



CLYDESIDER

OUR COMMUNITY'S POPULAR PRESS

ISSUE 14 WINTER 2020

FREE



HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

* A CLYDESIDER CREATIVE SPECIAL

Christmas Eve

Mammy's in the kitchen
Wi' steam comin' oot her ears
The dug has ate the turkey
An ma Da's drunk a' the beers

Ma brother's oan the telephone
'cos he's fell oot wae his burd
Ma sister's in the lavvy sick
She's ate aw the lemon curd

Ah've been doin' a reccy
of every hidin' place
They've no bought any presents
An' a think it's a disgrace

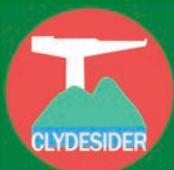
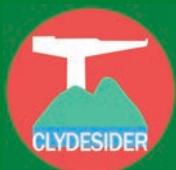
I've even searched the cellar
Where we keep aw the coal
But that wis jist a waste o' time
A big black empty hole

Noo Mammy's oan the sherry
She's singin' Christmas carols
But aw that's botherin' me just noo
Is where's the Christmas parcels

I'm writing this by candle light
'cos the meter his ran oot
Ma Mammy's just fell o'er the dug
Noo she's got a broken foot

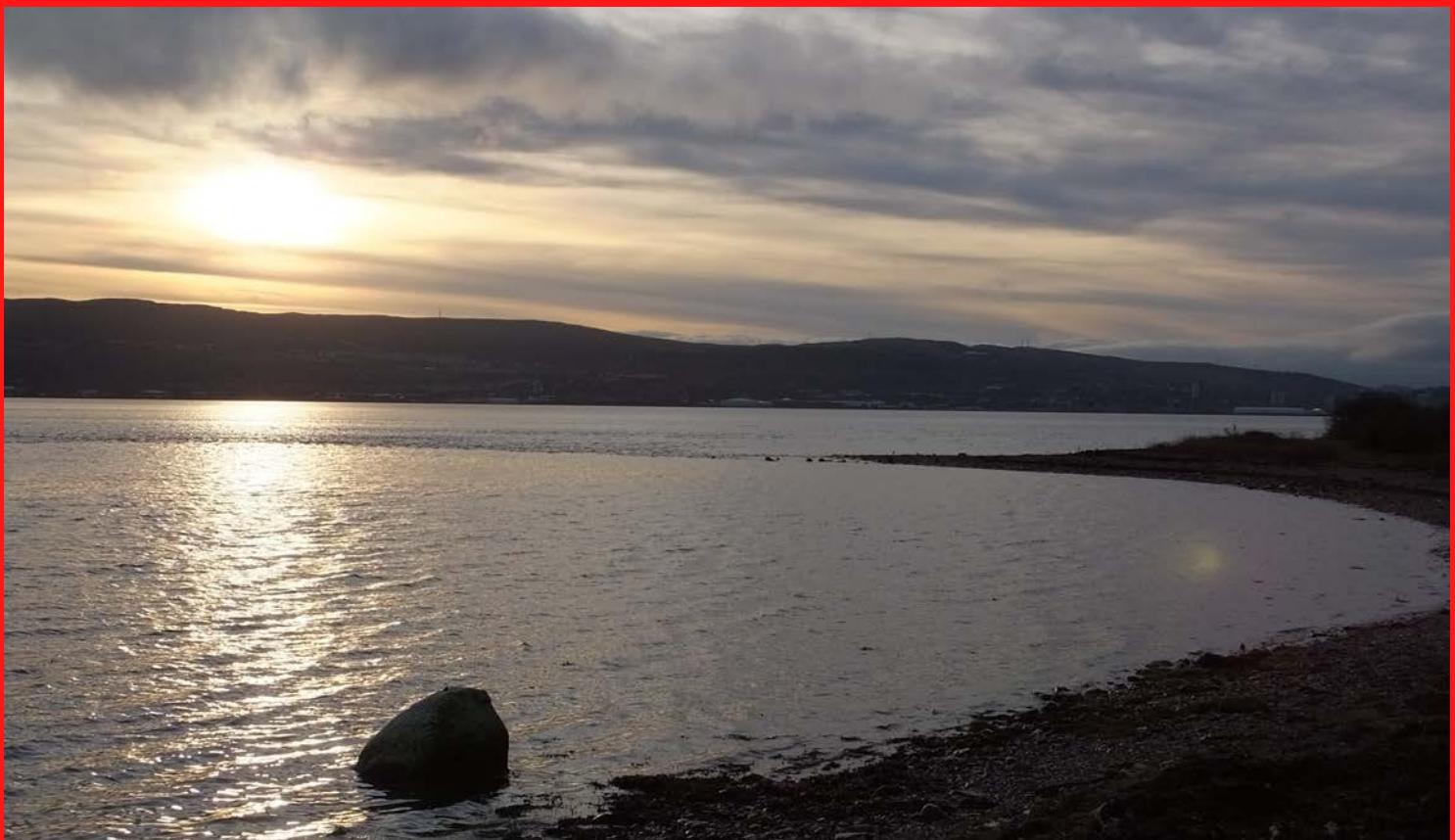
Tomorra's gonnae be dismal
Nae presents or Christmas roast
'Aw a know fir certain is
Ah'm havin' beans oan toast

by Maureen Spratt
Poetry Competition Winner



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Welcome

Christmas was always such a special time when I was a child, it usually started near the end of November with the making of Christmas cakes and puddings for friends and neighbours, then the magical build up began from the start of December with the daily opening of a family advent calendar. No chocolates or gift packs back then, just a little picture hidden behind a festive door but none the less special.

Christmas card and decoration-making would keep us busy at the weekends along with festive stories and music. Excitement levels reached fever pitch with the arrival of the tree - always a real one that usually shed most of its needles before New Year. With eight younger siblings and a small army of aunts, uncles and cousins it was usually hard to see the bottom of the tree by the time Christmas Day came round as a mound of presents surrounded it, many of them homemade.

I am so fortunate to have these happy memories of Christmases past to help me through this present Christmas with family, who I haven't seen since last December, many miles away now. And it was with these festive reminiscences in mind that we planned this issue, along with our virtual Creative Cafe from Your Couch, with the aim to capture some of that homemade Christmas spirit.

It has been the toughest of years for so many people and I know Christmas 2020 will be one most of us will be happy to forget, but we couldn't let the Grinch have all the fun this year. So I hope you will find something within these 32 pages of creative activities, festive stories, humorous poems and stunning photos to make you smile and here's hoping 2021 will be a year to remember for all the right reasons.

Enjoy & Stay Safe!

Amanda Eleftheriades-Sherry, Editor



Martin Docherty-Hughes

Your MP for West Dunbartonshire (SNP)

CONSTITUENT ADVICE SURGERIES



Here to help you

Throughout the Coronavirus outbreak my constituency team and I have been working hard to provide advice and support to people across Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven.

In order to be as accessible as possible I'm holding weekly virtual advice surgeries for my constituents. Every Thursday I'm available via phone or video call - please get in touch if you'd like to arrange an appointment.

Thanks,

Martin Docherty-Hughes MP

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Surgery dates may be subject to change depending on public holidays or parliamentary commitments.

Due to high demand appointment slots of 15 mins are allocated on a first come first served basis.



Cook-a-Long With Colette

By Angela Clark

With most of us spending more time at home than ever before the pandemic has seen a growing interest in activities we can do within our own spaces.

During the spring and summer our gardens were the place to be as many of us tried to grow tomatoes, potatoes and sunflowers - perhaps for the first time.

Now winter nights and wet weather make the outdoor space less appealing we're looking for activities to pass the time indoors.

And one Clydebank business woman has come up with a great initiative to keep family and friends entertained, connected - and well fed!

Colette Lord who runs a successful events catering business had to adapt her ways of working this year as most events have been cancelled and venues closed throughout 2020.

At first she started making and delivering afternoon tea and picnic platters tailored to individual dietary needs.

And recently she began running online cook-along sessions giving people the chance to have fun trying new recipes and

spending time cooking together from the comfort of their own kitchen. Colette said: "I never thought I would do something online. The cook-a-longs come from when we were in lockdown and couldn't see our friends and I thought I can't do another Zoom quiz.

I wanted to see my friends and do something I enjoy, which is where the idea came from. It's a way to socialise and have a bit of community, sharing a meal is a big part of that and it's done safely from your own home."

Cook-a-longs are suitable for anyone and are helping bring people together without having to leave the safety of their home.

Colette said requests for birthday parties and other special events have become extremely popular as people look for different ways to celebrate with family and friends.

It's an alternative to going out for dinner. It's somewhere you can see your friends, have a meal and a few drinks and celebrate without putting anyone at risk and it's becoming more popular for people to hire me for their party.



"Once the party is booked I send out the details of how to log into the Zoom, what ingredients and equipment is needed. If people don't like something that is part of the ingredient list then we tell them to use their usual alternative.

"We keep the equipment basic, generally what most people have in their house, I don't want people rushing out to buy things - if you don't have a rolling pin use a bottle of wine."

And her weekly Zoom cook-a-longs which are open for anyone to join are growing in popularity as parents look for new ways to keep themselves - and their children - entertained at home.

The sessions are a fun way to spend time with people on screen, often people you have never met before. They are about community, about sitting down having a meal and chatting is a big part of that, especially with family.

Although Colette admits teaching kids how to cook is the main drive for her doing the

online cook-a-longs.

She added: "We can't bring up a generation of children who don't know how to fend for themselves in the kitchen and think it's this big scary place.

"Fair enough we need to have safety and we need them to know what's dangerous, but we don't want to have kids that are scared of the kitchen.

"I did a wee girl's ninth birthday party and we made pizza. It was like three ingredients - flour, natural yogurt and a pinch of salt - that's dead easy for a kid to do. It gives them a bit of responsibility. They love it. They show up at the table, like 'look I made you your dinner'."

Colette loves hosting the events and helping participants increase their cooking skills.

If you would like to encourage your kids into the kitchen or want to improve your own cooking skills contact The Buffet Lady on Facebook or email colettelord23@gmail.com



Express Yourself

By Amanda Eleftheriades

From an early age Carla Woodburn discovered that poetry and rhyme helped her express her emotions and clear her mind.

Now the Clydebank-based poet has created an audio space which celebrates the power of poetry and provides a platform for local writers to share their work.

‘Express Yourself – The Radio Show’ broadcasts every Thursday evening at 7pm on Sunny Govan Community Radio and Carla describes her show as “poetry from everyone, for everyone”.

She explained: “The aim of the show is to make poetry accessible to everyone and understandable for everyone. It takes away any pretentiousness that is associated with poetry and makes it enjoyable for all.”

Originally from Tain in the Highlands, Carla returned to her mother’s home town of Clydebank five years ago, after living in Barcelona.

On her return to Scotland she started hosting a monthly ‘Express Yourself’ creative event in Glasgow’s Project Café.

It was through a regular spot on a friend’s community news show that Carla first got involved with Sunny Govan. Tragically her friend, Sarah passed away from terminal cancer and Carla was asked if she would like to take on her slot.

She said: “Sunny Govan approached me and said they would like me to do a show, I knew how to use the equipment so I just took it on board. It’s a nice memory of Sarah, my friend.

“Sunny G have been brilliant with me and have given me free rein.”

Now Carla is keen to hear from other local creatives and feels the radio show is a great opportunity to do this.

Anyone can send in an MP3 recording of their poetry and Carla will air them on her weekly show. She also has regular themed nights which involve discussion and special guests.

Mental Health

Some of the recent topics covered included a mental health event and a Scottish themed show and she’s now planning a festive Christmas special.

Carla explained: “When we do themed shows it is much more of an event.

“The mental health show was a two hour slot and it was just great, we discussed male mental health and had two male poets on the show, we were discussing suicide but it was still an upbeat show.

“I think that’s the energy I bring to it, no matter if it is a hard topic.

“By keeping it real and remembering we are all real people, there is no taboo subject because we are all humans at the end of the day and we all have to tackle these stigmas and problems.

“Life’s ups and downs effect everybody and touches their life at some point.

"At Christmas I will be doing a festive show we'll be talking about Covid at Christmas and anything that is Christmas related, how people are feeling at this time of year - the real world."

As well as hosting the radio show and (pre-Covid) her own creative events, Carla loves writing her own poetry.

"Poetry for me was a thing I got involved with in primary school because I always enjoyed rhyming and the whole putting a poem together, expressing myself through rhyme.

"Poetry has been a continuous thing through my life, I'm published in two anthologies and have the radio show and events. I write a lot at home, it's my way of expressing how I feel, it's also good for your mental health, it clears your mind and it's a really good outlet for me."

And Carla has found the pandemic has boosted her creativity.

She added: "I'm creative anyway but the creativity that is coming out of me is ridiculous, I'm writing an awful lot and I'm focusing a lot more on the radio.

"I love writing imaginative poetry. I like twisting fairy tales and I enjoy surreal poetry. I wouldn't say I'm a political poet

but sometimes a number of my poems converge to be political.

It's always when something gets on my goat and it just seems to write itself, I don't set out to be that political, usually it's imaginative poetry, funny, humorous poetry almost fairytale like."

And Carla is already planning her shows for 2021.

"We've got some really exciting things coming up. We're going to be doing an Alisdair Gray show at the start of January, not a tribute but celebrating his poetry because he's quite neglected as a poet, there is more focus on his artwork and novels, so we're going to focusing on him as a poet on the show."

To have a poem included on Carla's show just email an MP3 file to expressyourselfprojects@outlook.com the only rule is there is no swearing and length should be no more than four minutes. Everyone is welcome to take part.

Tune into Sunny Govan online at www.sunnyg.com or if in Glasgow you can hear Carla's show on 103.5FM from 7pm every Thursday.

Listen in on December 10 to hear some of our very own Clydesider poets.

Stepping Up To The Challenge

Police Scotland Youth volunteers have stepped their way into children's hearts by totalling up one million steps to support a local toy appeal.

Previous years have seen the team raising funds for West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare's festive appeal by bag packing in the local Morrisons in Dumbarton.

However due to restrictions this event was not possible this year.

Group co-ordinator, PC Dale Logsdon, said: "We, as a team, are going to support this year's appeal by completing a virtual team walkathon by recording our daily steps over the course of November. This will be done ensuring that we adhere to the local restrictions and incorporating the latest technology."

Funds have already been kindly donated and family members are also keen to contribute to the step count. All steps are recorded on a virtual Step-O-Meter and totalled up at the end of the month.

To donate visit www.gofundme.com and look for PSYV WD Community Foodshare - Christmas Toy Appeal.



Clydebank Can

Sponsored Editorial

Clydebank Can is a Community Links Scotland project, funded for two years by the Scottish Government's Community Inclusion Fund.

This new project aims to bring people together for a more vibrant and socially and economically active Clydebank town centre.

Our purpose is to enable greater use of the local canal and bandstand area, bringing local people together and giving them the opportunity to perform and enjoy music and entertainment in Queens Square.

Activities have already taken place with Awestruck Academy and Y Sort It - two of Clydebank's many local groups taking part in this project.

By bringing together 25 young people to develop their musical abilities, Awestruck Academy are growing new talent in musical performance.

The young people aged 12 to 18 have been learning a musical instrument through weekly classes as well as practice at home.

They will come together to form a band and give a live-streamed performance when restrictions allow.

Y Sort It engage local young people to increase access to education and employment. They are offering cycle rides, outdoor activities and kayaking for anyone aged 10 to 25 who wants to take part.

Allan Young, Y Sort It Youth Work Outreach Co-ordinator said: "With so many families under immense pressure at the moment, it is so important that young people have somewhere they can come to be outside and safely interact with each other.



"The cycle rides we've been offering give young people freedom to explore their neighbourhoods safely and connect with each other whilst socially distancing."

The Clydebank Can project is also supported by Clydebank Housing Association, a social housing provider operating in Clydebank for 35 years, and by West Dunbartonshire Council. Last month Clydebank Housing Association secured funding to build a ramp which provides access to the canal from Centre81, a community centre and gym in Whitecrook.

The ramp is being developed over the next 12 weeks and will be ready for use in February to allow easy access to the canal from the community centre. This will further increase outdoor activity so local people can make the most of the canal and surrounding area.

Many more activities are planned next year for everyone, check out the new website which has a directory of more than 80 local organisations and community groups, so you can find out what's going on in your local area!

Visit www.clydebankcan.com





Homemade in Haldane by Angela Clark

From Christmas wreaths to festive cupcakes, candles and cards, youngsters in Haldane are getting in the Christmas spirit with a host of fun-filled activities.

The seasonal sessions are organised by Haldane Youth Services for the young people to get involved with both at home and at their base.

And they have been sharing the festive joy by designing homemade cards and treats for residents at local care homes.

The charity is now preparing an elf trail in their gardens with a mystery gift for each child. Project assistant, Carolyn Mackie, said: "Our garden will be getting decorated outdoors and the young people will have 10 minutes to go and find an elf. All the elves will have different numbers on the back and each number gets a toy which the children will be able to choose from a selection of toys that have been gifted."

Restrictions mean only a maximum of 12 children can attend indoor activities, which run twice a week so to ensure children in the local community are not missing out, Haldane Youth Services is sending out home activity packs.

Carolyn said: "You want to help every young person so that's why we do a home pack so it gives everybody a chance to still do the same activities.

"We identified early on the cooking events were really popular and we always have a waiting list, so we started budget bites where we supply a recipe, some utensils, and the ingredients to the young people in the community who want to take part.

"This way they still get the experience, only they are at home but we didn't expect it to be so popular, it was great because it started family bonding sessions.

"Sessions are limited, however if you would like to find out more about the services available contact Haldane Youth Services on Facebook or call them on 01389 600367.



Christmas Knitters

"Local knitters have joined forces with Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels to add a little festive cheer to their Christmas deliveries. And when we heard the Dalmuir Knit & Natter group were looking for extra knitters to help make some festive toppers to pop on a Terry's chocolate orange we offered to lend a hand.

But as none of our team are much good at knitting, we instead made up some Wool Packs for the knitters and shared the idea across our social media.

We quickly got local knitters - and crocheters - offering to get involved. From school children to great grandparents the knitting needles and crochet hooks were working over time as they made some gorgeous Santa hats, Christmas puddings and reindeer hats for the chocolates.

We also donated 50 chocolate oranges and Clyde Shopmobility got their knitting group involved in the fun and donated a further 25.

Mags Reid from Dalmuir Knit & Natter said: "I chose the chocolate orange covers because I'd just bought one for a stocking filler and had been looking at patterns to do them myself.

"It's a quick, easy pattern and a fun gift to receive. Novelty items are always popular with folk.



"I'm pleased with the response from knitters wanting to get involved. I love bringing folk together in our Knit and Natter group projects, it gives us all a shared focus especially during these difficult times when we are feeling isolated.

"It helps keep us sane plus it's nice to know our wee creations will bring joy to others."

OKFP had approached Dalmuir Knit & Natter for help to knit novelty items for kids to put in their Christmas parcels.

Mags added: "I was pleased to help out this wonderful group. They came to our family's rescue during lockdown when we really struggled to get an online shopping slot and were short of groceries one week while shielding at home - they even delivered them to us, it was a god send to receive them. It's a pleasure to give back to show our appreciation for everything they are doing in our community and reassuring to know they are there for us all in times of need."

As well as the Christmas knits Mags also raised over £100 for OKFP by making jams, chutneys and apple sauce from a bag of crab apples donated by one of her group.

To get involved with local creative projects or share your creative ideas and activities join our Clydesider Creatives Facebook group.

Knitters contact Dalmuir Knit & Natter via Facebook for more knitting projects.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:



HOMEMADE PAPER CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Step by step guide



STEP 1

Choose or create some sheets of paper in any colour scheme you would like, then cut them into thin strips. Try cutting some of the strips into wiggly lines and zig zags to make some of the baubles a little different.



STEP 4 Repeat glueing each strip until you have a 3D circle



STEP 5 Pierce a hole at the top of your bauble where all the strips of paper meet and feed a loop of string through.



STEP 2 Glue the end of one of your strips and loop it into a circle.



STEP 3 Glue another strip at the top and bottom of your loop like below



You can now hang them on your tree individually.

Or you can feed them onto a length of string or ribbon and hang them on your wall.



Another option is to create a template to make flat baubles to hang on your tree. Here are the outline of four simple shapes you could try, a tree, star, snowman and round bauble. You could try any shape you like, you don't need to stick to traditional shapes like these.



Choose a piece of card or paper, you can use colour or patterned paper or you can use white card and create the design yourself. Draw around your chosen shape with a pencil and cut it out. Punch or pierce a hole at the top for a loop of string.



If you would like to make your baubles 3D you can make a slit up the middle of two cutouts. First pierce or punch two holes at the top of each bauble. Now cut one bottom to middle and cut the other top to middle between the two holes. Then slide both cutouts together feeding string through all four holes at the top for a loop.



Now it's time to decorate your decorations. You can do this in any way you like. You can use pens, pencils, paints, glitter, traditional or alternative colours. It really is up to you, here are some ideas of things to try.



Now decorate all eight sides of the 3D bauble in any way you like. Why not let the kids join in to paint or colour their own baubles to decorate your tree. Put the artists name and the year on it and your family can enjoy it for years to come.



We love seeing what you make, so tag us over on social media and show us your homemade Christmas decorations



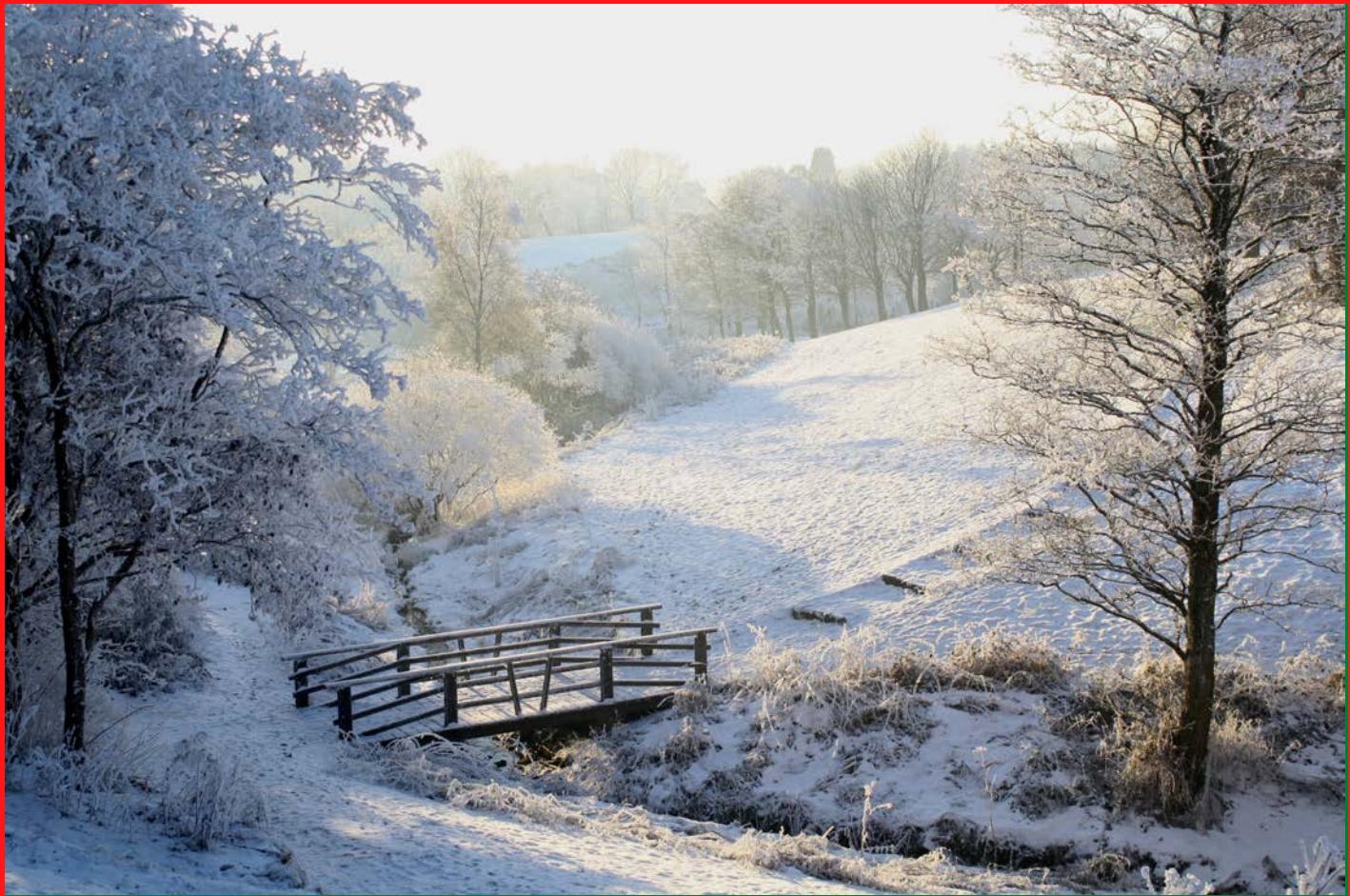
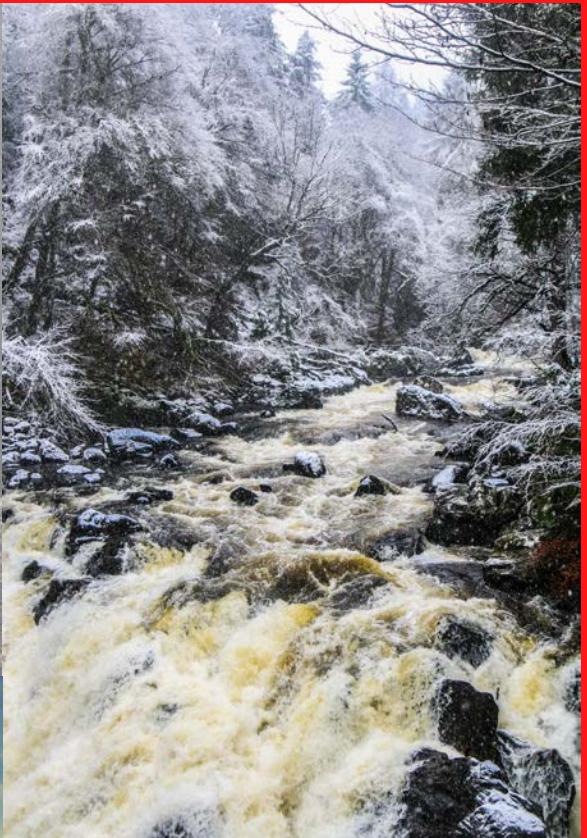


Photo Competition - Winter



Winning entry by Sam Gibson (top) with runners-up
Melanie Tauscher & Carol-Ann Hardy (l & r)



Photos clockwise from top left by Scott Campbell, Robert Wilson, Ruth Oggelsby, Robert King, Ian Barr & James Hall



Makers West

Sponsored Editorial

A creative community of West Dunbartonshire makers are seeking to expand their network.

From part-time potters, full-time photographers and choreographers to woodworkers and textile artists, Makers West are an eclectic network of artists and crafters, at all stages of their journeys. They are a broad church of ages, backgrounds and art forms, brought together by locality.

The group creates space for peer-to-peer support, professional development and hopes to create more opportunities for creatives living and working here.

Its goal is to bring a varied community of creatives in West Dunbartonshire together to connect, collaborate and grow.

The idea came from Jain McIntyre, who runs Made Gud in Dumbarton East, selling art and crafts from makers across the region. Now supported by Creative Scotland, the network is run by members and has so far met online to share each other's work and listen to invited guests.

"There are so many creative and brilliant people living here, but often we don't know one another," says member Nic Green, who lives in Bowling.

"It's about looking to what's immediately around you, to be inspired and encouraged

by our neighbour makers. In a way, the pandemic has helped us to zoom in and connect, collaborate and make locally."

In 2021 the group will concentrate on connecting with artists in the area and providing training in: Making Work Exhibition Ready, Teaching Your Art Form and How to Create 'Big Makes' for Festivals. From these sessions and conversations with funders/events in the area they hope to create sustainable work for artists that are confident in their skills.

"What I love about the network is the diversity of makers. We have film-makers to musicians all meeting together. And to feel part of a community on a local scale is brilliant. I already have new collaborations which have come out this."

Anyone who identifies as a maker or artist, working in any form, at any stage of their journey, is welcome and all events are free of charge!

Sign up to the Makers West newsletter to be kept up to date -

Website: www.makerswest.org

Email: hello@makerswest.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/makerswestscotland

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/makerswestscotland



First we need to prepare the oranges for the wreath by drying them. The following instructions explain how to do this at home in your oven at 120 degrees C for 5 - 6 hours but you can also dry oranges over a longer period of time on radiators or purchase pre-dried oranges online.



Drying Oranges in the Oven

1. Slice oranges into roughly half a cm thick slices and place on baking trays lined with baking paper. If you have kitchen roll, blot slices to remove any excess moisture as this helps them dry.
2. Place the trays in the oven (set to 120) for 5 - 6 hours, turning slices every so often to help dry evenly. The low temp allows them to dry out and not bake and you will see them begin to brown slightly when dried.



Creating your Wreath

I have used other natural materials such as cinnamon twigs, rosemary (in lieu of real pine cuttings) and orange peel to add to my festive wreath. All you need is a wreath shaped base to attach the decorative pieces to; you can even use an embroidery hoop or a wire coat hanger - carefully - bent into a circular shape.

You can attach the pieces using jute twine for a rustic look, fishing wire or if you have a hot glue gun, this would work well too. Please view my video via Clydesiders social media for tips on how to assemble pieces and some other orange decoration ideas using peels!



@ susanlawsartwork





A Rum Tale

By Amanda Eleftheriades

The murky banks of the Clyde have little in common with the white sands and crystal blue seas of the Caribbean.

Until now - when an ambitious young St Lucian decided to follow in his father's footsteps and try his hand at distilling.

But instead of the traditional whisky which generations of sons and daughters of the Rock have helped produce, Sylvester Herman is distilling rum.

And his Island Slice rum is proving a popular alternative to Scotland's national drink.

In an undisclosed location close to the Clyde, Sylvester is honouring the memory of his father David Gabriel who ran his own rum shack in St Lucia.

Sylvester's journey from St Lucia to Scotland has been via New York where he was brought up by an older sister, then Germany, Afghanistan and Iraq, serving first as a member of the US military and then the British military.

In 2014 he decided it was time for his next move and whilst in Crete, Aphrodite - the Greek goddess of love - decided to lend a helping hand.

It was here he met his Scottish wife Clare and together they moved to Dumbarton.

"I liked being in Scotland but I didn't know what I was going to do here," Sylvester explains.

There was no rum here, just whisky so I decided to try making a proper rum punch from my mum's recipe. I didn't expect anything to come from it, but decided to give it a go.

"I went to the first food market with 500 bottles and sold out on the first day - it was a four day market - so I went back the next day with a thousand bottles and the same thing and again the next day. I couldn't believe it."

Sylvester was delighted to have discovered a market for his mother's secret recipe but his next challenge was finding a wholesale rum supplier.

"I don't know if it was because I was a small company or because I am a black guy but no-one wanted to sell me rum. So I decided to set up my own distillery.

"That's how we ended up with a rum distillery on the banks of the Clyde. I'm doing it the way my father and forefathers did it

"The reason I registered the company in 2015 was because my father passed away and I needed to do something.

"He used to have a kabawe - a rum shop - in St Lucia. I think he would be very proud of me."

Sylvester's rums can be purchased online from www.islandslice.co.uk and in various shops across Scotland including Nisa in Old Kilpatrick or check out Clydesider's social media in December for a chance to win a bottle of dark rum sent direct to your door in time for Christmas.

It's A Grinch Life

By Jenny Watson

Linnvale local, Oli Keenan, developed his love of bringing joy to people through transforming himself into various weird, wonderful and well-loved characters at a young age.

"Halloween really got me into it, every year since I was young Halloween has been a massive deal in my house.

"We always decorate and go all out but on Halloween 2018 we decided to do a full IT theme, we covered the garden in red balloons my little brother played Georgie and I dressed as Pennywise."

This display performance was filmed by a local passer-by, the video went viral – 21 million views viral – and before he knew it Oli's new career had launched.

He has now been signed up for a two season Netflix original series which was meant to start filming this year but has been postponed until 2021 due to the pandemic.

Fame definitely hasn't gone to his head and although he wasn't able to get out on the streets of Clydebank this Halloween he still spent many hours getting into character and costume to give people a laugh or scare.

This year he put it to the public to vote for which persona they would love to see and firm favourite Pennywise the clown, was the clear winner.

But it's not just on Halloween you can catch a glimpse of Oli slipping into costume.

Christmas brings another opportunity to make an appearance in West Dunbartonshire, this time as the well loathed Grinch.

"I love making people happy and people really seem to enjoy what I do, so even though sometimes it can be hard work I always think about the smiles it will hopefully put on others' faces."



"When he isn't taking on the guise of another, Oli loves nothing more than a good book and a warm cuppa.

Oli has big plans for 2021, with some new characters in the works.

And he would love to be able to teach others how to build their own confidence, let go of their inhibitions and maybe get into a character or two of their own.

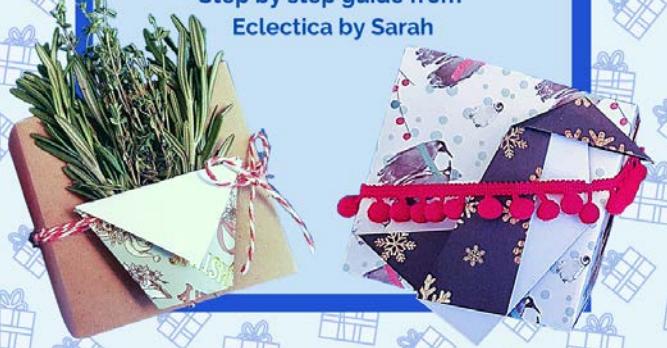
Until then though, you can bring a little Oli enchantment into your world through his personalised character video messages and guest appearances.

To book these send him a direct message via his Facebook page: www.facebook.com/oliver.keenan.9



ORIGAMI GIFT BOXES

Step by step guide from Eclectica by Sarah



You will need:



- Card stock of your choice 12" x 12" (30cm x 30cm) and 6" x 6" (15cm x 15cm)
- String/wool/ribbon
- Dried herbs or flowers to decorate
- A ruler
- Scissors

Step 1

Choose two complementary pieces of square paper or cut into 30x30cm squares.

One will become the top of the box and one will be the bottom.

The steps are exactly the same for both parts of the box, with the exception of one bit in the middle, so you can create each fold on each piece of card at the same time.

Step 2

To start, turn both sheets over, with the pattern on the bottom. Fold each piece in half and create a crease. Open the card out, turn it 90 degrees and repeat the same fold on the other side. Unfold the paper.

Tip: Using a ruler, or something similar, can ensure a really firm crease

Step 3

Now turn the card so that a point is facing towards you and fold the bottom point to the centre of the paper and crease flat. Turn the card and repeat the same fold, until all the points meet in the centre.

Step 4



Now take the piece of card that is going to be the bottom of your box and fold up the edge of the square so that it meets the centre of the paper, exactly on the midway point. Turn the card and repeat on the opposite side. Open out. Now turn the paper 90 degrees and repeat for the other two sides of the square. Open out.

Step 5



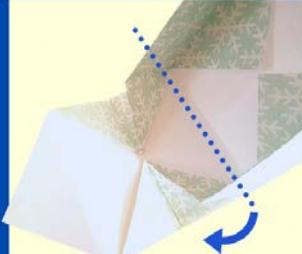
This is where things change slightly. Your lid is going to need to be slightly bigger than the bottom half of the box, so repeat the last steps but fold so that the edge has a small (approx. 1/2 cm) gap from the middle, on all four sides.

(From here on in the folds are exactly the same for both pieces.)

Step 6

Open out two opposite sides and fold firmly along the existing lines of the bottom fold. Turn the card round and repeat on the other side, then open them back out.

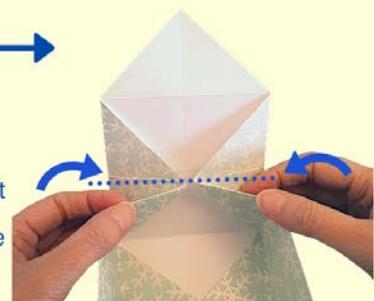
Step 7



Now turn one end on its side and create a diagonal crease along the dotted line. Press firmly. Repeat at the other end.

Step 8

Tuck the corners in where the arrows are and fold along the dotted line to bring the point down so that it fills the empty triangular space in the middle of the box and crease along the top edge to secure. Repeat at the other end.



You should end up with half of your box like this.



Do exactly the same on the lid and it should slide on top perfectly. (If you find that it is very tight/loose, you can undo the lid and redo the folds to the centre making them slightly bigger/smaller).

I have a couple of different ideas to adorn your box. You can show your personal style and/or use what you have on hand.

ORIGAMI PENGUIN EMBELLISHMENT



Step 1 →

Start with a piece of square paper half the size of the paper for your box. This time start with the pattern/coloured side facing upwards and bring the top right-hand point down to the bottom left-hand point, to create a triangle.



← Step 2

Then take the point at the bottom right and bring it to the point at the bottom left and create a fold up the right-hand side. To help with the next step, turn the paper over and repeat the crease along the same fold line on the other side.



Step 3 →

You now need to open the triangle out and tuck the point inside, it should now be able to stand up on a flat surface.



← Step 4

Take the bottom left-hand point and fold it, so that the point touches the side of the straight edge opposite and crease, making the top point as sharp as you can. Turn the paper over and repeat on the other side.

Step 5 →

Now create his head by folding the top point down at an angle to the body and then fold it again along the same fold line on the other side. Bring the point back to its original angle and turn the head inside out.



Stand him up and there you have a cute little penguin. Attach him with a piece of ribbon or string onto the top of your box.

Please share your origami gift boxes on social media and tag Clydesider, we would love to see what you make.



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

"Merry Christmas to each and every one of you.

Hope you have a good day during this pandemic."

Denver Ballantyne



"Wish everyone a merry Christmas and hope everyone has a good time, especially with everything that is going on."

Victoria Byrne & daughter Olivia



"Merry Christmas and happy new year, hope it's not like 2020."

Rebecca Martin



"A Merry Xmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year in 2021 to the CYAB Hill Walkers (Clydebank) and the Bay Inn Ramblers (Bowling). Hopefully 2021 will be a better year for us all."

David Fitzpatrick

"Wish you all a very happy Christmas and a fantastic day."

Mercy McDonald & daughter Abigail



"Merry Christmas and hope everyone keeps safe and well."

Jimmy Boyle & Joseph Andrew



"Inclusive Images would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, stay safe and well folk and keep snapping."

Inclusive Images

"The Clydesider Team would like to wish our community a peaceful Christmas and relaxing New Year. We've got all our fingers & toes crossed that 2021 will be a year to remember for all the right reasons!"

The Clydesider Team



Wrapping Paper Alternatives

With Lottie Barker from Clifftop Projects

Each year in UK we use 227,000 miles of wrapping paper - enough to wrap round the earth 10 times, that's just in the UK so think how much is used in the whole world! Alternatives to wrapping paper can be found at home especially if you are giving them to someone in your home.

First up - scarves. You can buy special Christmas wrapping scarves or use ones that you have lying around.

Another option are pillow cases, especially if you have Christmas pillow cases you can either use it to wrap the gift or put the present inside.

One more suggestion is a tote bag so people are getting two gifts in one.

Also try to avoid using too much sellotape - try ribbon, wool or even shoelaces will do the trick.

If you've got a big present to give - how about trying a sheet.

Wondering what to do with wrapping paper after Christmas?

Lots of wrapping paper can't be recycled, the shiny stuff ends up in landfill so the most obvious thing to do is save your paper to use next year. Another fun use for it is to cover a notebook, just cut it to the right size and then glue down the tabs inside.

Or try making it into bunting for a fun activity, just cut it into triangles, hole punch some holes in the top and thread ribbon through, that's it ready to use as a decoration next year.

Or why not make some homemade thank you cards - just cut a rectangle shape and fold it in half or get a piece of card, cut out some of the pictures and stick them on the card.





Wildflowers for WD

By Angela Clark

With spring not too far away local community groups are making plans to cover waste ground across West Dunbartonshire in wildflowers.

Growing West Dunbartonshire, the Leamy Foundation and West Dunbartonshire Council's Greenspace team are working together to provide local residents with free seeds and instructions on how to grow their own wildlife meadows, which will help bees, butterflies and wildlife to flourish.

Mylene Colquhoun is part of West Bridgend community garden and is helping distribute the seeds. She said: "People want to help as we know the bees are in trouble and one of the things people wanted information on was wildflower meadows so we contacted Greenspace at West Dunbartonshire Council about how to prepare your ground for a wildflower meadow and they gave us three kilos of seeds of roadside mix, wildflower meadow mix and a roundabout mix."

As well as the seeds that make outside areas beautiful and attract wildlife, there are instructions on how to make bee bombs which may suit people who want to help create more areas for wildlife but don't have the time to prepare a meadow.

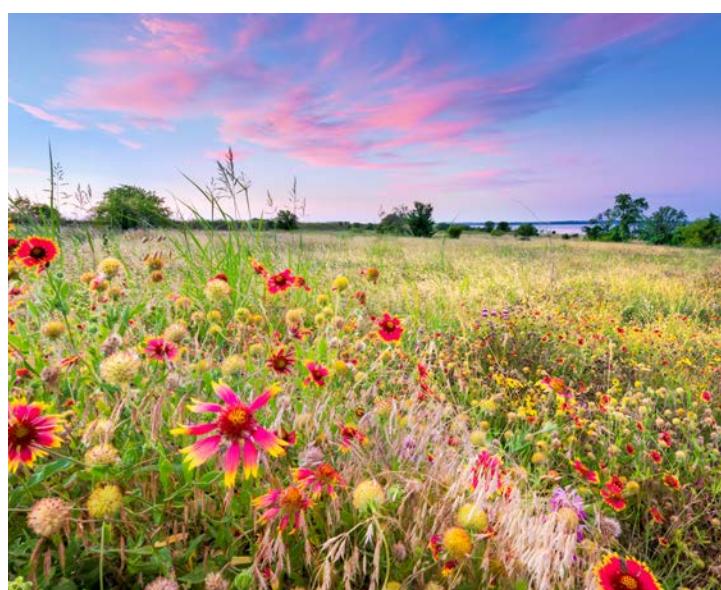
Mylene said: "We discovered you can't just scatter the seeds because they like fertile soil, so if you do have an area you have to prepare it and clear it of all the grass, then level it and flatten it.

"However to make bee bombs it's seeds mixed with clay and you can just throw them in places where they grow well, where there isn't lots of soil, they cling to rocks and rubble. Some will come up every year and the fact is you are helping the bees and butterflies."

The group is also looking at creating meadows along the centre of the A82 to encourage more wildlife.

And they are urging anyone who wants to create a meadow on unused land to contact the Council who will come and check the soil is correct and will leave the grass uncut where it has been seeded.

If you would like some seeds or information about growing your own wildflower meadow contact Mylene through Growing West Dunbartonshire Facebook page or email colquhounm1@gmail.com





Nature on the Hoof

The Festive Robin

Words & Photos by Paul Murdoch

Christmas, as we know it, was probably concocted by the Victorians. The postmen back then wore red-breasted uniforms and were actually nicknamed 'robins'.

Over time the bird itself appeared on more and more Christmas cards and, in kind of reverse psychology, they came to symbolise the postmen that delivered the cards.

Robins can withstand cold temperatures and are surprisingly trusting. Their perceived curiosity, however, may actually be a simple drive to find food. When the gardener unearths some worms or we throw out those Christmas dinner leftovers, they're ready and waiting.

The Vikings associated the bird with the god Thor. Others said that it got its red breast after being splashed by the blood of Jesus. When I see a Robin, I often think it's a loved one coming back to say 'hello'.

An intelligent bird, the Robin has been shown to recognise different people and even distinguish between colours and symbols.

Sadly, most Robins will only see one Christmas as their average lifespan is just 13 months.

That festive red breast comes into play when too many relatives get in too small a space...

They begin by having a singing competition and then head for the highest vantage point to show off.

All puffed up, a flash of red will usually end the quarrel there and then, but around 10% will actually take it all the way.

This is why young robins only develop the red breast when they are truly ready for the fray.

Christmas, eh?

Enjoy a weekly Nature on the Hoof post from Paul on our Facebook page and his website <https://www.paulmurdoch.co.uk/nature-on-the-hoof>

A Christmas Eve Story

By Jenny Watson

Twas the night before Christmas
And the Shire was still
Not a creature was stirring
Except for Wee Will

He was pulling on his slippers
And sneaking down the stairs
Being a good boy for Santa
(Was not one of his cares!)

There were fresh baked cookies
In the kitchen he could smell
And he wanted a taste
Before his big sister Nell

Every year
Nell gets the first bite
Not this year
Will was putting up a fight

Just as he got
to the kitchen lit dimly
A loud creak he heard
From his old house chimney

Now Will don't scare easy
But he got such a fright
"What was that?!" he wondered
As he crouched out of sight

A whoosh and a thump
Someone tall appeared
Out of the fireplace
With soot in his beard

That chimney was manky
Thought Will to himself
The fireplace was used
For nothing more than a shelf

Out of his hiding place
Will started to tread
"I see you young man,
"what you doing out of bed?"

Straight and tall
Was how Will stood
"Well you see strange fella,
"It's all over food."

"My big sister Nell,
Year in, year out,
Eats all the cookies."
Said Will with a pout.

The stranger he laughed
So deep from his toes
"Ah now Wee Will,
There's something you should know..."



*“It’s not your sister
That eats them all up,
It’s me that devours them,
As I sip milk from a cup.”*

*“Your mum makes the best,
They are just so sweet.
They really are, the world over,
my most favourite treat.”*

*“Children all over the globe,
Leave me plate after plate,
But to get to your house,
I just can’t wait.”*

*“I realise now,
That is quite greedy of me.
So, from this night forth,
I will just take three.”*

*Santa offered his hand
For a deal to make
And Will stepped forward
As he knew what was at stake.*

*To tell the whole street,
He met the big fella in red
All cos he sneaked
Late at night out his bed.*

*With a thump and a whoosh
Santa was soon out of sight.
Will danced with glee
Over these bragging rights*

*None of his pals
Have ever met the real St Nick
“Damn, where’s my phone,
I should have gotten a pic!”*

*“Auch he’s away now”
Thought Will, as he began to tread
His sleepy wee head
Back up to his bed.*

*As he pulled up the covers
To himself, he smiled
Ha! I knew that cheeky elf
Didn’t tell Santa I was wild!*



Reliable Resources

Local & national helpline numbers and information sources to cut out and keep.

Local Numbers

Food For Thought - 01389 743908.

Emergency food aid referral line.

West Dunbartonshire Community

Foodshare 01389 764135 - emergency food aid delivery

Dumbarton District Women's Aid - 01389 751036

WDC 'No Homes for Domestic Abuse' - 01389 738510

Clydebank Women's Aid - 07832 710065 or 0141 952 8118

Dumbarton Area Council on Alcohol (DACA) - 01389 731456 or 0141 952 0881

WD Citizens Advice Bureau - information on benefits, welfare rights, employment rights and general well-being

Alexandria - 01389 752727

Clydebank - 0141 435 7590

Dumbarton - 01389 744690

Independent Resource Centre - benefits advice 0141 951 4040

WD Housing & Homeless 01389 738282 or Freephone 0800 197 1004 (option 5)

Clydebank Community Addiction Team - 0141 562 2311

Dumbarton Joint Hospital - 01389 812018

Stepping Stones - 0141 941 2929 - mental health charity providing telephone support

Big Disability Group - 0141 237 4560 thebigdisabilitygroup@gmail.com and on Facebook - support and information to people living with disabilities

WDC Additional Support - text 'help' to 07800 002582 or visit www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/coronavirus/additional-support

National Helplines & Websites

NHS 24 - 111 for urgent health advice if GP or dentist is closed www.nhs.uk

NHS Inform Scotland - 0800 028 2816 - General advice line

Breathing Space Scotland - 0800 83 85 87 www.breathingspace.scot Mental Health helpline

Age Scotland - 0800 12 44 222 - advice, help or simply a friendly voice of support www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland

Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland Nurses

Advice Line - 0808 801 0899. Text: NURSE to 66777. Specialist nurses answering questions, provide advice, and information to anyone with a chest or heart problem.

Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline - 0800 027 1234. Available 24/7 www.sdafmh.org.uk

Rape Crisis Helpline - 0808 801 0302 or TEXT: 07537 410027

Samaritans Helpline - 116 123 anytime or email jo@samaritans.org (response time 24hrs)

Alcoholics Anonymous - national helpline 0800 917 7650 www.alcoholicsanonymous.org.uk

Gov.uk - Government guidance on all aspects related to impact from COVID-19 www.gov.uk/coronavirus

World Health Organisation - www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

Young Scot - Information and advice for young people www.young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus

Parent Club www.parentclub.scot

Clydesider Credits

A big thank you to our fantastic team of volunteer contributors, even in these trying times you have stepped up to the plate and helped produce this festive creative special- you are a real joy to work with.

We would also like to thank the Corra Foundation who have funded the print costs of three issues. As many of our usual community distribution outlets are closed and others are trying to keep surfaces clear we have reduced our print run from 10,000 to 2,500, this has a knock-on impact on advertising so without this grant we would not be able to publish Clydesider. An additional vote of thanks goes out to all the community organisations who have helped with the distribution, making sure the magazine reaches those least likely to read our stories or access our activities online.

About Clydesider

Clydesider Creative Ltd is a not-for-profit social enterprise based in West Dunbartonshire. The Clydesider community magazine promotes the positives our area has to offer in terms of people, place, scenery and history and showcases the creative talents, ideas and experiences of local people.

This year has been different as we switched to a monthly Mini Mag during lockdown, this was more an information resource about what support was available locally. We are also busy online with regular video interviews and community spotlights as well as our new for 2020 Creative Cafe From Your Couch, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for details.

Despite the difficult circumstances we are always keen to hear from people who would like to get involved and contribute to Clydesider - if you are interested in volunteering please email theclydesider@gmail.com

Contact Clydesider

Phone: 01389 381110 (we are not in the office as often as usual so please try our mobiles or email if you can't get us on this number. We'll be closing our laptops on December 18 and they'll be shut until the new year).

Editorial: Call Amanda on 07913029234 or email amanda@clydesider.org

Advertising: Email clydesideradvertising@gmail.com

Competitions: Email clydesidercomp@gmail.com

Creative Activities: Email caroline@clydesider.org

Community Engagement: Email jenny@clydesider.org

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Santa Claus and Friends Toy Company North Pole.

Dear girls & boys,

Santa has been very busy this year putting extra precautions in place to allow him to still safely do his job on Christmas Eve, so he has asked me to help him write some letters.

We know it has been a very strange and difficult year for you all but we also know how very, very good you have all been. The Naughty list is practically empty!

Our friends at Clydesider have helped us out a great deal by sharing this letter for us. Santa is going to do his very best to be out and about in the community in the lead up to Christmas to try spread a little festive cheer but he has to be very careful and remember no hugs or high fives this year. I do hope he remembers his mask.

From myself, Santa, Rudolph and the rest of the gang. We hope you find some joy in the season this winter, stay safe and get to spend some quality time with your nearest and dearest.

After all, that is what the magic of Christmas really is...Love!

HO HO HO!

Mrs Claus



SANTA CLAUS AND FRIENDS TOY COMPANY
NORTH POLE