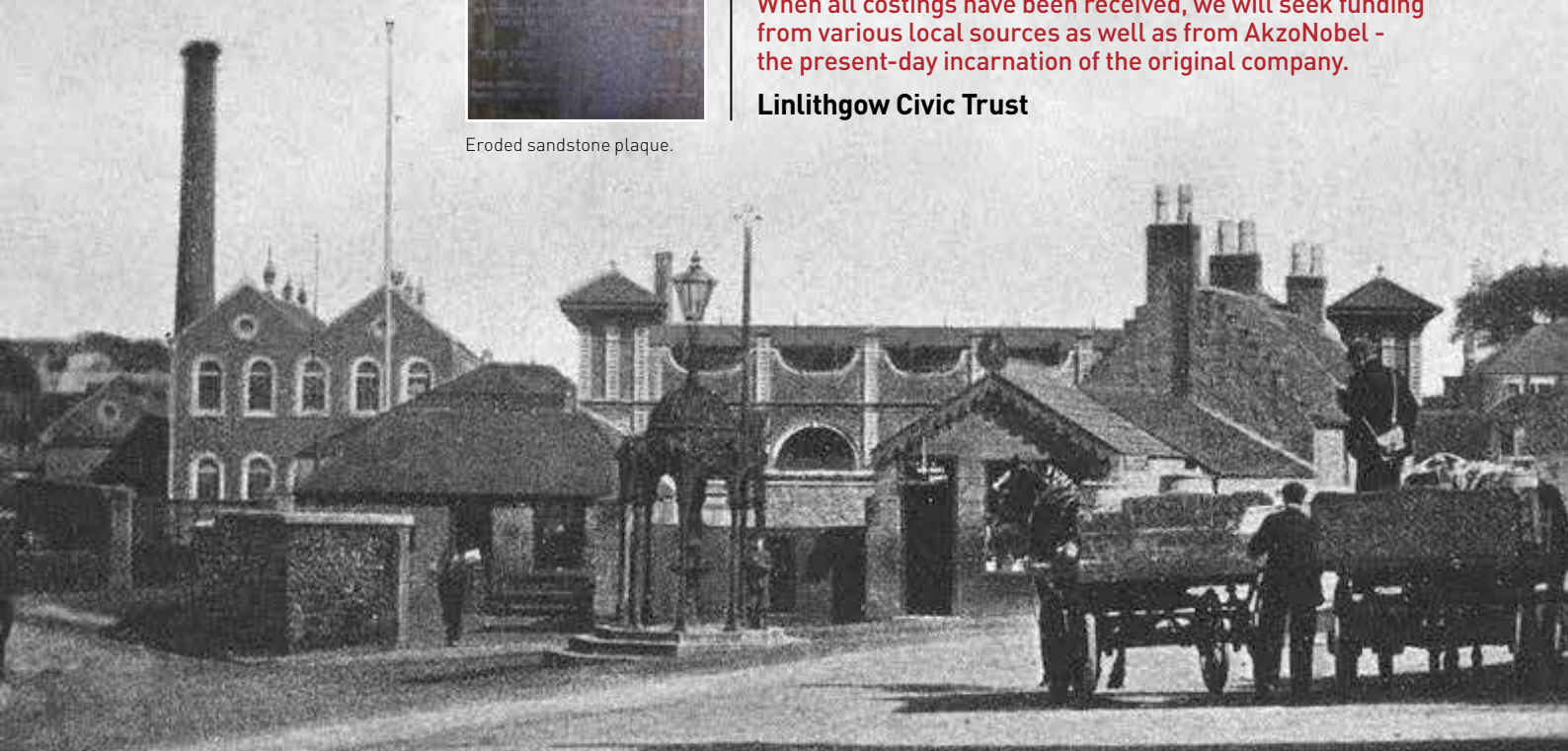
Eroded sandstone plaque.



and all the existing shrubbery will be removed to be replaced with evergreen groundcover planting and five flowering cherry trees. LED lighting, controlled by a dusk-to-dawn sensor, is to be installed to floodlight the monument and up-light the trees. A new interpretation board will be erected to tell the important story of the factory, including the working lives of the munitionettes, in the context of Linlithgow's industrial past.

The Trust already has a quotation for the refurbishment of the monument and is now in process of obtaining estimates from local contractors for the landscaping and electrical works. When all costings have been received, we will seek funding from various local sources as well as from AkzoNobel - the present-day incarnation of the original company.

Linlithgow Civic Trust



Nobel's Explosive Works, Linlithgow.

BUDDING YOUNG FOOTBALLERS HONOUR A LOCAL SPORTING LEGEND...



SUN
21
MAY

Budding young footballers from Primary schools in the Linlithgow area will parade their skills at the annual George Allan Memorial Football Festival on Sunday May 21st at Linlithgow Rose FC's Prestonfield ground. Kick-off is at 9am.



named after the first two Scottish Junior Cup-winning captains of Linlithgow Rose.

The George Allan Shield is presented to the winners of the Reston League, while the Gallagher League victors are awarded the George Allan Trophy. A 'Fair Play' trophy is also offered and this was donated by Mrs Georgina Waugh of Erskine, who was George Allan's great-niece.

The event is strongly supported by Linlithgow Rose FC and Linlithgow Rose Community FC. This year, the organisers are delighted to welcome again as main sponsors the **Blue Eyes Sports Foundation (BESF)**, which is a family registered charity founded in 2012 by Linlithgow residents Alex, Carole and Robbie Brown. BESF's ethos is to inspire, include and encourage young people and they firmly believe that sport fosters discipline and focus and develops healthy traits which last a lifetime. The charity supports access to sport of any kind, through individual help, equipment, coaching and travel.

Now in its fourth decade, the Football Festival honours the memory of Linlithgow Bridge footballer, **George "Dod" Allan**, a star centre forward on both sides of the border who, in 1897, became Liverpool Football Club's first Scottish internationalist. Sadly, on the cusp of a glittering career, George died of tuberculosis in 1899, at the age of only 24.

George Allan was one of Liverpool FC's very first star players and his exploits have never been forgotten by the club. Until fairly recently, a large photo of the man described as *"a model centre; of fine physique, great speed and no fear"* hung proudly in the club museum. He netted the club's 100th goal and was the first player to score for Liverpool when they changed their club colours from the original blue to the more familiar red in September 1896. It is hoped that George's achievements will be formally recognised in a **"Hall of the Heroes"** being planned for the new stand development at the Anfield stadium.

It is very heartening to see the number of footballers from the Linlithgow area who are now plying their trade at all levels of the game. These include **Scott Banks**, who is with Crystal Palace in the Premiership in England and **Robbie Hamilton** of Hibernian FC. Robbie scored the winning goal for Linlithgow Primary at the George Allan in 2015.



The action gets underway at 9am on Sunday May 21st and a warm welcome is extended to everyone to come along and cheer on Linlithgow's football stars of the future.

The Football Festival has a tried and tested format. Participants play in two seven-a-side leagues: the developmental Reston League at the Social Club end and the more advanced Gallagher League at the Academy end,

Murdoch Kennedy



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Don't let stress impact your eyesight

Specsavers

We often talk about the impact stress can have on our mental health, but did you know it can take a toll on your physical wellbeing too?

Your eyes are no exception and in this column Diana Kelly, store director at Specsavers in Linlithgow, discusses how stress can impact your vision and what you can do to keep your symptoms under control.

How does stress affect your eyes?

Diana says: 'Stress stimulates the 'fight or flight' reflex in our nervous system which causes our pupils to dilate, allowing more light to enter our eyes. When you're in a constant state of stress, your pupils stay dilated which can result in several problems.'

It could cause blurry vision

'Increased levels of light and high levels of adrenaline put extra pressure on your eyes, causing blurred vision. While blurriness can be worrying, it's not a serious cause for concern and you should rest until your symptoms subside.'

Your eyes may begin to twitch

'Eye twitching is another common sign of stress. The movement in the eyelid occurs through the continuous contraction of the orbicularis oculi muscle and although this can be uncomfortable, it's usually harmless and tends to resolve itself.'

It could make your dry eyes worse

'Stress can often make your dry eye condition worse, which can cause more stress in the longer term. It's important to stay on top of your treatments to avoid being in a prolonged state of discomfort.'

How to rest your eyes

'Deep breathing can relieve tension, while exercising and getting outdoors can help reduce feelings of stress too. If you're feeling stressed at work, the best thing to do is have a screen break. Use the 20/20/20 rule – every 20 minutes look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds, to give your eyes time to rest and recharge.'

To book an appointment at Specsavers Linlithgow, call 01506 534 484 or visit www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/linlithgow.

BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY IN THE ITALIAN LAKES

Last month Lesley and I had a very happy ten days in the Italian Lakes visiting gardens and enjoying the food, wine and the company of our fellow travellers. It was the first time we had been out of the UK since January 2021. We showed you a picture of Lesley at Balbianello in the January Black Bitch, when we visited in August 2015, here she is again, wrapped up but with blue skies under the arches which have the green tracery of Creeping Fig clinging to them. This garden was used as location in



Lesley at Balbianello,

Casino Royale when James Bond was recuperating on the lawn below the huge mushroom shaped topiary Evergreen Oak.

It's lovely revisiting gardens you've



Palm Leaf Mulch

also to feed the soil, Andrea mulches all the ground, even using palm leaves, no vegetation leaves his garden... it's all composted or shredded and returned to the earth. Lessons for us in our gardens!



Italian statue

Being in Italy we couldn't avoid those classic marble statues, and as we think of New Hopetoun Gardens as the Scottish home of garden ornaments you won't be surprised to see us include one of these characters here!



Camellia

seen before, especially at a different time of year. But we had never seen Camellias and Magnolias flowering in the gardens of Lakes Como and Maggiore but the real treat for us was visiting the Camellia garden of the President of the Italina Camellia Society for the first time. Andrea led us around his garden which is in a steep sided valley and beautifully designed and maintained.



Magnolia

Many of the Williamsii varieties of Camellia were in full flower, two weeks ahead of ours back home, and these are the varieties that perform best for us in Scotland. They have the added advantage of dropping their spent flowers rather than holding onto them

looking brown and dead on their branches. What a tapestry we enjoyed with Magnolias and Camellias dropping their spent blooms in generous pools around their feet.

Partly to reduce the maintenance required for weeding, but



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IT'S STILL LATE SPRING!

THE GARDEN CENTRE IS BURSTING AT THE SEAMS WITH THE MOST TEMPTING PLANTS, BUT SOME OF THE SUMMER BEDDING NEEDS PROTECTION FROM THE COLD WEATHER UNTIL MAY!

STITCH MATTERS

Stitch and Textile Art Exhibition In conjunction with Linlithgow Museum.

29 April - 7 May 2023 (closed 2 May)

Monday, Wednesday - Saturday 10am-4pm
Sunday 1pm - 4pm

Stitch Matters (formerly Linlithgow and District Embroiderers' Guild) would like to welcome you to see members' textile art in a new exhibition at Linlithgow Museum.

Textile art is "art that uses varying materials and fibres to produce decorative, artistic objects." Techniques include embroidery, collage, dyeing, printing, felting and lots more. These are based on both traditional and contemporary styles.

The Stitch Matters group provides an annual programme of speakers, informal stitch and chat afternoons, workshops, learning opportunities and outings. Membership is open to all those with an interest- complete beginners to the more experienced.

Members will be available at the exhibition to share more information about the group, and you can even try your hand at creating some textile art of your own.

Membership information is available from the secretary at d6eagle@gmail.com



PERAMBULATION OF LINLITHGOW MARCHES 2023

You are invited to participate in the Perambulation of the Marches this year!

The Perambulation compliments the Marches by walking the line of the Linlithgow parliamentary boundary as established in 1832.

The organisers, Linlithgow Civic Trust, invite town residents and visitors alike to attend.

The walk is four miles long (6.5k) and passes seven out of the eight marches stones, (one original and seven replica stones installed in 2014).

The Perambulation of the Marches takes place on Wednesday 7th June starting at 7pm at March Stone No. 1 in front of St Ninian's Craigmailen Church on Falkirk Road (just west of the West Port



Hotel) and proceeds in a clockwise direction round the route.

The walk will be led by the provost, flagbearers and the halberdiers of the Deacons Court, and the town crier. At each march stone along the route, a standard is mounted on the stone and a piper will play. The perambulation stops

for refreshments at Linlithgow Canal Centre where walkers will be entertained by Linlithgow Reed Band.

Linlithgow Civic Trust hopes for a supportive turn out this year and look forward to seeing you all.

LINLITHGOW LINK

Linlithgow Link is one of the town's best kept secrets. The charity, which has been recognised with the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, started more than 40 years ago.

In the mid '70s a group of Linlithgow locals noticed that a growing number of people, due to illness or infirmity, were becoming lonely and isolated. Many of these people had lived in the town for most of their lives but were now unable to meet up with friends and relatives.

Events were organised where friends could get together. Occasionally volunteers were asked to give people lifts to the shops or medical appointments. Linlithgow Link evolved from these small acts of help and became a registered charity in 1979.

People can join the 'Link' and take advantage of several practical initiatives such as a weekly get together of tea and cake or, for those unable to use public transport, a lift to a medical appointment with a volunteer driver.

The 'Link' also offers a befriending service, visiting folk who may feel lonely through age or ill health, finding that a shared cuppa and a chat are easy to give and very welcome. Regular contact can make a huge difference to people's health and wellbeing.

The demand for the services that the Linlithgow Link team offers is growing. New volunteers are needed. **Sarah Vibert** CEO of NCVO says *"volunteering is not only really fulfilling, but also offers the chance to meet new people, learn new skills and make a positive impact on the community you live in."*

Sue Vizard joined Linlithgow Link as a volunteer at the end of 2019. *"It took a month to get my Protection for Vulnerable Groups disclosure record approved. The Link office helped and once I got the certificate and some 1:1 guidance I was up and running."*

PVG is required for all new volunteers to Linlithgow Link. Sue feels gratitude for her volunteering role. *"It's easy to be overwhelmed by the grave happenings in the world."*



Fancy a Cuppa?
Linlithgow Link is looking for volunteers within the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge area.

Can you spare an hour or so a month to be a friend to someone nearby who is feeling isolated - a shared cuppa and a chat are easy to give and can make a huge difference to someone who is feeling lonely through age or ill health?

Linlithgow Link

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That's why I enjoy accompanying people to their appointments. My passengers are interesting. They all have stories to tell about their lives and I love to hear them. I feel more positive about, well, everything as a result!"

For further information about Linlithgow Link:

<https://www.linlithgowlink.org.uk>

or call 01506 845137.



LOW PORT CENTRE UPDATE

St John's Church - Community Asset Transfer

St John's Church Linlithgow is committed to investigating the suitability of the Low Port Centre as a vibrant, active and sustainable hub to serve the communities of Linlithgow! We are in the early stages of a Community Asset Transfer process which may enable us to reopen the Low Port Centre and turn it once again into a vibrant community hub.

We recently undertook a structural survey of The Low Port Centre on 2 areas that the building survey flagged up. One was a crack in the old drying room wall and one was in a stairwell. We had positive results from the two areas that were inspected which is good news.

Andy Clark, Youth Worker,
St John's Church, Linlithgow



LINLITHGOW'S MOONDANCE IS BACK!

It's back! After having to cancel the 2020 event due to the pandemic, the Moondance team are beyond excited to finally be able to bring the third Linlithgow Moondance Ladies Night to the Rugby Club Indoor Marquee on Saturday 10th June 2023.

The phenomenal success of the first two events in 2018 and 2019 meant there was little hesitation in organising a third event in 2020 and the team were in full swing, ticket sales were flying and last minute touches to finalising arrangements were being made. Then, Covid!... The cancellation of events and plans around the globe plunged the world into unknown waters and something most had never experienced. The team never dreamt it would be 4 long years to host another Moondance! So, 2023 is the one,... the big one,... the best one yet,... when Linlithgow Moondance hopes to raise as much money as possible for two deserving charities and make up for so much lost time!

The goal is to surpass the successes of the last two events, both of which were sell-outs and together raised over £15,000. This year it's hoped boundaries are pushed to raise more than ever, splitting the proceeds equally between the Breast Unit in Oncology at St. John's Hospital and Breast Cancer Now.

The Breast Unit within St. John's hopes to continue a Complementary Therapies service which provides much needed support to patients during and after treatment, assisting patient recovery, and helping those ladies to feel good about themselves whilst undergoing a difficult and challenging time of their lives. This service is self-funded and not supported by the NHS so the money raised will allow this to continue. The other half of the proceeds raised will be donated to Breast Cancer Now (created through the merger of Breast Cancer Now and Breast Cancer Care). Together they'll have the ability to continue to carry out more world-class research, provide more life-changing support and campaign even more effectively for better services and care. As one, they'll make greater progress in more effective ways and provide coverage right through from ground breaking research to care and support for those affected.

Those who have been to a Moondance before will know that it's a fabulous night right on the doorstep. This year we are delighted to welcome a newcomer to our event, Graceland live band. Graceland are a well-known 5 piece band on the wedding and event circuit. They come highly recommended and with their 5 star reviews these guys are certain to have the dance floor filled from the outset.

A stream of ticket sales since the beginning of the year suggests the event is heading towards another sell-out with 70% of tickets already sold at the time of writing. Tickets

are £15 having been held at 2018 prices and include a glass of fizz on arrival. From 7.30pm to midnight there'll be live music, dancing, a bar and a raffle with some amazing prizes that have been kindly donated by companies both local and further afield. This is not a night to be missed - ask anyone who's been before!

Linlithgow Moondance would like to say a huge thank you in advance for the help of the Linlithgow Round Table. Thank you also to our advertisers: The Black Bitch Magazine, Konect Magazine, the Round Table Marches Magazine and also to our ticket outlets - Beautique Beauty Salon, The Thread Counter and Flowers by Carolyn. Tickets are available from any of these outlets, committee members, by messaging the Facebook page or email Linlithgowmoondance@mail.com.

If you haven't already, make sure you've got your ticket, 'like' the Linlithgow Moondance Facebook page @ [linlithgowmoondance](https://www.facebook.com/linlithgowmoondance) or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page to keep up with the latest Moondance news. We are looking forward to another fantastic night and raising lots of money!

Thank you for your support
The Moondance Team



SAT
10
JUNE

ANSELM ADORNES

Bruce Jamieson



Anselm Adornes, carved on his tomb in Bruges.

On the side wall of St Katherine's Aisle in St Michael's Church is a plaque remembering Anselm Adornes, Belgian merchant, diplomat, confidant of King James III and friend of Scotland. The memorial goes on to state that he is "buried near this place." It was unveiled in 1990 in the presence of Lord Lyon, Malcolm Innes, Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Morton, Tam Dalyell, MP, the Rev Ian Paterson and two descendants of Adornes: Count Henry Limburg-Stirum and Maximilian Limburg-Stirum. Also present was historical novelist Dorothy Dunnet, who had featured Adornes in several novels, a church full of her admirers and also members of the Heraldry Society of Scotland.



The memorial plaque is in St Katherine's Aisle.



Anselm's actual burial place is unknown, although he lies undoubtedly in the building somewhere. His will, written in 1480, stated that he wished to "leave my soul to the Blessed Virgin Mary and my body to be buried in the parish church of the Blessed Archangel Michael of Linlithgow." In the pre-Reformation church people of rank and status were often buried beneath the floor of the consecrated House of God. Adornes went on to say that he was making his will in case "the day of my extremity should happen in the Kingdom of Scotland, since nothing is more certain than Death and nothing more uncertain than the hour of Death." How true that sentiment was to be regarding his own demise!

Did his request mean that he wanted to be buried beneath the Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary? This shrine was always placed at the right side of the High Altar and in St Michael's this would have been at the east end, in the sanctuary behind the chancel.



The Virgin Mary Altar would have been placed to the right of the High Altar.

However, another reference to Adornes appears in a list of obits, fees paid for regular masses to be said for the repose of the soul. Anselm's daughter, Euphemia, paid a rental from her properties in the Kirkgate towards the upkeep of the Altar of the Holy Cross. As the owner of these properties, she was obliged to pay the required fee to that nominated altar. It does not necessarily mean that her father was buried at that altar, but, given the connection, he could have been.

Anselm was born in Bruges in 1424, into a powerful family which was closely involved in international trade and in the administration of the city. Anselm also became very involved with municipal affairs, ending up as Mayor of Bruges. He did not live in

the family mansion but moved into an area called the Dyers' Dyke where he owned several warehouses close to those owned by many Scottish merchants, some of whom he befriended.

In 1467, on account of complicated international relations, the Scottish Parliament forbade trade with Flanders and the Scottish merchants had to leave Bruges. A year later, Anselm Adornes and others went on a diplomatic mission to persuade the Scottish authorities to reverse their decision. In Linlithgow, he met King James III who was impressed by the young man and his plans to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem - something the Scottish monarch had always wanted to do. He made Anselm promise that, on his return from the Holy Land, he would tell the King all about it.

King James was so taken by Anselm that he bestowed on him the Order of the Unicorn and made him a Royal Councillor, giving him land and properties in Linlithgow and in Blackness from where Anselm sailed to and from the Low Countries.



It is recorded that amongst other property Adornes was gifted "a Blackness house, roofed with tiles, by the shore."

The King entrusted Anselm with the task of bringing his sister, **Mary Stewart**, back from Denmark and, on his return to Scotland, Anselm established himself as one of James III's closest companions. He was appointed "Keeper of the King's Palace at Linlithgow", with accommodation in an area specially constructed on the orders of the monarch. King James was further impressed when Anselm arranged for Flemish painter **Hugo van der Goes** to paint portraits of him and his wife Margaret. They posed for it in Linlithgow Palace and it now hangs in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.



(Below left) King James III and Queen Margaret of Denmark painted by Hugo van der Goes.

Such favouritism of course invoked jealousy from other Scottish nobles and, in addition, Anselm had fallen foul of rival merchants in Belgium. In 1483 he went on a mission for the King to North Berwick where he spent the night of February 22nd in the Priory of Cistercian Nuns.



The remains of the Cistercian Nunnery in North Berwick.

The next morning, near the village of Dirleton, Anselm was set upon by his enemies (whoever they were) and murdered. King James was inconsolable and ordered that the body be brought back to Linlithgow to be buried in St Michael's Church.

Amongst other relevant records held in Edinburgh is the Royal Treasurer's Accounts for expenses outlaid on this.

For the service held in North Berwick: £2. 8 shillings

To carrying his body from North Berwick to Leith: £4. 4 shillings

And from Leith to Blackness: £1

For torches and candles in Linlithgow: £2. 4 shillings

For masses to be said in Linlithgow: £3

For alms and bread for the poor: £11

For the ringing of the bell in Linlithgow: £4

At which altar the masses were said and where Anselm's body was laid to rest is not exactly known. The King agreed that before burial, Anselm's heart could be removed and taken to Bruges where it was placed in a shrine inside the beautiful Jerusalemkirk which the Adornes family had built.

I have visited the Jerusalemkirk and witnessed the place where the heart of Anselm Adornes still lies. Descendants of his family are still rightly proud of their ancestor and his Scottish connections – and that explains their attendance at the unveiling of the plaque in St Michael's Church.



Unveiling the Adornes plaque in 1990.



The Jerusalemkirk in Bruges and the Adornes tomb.



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LADAS A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ALLOTMENTEER

A sunny and warm day at last! With the cold, wet weather in March any planting has been held back. Potatoes have continued to sit in egg boxes on the window sill, chitting. Normally seed potatoes would be in the ground by now. But today, 2 April, the potatoes have been planted – only the earlies, the main crop potatoes can go in later in the month. Potatoes need a deep trench at least 15 cm deep. I put plenty of organic matter (compost and some manure works well) in the trench and nestle the potatoes into the soil (with the 'eyes' facing up) before covering the trench with soil. Early potatoes are planted about 30/35 cm apart. On advice from another allotmenteer, this year I have added some ericaceous compost, which reduces the pH, making the soil more acid. This is supposed to give 'clean' potatoes without 'scab'.



The other job today has been to plant shallots. I grow from sets but start off in modules with multi-purpose compost up to the 'shoulder' of the shallot set and the tip poking out of the compost. These are watered and left in a greenhouse or somewhere cool and light until the long green shoots emerge. They are then hardened off for a week or so to let them get used to being outside before being planted out in fertile soil. Growing in modules first, gives the shallots a good start.

Shallots are so easy to grow – just keep weed free and water if very dry.

My third job has been to plant out new strawberry plants. To keep picking large, juicy strawberries, a strawberry bed needs to be replaced about every four years. I bought my bare-rooted plants in November and planted into small plant pots into multi-purpose compost to grow and become established over the winter. They had been kept in the greenhouse and then outside when the weather improved. They are frost hardy and so haven't suffered from the cold weather. They are now planted out 35 cm apart with rows 75 cm apart in soil that has had plenty of home-made compost added.



Today has been a busy day with many other people working hard on their plots, mainly planting potatoes and onions, either from sets or from plants grown from seed. Ground is being weeded and made ready for legumes and brassicas. There are already some plots with broad beans growing that were planted in the autumn. This will give an earlier crop. Buds on fruit bushes and trees are beginning to burst into life. What we don't want is any frost when the flowers appear. This can seriously damage a fruit crop. Being alert for frost warnings is a constant when growing fruit and vegetables. If a frost is forecast when flowers are out on fruit trees, covering with some fleece can help protect them.



These jobs today were punctuated by chats to other allotmentees! And a very welcome cup of tea! Oakwell is a beautiful site and on a sunny day, looking across to the Ochil Hills with the sun picking out the different shades of green is very special



Jobs for April include...

April is a busy month for sowing vegetables in the Linlithgow area, a few weeks later than further south. As always, be guided by the weather forecast.

- >> Plant out summer cauliflowers. Make sure the plants never dry out.
- >> Plant potatoes this month.
- >> Sow winter cabbage and savoy under cover for transplanting later.
- >> Sow radish and spinach in the middle of the month.
- >> Towards the end of the month pot on tomato plants into their final containers or growbags. Pinch outside shoots as they appear on cordon varieties.
- >> Towards the middle of the month harden off kohlrabi, summer cabbage and brusse sprouts sown inside earlier for planting out in week four.
- >> Sow swiss chard and spinach beet in the open at the end of the month.

Val Corry,
Chair LADAS





BYE BYE SKIN TAGS

Say goodbye to your unwanted skin tags and say hello to smooth skin!

Skin tags are small, harmless growths of skin that commonly occur on the neck, armpits, eyelids, and other areas of the body where skin rubs against skin or clothing.

Did you know they are extremely easy to treat? At Skin Happy I use Cryotherapy which is a very quick method of freezing skin tags (and other lesions) down to -47°C , this causes them to die and fall off usually within 7-14 days leaving you with smooth clear skin.

The treatment procedure only lasts for a matter of seconds, there is minimal discomfort which is described as feeling

like a stinging nettle rash and only lasts a few minutes.

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Whether you have one or more than one hundred I can help.

If you have a skin tag that bothers you or is in a location that is uncomfortable, it can be removed leaving you tag free and worry free. You can see examples of my work on my website under Cryotherapy treatments.

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REV ROSIE ADDIS

St Peter's, Linlithgow and its sister church St Columba's in Bathgate are delighted to have a new spiritual leader. On the first day of March, in front of a packed, joint congregation, the **Rev. Rosie (Rosemary) Addis** was installed as Rector of both charges by **John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh**. Also present were members of her family and representatives from the clergy of Linlithgow and across the Edinburgh Diocese. She is now living, with her husband Reuben, in the Linlithgow Rectory in Acredales and is leading the town's Scottish Episcopalians in worship every Sunday morning at 9-30am. Rosie has two children - both students of music. She herself hails from Whitehaven in Cumbria but grew up in Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. She has lived and worked in Scotland for thirty years - latterly as an Associate Rector at St John's Church in Princes Street, Edinburgh. At University in Keele, she studied Russian and economics and then went on to become an expert in British Sign Language. She is currently the Chair of Deaf Action and very much involved with the Christian Deaf world.



Saturday 9pm - late

Kenny Hanlon - 22nd April
 Gerry's Karaoke - 29th April
 CAL - 6th May
 Sandy Taylor - 13th May
 Marilyn Childs Duncan - 20th May
 Gerry's Karaoke - 27th May

Sunday 5pm - 8pm

Pure Malt - 30th April
 Martin McGroarty - 7th May
 Pure Malt - 28th May

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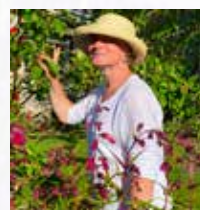
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“Is the property market stable or crashing and is this a good time to sell?”

As a local estate agent, a question we are frequently asked is, *“Is the property market stable or crashing and is this a good time to sell?”*

Post Covid-19 we saw unprecedented market conditions. This was due to a severe lack of properties being listed and the demand far outweighing the supply. There were times last year where we as agents wouldn't bat an eye at properties selling in a few days for 15% to 20% over the asking price, regardless of price, condition or location. The question then was, *“How long can this continue?”*. The answer may surprise you.

With the cost of living crisis, the war in Ukraine and other external factors deemed to potentially negatively affect the UK property market, you would presume the answer would be - not very long. You would be mistaken. While rising living costs and mortgage rates have had an effect, the news isn't all doom and gloom as the mainstream

media would have you believe. Yes, every property isn't selling for 15% to 20% over the asking price but property values (i.e the valuation the surveyor will put in the home report for your property) are still rising steadily.

The volume of properties available for sale is still consistent with, if not slightly higher than, volume of properties available this time last year. In postcodes EH49 and EH51 between January and April 2022 there were 105 new instructions brought to market vs 109 new instructions in the same time period of 2023. In terms of sales, in 2022 there were 89 sales whereas in 2023 this number fell to 85 sales. This is excellent news for buyers as there is more choice. However, this isn't always great news for sellers as more choice means buyers have a greater choice too and can in turn reduce the number of offers received for their property bringing the price achieved down slightly. The good news for sellers is that the demand still outweighs the supply so if people fall in love with your property, they will still have to pay on average 5% to 10% over

the asking price, depending on the level of competition and condition of the property.

Is it a good time to sell? Yes. If you are selling and buying in the same market it is almost an irrelevant point; if you sell your home in a buoyant seller's market, the chances are the seller you intend to buy from will be expecting an exceptional offer also. Likewise, if you sell in a buyer's market and don't achieve much more than the home report valuation you should get your onwards purchase for a similar price.

In summary and based on the evidence we have seen; the market is stable. There is evidence of a return to pre-Covid-19 levels, however, a good agent should still achieve a sale for you in excess of the asking price.



Hello
I'm Lenny
Macleod

This month Westport Vets Pet of The Month is **Lenny Macleod**. Lenny is a one and a half year old Labrador Retriever.

Lenny makes his owners smile when he runs to get a toy for them whenever they get home and likes to join them on the sofa for cuddles at night. He makes them chuckle, getting far too excited at meal times and likes to push them out their space in bed. Lenny is also partial to stealing their seat the moment they get up!

Lenny absolutely loves swimming and playing in the garden - he would happily spend hours doing both! He also loves nothing more than finding a fellow dog to play chase with in the park. Another favourite is collecting the biggest sticks he can find on his walks. In the house he loves to play tug of war with one of his many stuffed toys.

His happy place has to be exploring up at Beecraigs. The beach is also a favourite place where he will run for hours on the sand. Lenny is also partial to a swim, splashing and swimming about in any part of water he can find. In the house he can be found napping on the sofa... or any bed he can get onto!

Lenny has recently moved back to Scotland from Amsterdam with his owners. His owner says:

"Lenny is really enjoying being back in Scotland. Here Lenny gets more

walks in the countryside, more time off the lead. In Amsterdam the dog areas in the parks were quite small and often access to outdoor areas restricted in the summer. Though he will miss his swims in the Amstel during the summer."

They are most looking forward to exploring more of Scotland together, lots of walks on the beaches in East Lothian and taking him for walks with friends in the Pentlands.

Lenny's owners have set Lenny up for the best success to settle into all aspects of life in Linlithgow. For vet visits he has been doing **Confidence Clinics at Westport Vets Linlithgow** practice.

Confidence Clinics are to help reduce the stress dogs feel when they visit the veterinary practice. This can range from the stress before entering the practice - such as car travel or walking by busy roads, to entering the practice grounds, the building, consult rooms, the kennels, handling for examinations and the equipment used inside the environment.

The aim in confidence clinics is to help dogs feel relaxed coming to the practice and to reduce stress and anxiety for future visits. Having a dog who is much less stressed on vet visits has many benefits including options of treatments available to be carried out for future visits should they need them.

We want pets to feel comfortable and safe in our care. We also want to offer the best care and treatments we can to pets and reducing the stress on the individual allows us to have these

options without needing to do check ups or simple treatments such as ear checks or anal glands requiring sedation.

Confidence Clinics are done as a course of 6 individual sessions. At Linlithgow these are done with Registered Veterinary Nurse Carena and are always done when the practice is closed on Sunday afternoons. This ensures the sessions take place in a quiet and controlled environment.

Sessions work on lots of aspects - the practice environment outdoors and entering inside, from handling tasks to veterinary care tasks and use of equipment. Also working on targets and specific husbandry skills. All sessions are tailored to the individual dog. They are designed to be as fun as they are educational and the pace of learning progression is set by the dog

>> these visits remain positive throughout which helps your dog understand that when they are at the vets fun things happen! Owners also learn skills they might need should their pet become worried or stressed

>> training type activities which can help to keep your dog's mind occupied for when they wait to be seen for future appointments or that may help with tasks at home such as caregiving for washing, grooming, nail clips etc.

These visits can help to make a massive difference to how dogs will feel and cope in the future. Lenny's sessions so far have been tailored

with the aim of helping him feel confident getting his vaccinations done. Making the practice environment as fun as possible allows him to feel happy coming in and working with him in the way he prefers to be approached and handled. Lenny loves food and play so both of these are used in his sessions with excellent results.

Many dogs may be fine in the practice however it should be considered that if every time they come in they are having something done, that over time this can increase anxiety. Simply popping in for a chin-wag with the team and a treat between appointments, or random weight checks for treats or play, is an excellent way to keep visits fun and positive.

The Westport Team are always available to help, if you have any concerns about your pet please call 01506 844165. For enquiries email surgery@westportvets.com



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