

CLYDESIDER

OUR COMMUNITY'S POSITIVE PRESS

ISSUE 27 Spring 2024

FREE



A SON'S PLEA FOR PEACE

INSIDE: VIVA LA BANKIES... DISCOVERING DENNY... VOICES OF THE FUTURE

POETRY COMPETITION WINNER: PEOPLE

"Momentary"

By Maia Kelly

Great laughter and grassy fields
Running footsteps
And spinning bike wheels

Footpaths and long walks
Old dirty trainers
And good talks

Crowded pubs and live music
Three airplanes
And cheap cigarettes

Old friends and coffee shops
Rain covered windows
And cool countertops

A fresh stone and hands held
Saying goodbye
Saying farewell

New eyes and an old soul
Ten fingers
Ten toes

WELCOME

I always enjoy writing my first welcome column of the year as there is so much news to share.

Our volunteers have come up with another excellent theme this year – People, Places & Outside Spaces, and have worked hard to produce an issue packed with interesting features on all these topics.

From our striking front cover story which takes us on a personal journey from Renton to Palestine, to an inspirational fundraising challenge completed by two Dumbarton women in Skye, to a school radio station empowering young people with additional needs, to a collaborative article by Clydebanks Ladies F.C. on the healing powers of a beautiful game and sisterhood – there are so many amazing people in this issue.

We also have some interesting places and spaces to share – a thriving green corridor in the centre of Alexandria, a museum offering scones and Lego alongside fascinating local history, a burn which may have changed the course of world history, and a living legend of a tree in Balloch Park – they're all in Issue 27.

And through our Creative Storytelling project we are working with local groups to shine a spotlight on the people and places helping create safe and welcoming spaces in our communities. Read on to discover the power of role play and eco-actions to increase confidence, build identity and challenge stigma.

As you browse through this issue, you'll notice some changes.

We have some new columns – our first Wellbeing column comes from Sam Paton aka Dreamcatcher Lady and we plan to include a regular Heritage, Creative and Community Garden spotlight in each issue, along with reviews of local events.

Volunteers and community partners suggested including a new Clydesider Community Directory alongside our What's On page.

So, on pages 42 - 45 you can find contact details for local support services, community hubs, groups and activities.

It's been a mammoth task pulling this together, so we hope it's going to be useful, and we'll be updating it in each issue, so please keep us posted with details of any groups/activities not included.

Enjoy!

Amanda & the Clydesider Team



ABOUT CLYDESIDER

Clydesider Creative Ltd is a not-for-profit community media social enterprise based in West Dunbartonshire.

The Clydesider community magazine, website and social media promote the positives our area has to offer in terms of people, place, scenery, and history and showcase the creative talents, ideas, and experiences of local people.

Follow us on Facebook, X, Youtube and Instagram. If you would like to get involved and contribute to Clydesider please email jenny@clydesider.org

CLYDESIDER CREDITS

A big thank you to our fantastic team of volunteers who are all a true joy to work with. We would also like to thank our advertisers, members and funders. Your support helps us shine a light on the inspirational stories and creative talents in our communities. An additional vote of thanks goes out to all the community groups and organisations helping with the distribution, making sure the magazine reaches those least likely to read our stories online.

Clydesider Creative Mission Statement

Inspiring change by sharing positive stories and solutions, creating opportunities for individuals and organisations to build connections so together we can challenge the negativity and stigma too often associated with our community.



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Cover Photo by Katie Kennedy

A NEW START

Local community charity OKFP celebrated the start of a new chapter as they opened the doors of the Napier Hall to the local community after giving the building a thorough revamp and facelift.

Maureen Cummings, founder of OKFP, said: "We closed the door on our Station Road Hub at the end of February – that marks three years of us being in the building.

"During those three years we've provided food to almost 30,000 people; worked with over 140 volunteers, creating jobs for seven of them thanks to funding secured mainly through West Dunbartonshire Council's Working 4 U employability initiative."

The charity's new venue in Napier Hall is a larger space which can accommodate up to 60 seated customers in the Chatty Café area.

Maureen is delighted the building also has gas. She said: "We now have the luxury of central heating so we can continue to offer the space as a Warm Hub during the colder months."

The organisation planned a phased opening to give them time to complete the complex work of installing a new kitchen.

The free food pantry opened back on February 5 and the Chatty Café on March 4 and their first Fish Supper Friday of 2024 at the end of March sold out within 24 hours of the 60 tickets going on sale!

Maureen added: "It has been a difficult time for a lot of our regulars while we've been closed but unfortunately, we didn't have the option of running the two premises at the same time.

"The OKFP team is looking forward to seeing all our regulars again and catching-up with all our

visitors in this much-needed community space." Despite being busy with the renovation works OKFP found time to support a new community group starting up in the village.

Maureen explained: "We're delighted to be partnering and supporting the new committee of OK Stay & Play who are providing an exciting new service for local children and families.

"They initially asked us for assistance to provide drinks and snacks for the children and teas and coffees for the parents and carers.

"We had offered this to the previous group, but the offer was never accepted, and we were therefore more than happy to help the new group out.

"We also provided the new committee with free office space in Napier Hall to enable them to meet privately. Going forward we will supply the group with snacks, fruit, and drinks free of charge to help keep running costs down.

"We are also helping them with the governance side of things to become a constituted community group with their own standalone bank account, and will be supporting them with a variety of funding applications to continue to develop their services.

"We're looking forward to working with the group and developing a good working relationship together which will benefit children and families in the village and the wider community."

If you need food support, a safe place to go for a chat or are interested in volunteering, visit OKFP in their new home at Napier Hall, 312 Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick, G60 5JH or contact Maureen Cummings direct on 0791631080 or email the admin team at okfp.napier@gmail.com. Donations can be dropped off at the hall Monday – Friday between 12 – 2pm.



Provost Douglas McAllister, Maureen Cummings DL, Gordon Cummings and Lord Lieutenant Jill Young



COMMUNITY NEWS

Storytelling for Adults Returns

by Mary Irvine

Last summer's trial sessions of 'Storytelling for Adults' took us on journeys in poetry, prose and video, from local places to all round the world, as local people told their extraordinary stories.

Sometimes funny, sometimes poignant, but all fascinating. Everyone even had their own drum in the final session, to accompany our African storyteller.



Such was the enjoyment, that a series of new sessions is arranged for this summer.

They are all very different but still told by local people.

We start with the Dumbarton Cine Video Digital Club who will take us on a journey of the equipment used or available when they first set up the club, to today's high tech.

The club is a very visible force in the area for collecting, restoring, preserving, and cataloguing

an extensive archive of local history.

This year is a special anniversary of its founding, so we look forward to their presentation.

Other stories include a traditional teller of Celtic myths and legends, a journey through the Hebrides, a 'writing' journey, the myth/legend of Theseus (he who killed the Minotaur), and how one photograph shocked the world.

All the sessions are free and take place the last Tuesday of the month, from 11a.m to 12 noon, from March to September, (excluding July), in the Green Tree Remedy centre, 4, Church Street, Alexandria. See our Community Diary on page 43 for details.



For further information contact: Jo: 07562 333 731 or Mary: 01389 729279.



CLYDESIDER NEWS



Take a Minute

Have you watched our Take a Minute heritage videos?

This collection of short films takes you on a journey through time to visit some of the fascinating, and, often long-forgotten places from our community's past.

From the Singer's Clock in Clydebank to the ancient Kilmaronock Parish Church, to the grounds of Dumbarton's Municipal Buildings and along the Clyde to Bowling Basin, our videos provide glimpses of times when local people and places were making history - often leading the way.

We also explore the human history of our more recent past with memories of piping hot chicken soup in the Bruce Street Baths and the art deco dome above the Clydebank Co-op, and take a stroll through some of our stunning parks and outdoor spaces from Balloch and Dalmuir Parks to Carman Quarry and the island of Inchmurrin on Loch Lomond.

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund Scotland all these videos are free to watch on our Clydesider Creative Youtube channel.

When the project concludes at the end of April there will be 40 videos to enjoy and share.

We will be sharing the playlist with local community groups, libraries, schools.

And as part of Local & Community History month we are hosting community screenings of the films at Dumbarton Cine & Video Club on Monday May 13 from 1pm and at OKFP Napier Hall on Wednesday May 29, doors open at 6.30pm. All welcome.

Turn up Your Life, Not Just Your TV and Get Your Hearing Checked Locally!

Hearing loss is a common problem that often develops with age or can be caused by repeated exposure to loud noises. It is estimated that around 1 in 6 people in Scotland suffer with hearing loss which usually develops gradually and can result in low mood and isolation as we become less connected. General signs of hearing loss can include:

- difficulty hearing other people clearly and misunderstanding what they say
- asking people to repeat themselves
- listening to music or watching television with the volume turned up higher than other people require

Hearing loss may be due to a buildup of ear wax, so it is worth checking and help is available with

a range of hearing aids and implants if you need them. You can take a short hearing test online at www.rnid.org.uk, see your GP or come along to one of our free community hearing checks in Clydebank for some support and advice:

Thursday 11, 18, 25 April and 2 May at Centre 81
11am – 1.30pm

Thursday 9, 16, 23 and 30 May at Clydebank
Library, Dumbarton Road 10am - 12.30pm

Join us for a cup of tea and a chat and get help as early as possible to keep you connected with your family and friends.

For more information email us at wdhscp@ggc.scot.nhs.uk or visit www.rnid.org.uk

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In Search of People & Place

WORDS BY CHARLIE SHERRY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SIMON COLLINGS

"I just want the Palestinian and Israeli people to live in peace."

Simon Collings from Renton grew up in the Vale, however his birthplace was many thousands of miles away in Jerusalem.

Born in 1979, he was adopted by a couple from Renton who brought him back to Scotland from war-torn Palestine when he was just a baby.

Simon explained: "My adoptive parents, who are devout Christians, were across in the Holy Land carrying out missionary work when they decided to adopt me and bring me back to Scotland."

Being brought up in Renton Simon never really thought much about where he originally came from: "I had a very happy childhood with loving parents, although my appearance was different from

the people I went to school with.

"Apart from the odd racist remark from some idiots, I never really had any problems."

For most of his formative teen years Simon didn't think about his identity. "I didn't really know what or who I was, most of my friends assumed I was of Pakistani origin, and I never knew any different, to be honest, I never really cared."

It was only when he was 18 years old Simon discovered his true nationality. He explained how this happened. "My adoptive mother decided I should see where I came from and took me to visit Palestine."

Initially Simon didn't feel much of a connection to the land of his birth, however it quickly grew on him to the point he fell in love with the country and its people.

Whilst in Palestine Simon's adoptive mother asked if he would like to find his birth mother.

This was a revelation to Simon. "I had no idea my mother was still alive, until then I assumed she had died when I was a child, I immediately said I would love to find her."

On returning to Scotland Simon and his adoptive mother, through the charity Barnardos, contacted relevant authorities in Palestine to help find his birth mother. After a short period they discovered she was alive and living in the West Bank town of Nazareth.

However, it was not until four years later in 2002 that Simon travelled to Nazareth to meet his mother.

He described their first meeting: "It was the most beautiful experience meeting her, we had an instant

connection.

“We got on brilliant, chatted, shared stories and looked at old photographs, I loved her right away.”

Simon now visits what he describes as his Palestinian homeland each year, catching up with his birth mother, aunts, and uncles.

Over the years he has grown very close to his birth mother, although there was a period he was angry with her, “I blamed her for giving me away, but that anger has passed now,” he added.

He became more understanding when he learned his mother had not wanted to give him up for adoption, but social and religious pressures forced her to make that difficult decision.

Simon explained: “My mother became pregnant out of wedlock which in Palestine then, and even now, was treated with shame and social alienation.

“My father, my mother’s boyfriend at the time, on hearing my mother was pregnant with me abandoned her and left for America, so she never really had much choice.”

His advice for any adoptee seeking their birth parents: “Go for it; it can be a beautiful experience, but be careful, there may be things you have to deal with that are not so positive.”

And since learning of his Palestinian origins Simon has developed a keen interest in keeping up to date with news from his homeland.

Although his mother and the rest of his Palestinian family live in and around Nazareth in the West Bank, an area not directly affected by the latest Israeli bombings and military incursion in the Gaza strip, Simon is worried the violence is spreading.

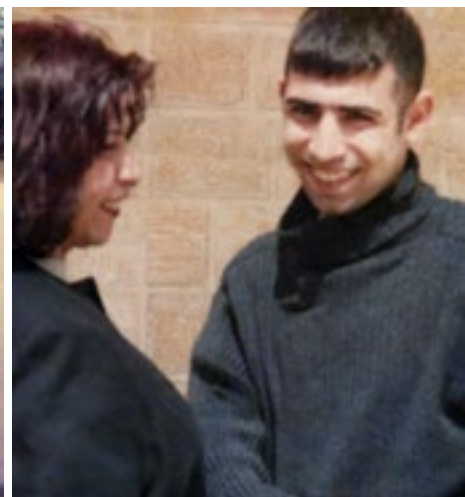
With tens of thousands killed and millions left without a home in Gaza, he fears it is just a matter of time until the West Bank also goes up in flames again.

“I really worry for my mother. It feels as if once the Israelis have destroyed Gaza, they will turn their attention to the West Bank.

“I just wish they could find a solution where everyone gets to live in equality, with dignity and peace.”

Find Out More

We have compiled a short list of information resources and guides to the conflict in Palestine. These are available on our website at <https://clydesider.org/2024/03/04/in-search-of-people-place/>



SPONSORED EDITORIAL

IMPROVING LIVES

Improving Lives are excited to announce that we have launched an independent advice and guidance service for Self Directed Support (SDS).

Working together with the SDS team at West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership (WDHSCP), and funded by Support in the Right Direction (SIRD) funding from Inspiring Scotland, Improving Lives are helping to spread the word about the benefits of SDS and helping people navigate the process.

We have a series of coffee morning information sessions planned at our Improving Lives Hub in Clydebank over the coming months and we'd love people to come along, ask questions and find out more.

We will also be out and about in the local community so keep an eye out for our advisors!

Self Directed Support is for everyone in Scotland who needs social care services or support and it offers choice and control to individuals and carers who meet the eligibility criteria for access.

SDS is underpinned by the values of respect, fairness, independence and safety and is underpinned by four principles – participation & dignity, involvement, informed choice and collaboration.

To access SDS people must have an assessment of their needs completed and once

eligibility is established a budget would be generated that is linked to agreed outcomes for the person.

SDS is delivered through four options: –

Option 1 – the supported person gets a direct payment and uses it to arrange their own support

Option 2 – the supported person decides what support they want and it is arranged for them

Option 3 – the supported person asks the HSCP to decide and arrange support for them

Option 4 – the supported person uses a combination of the above three options

At Improving Lives we are passionate about personalised and holistic approaches to support everyone in our community.

We know the difference support can make to people facing challenges, their families and carers.

This has always underpinned our work and we are excited to be delivering a service that will increase awareness of SDS for people across West Dunbartonshire.

You can find out more about SDS, our information sessions and the other supports we offer by contacting us on 0141 237 4560 or checking out our website at www.improvinglives.co.uk



Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Words by Amanda Eleftheriades

Photos by Helen Connolly & Julie Murray



A marathon fundraiser in memory of a Dumbarton woman took three friends to the top of one of the most technically challenging peaks in Scotland.

Helen Connolly and Julie Murray from Dumbarton, and Helen's cousin Fiona Campbell from Ireland, regularly take on fundraising challenges for charity.

But this time was personal.

They wanted to plan something special to honour Helen's mum, Catherine McQuade from Brucehill, who passed away in June 2020.

Together, the trio designed their own four-day fundraiser to give back to communities in Skye.

Helen explained: "My mum died suddenly from a stroke during the pandemic, and this was me finally coming to terms with her death.

"I wanted to do something to raise awareness and raise funds for Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland and I wanted it to be in Skye.

"When my mum passed away our undertaker friend travelled

down from Skye, took her back to Skye to prepare her and then brought her home to Dumbarton - that was my mum's last journey.

"We'd done the West Highland Way and then climbed Ben Nevis before, so we wanted to take it up a notch, but I'd also had a slipped disc and didn't want to set myself back, so we decided to do a combination of extreme with giving back to the community."

Helen had always wanted to climb the Cuillin Ridge so they decided the ridge followed by a Munro, would be the extreme element of their fundraiser.

However, one challenge wasn't enough for the three bravehearts.

Instead, they also planned a 15-mile hike, a beach clean and a mammoth tree planting session.

Each challenge came with its own adventures as Julie and Helen explained.

Julie said: "Helen contacted Skye Guides and asked if they would take us up the Cuillin Ridge and the Inaccessible Pinnacle, however they said

they didn't think we'd be able to do the Pinnacle as we'd never mountaineered before.

"That was fine with us as we had all the other challenges planned.

"But on the way up our guide asked if we wanted to do the In Pinn (as it's called by climbers) and I thought, 'why not, I'll give it a go.'

"All the way up the views were amazing, the guide was teaching us about the different types of rock and how to climb safely as we went up. The whole day turned out to be a blinder."

At the top of the ridge Fiona laid dried rose petals she had saved from her aunt's funeral and the trio raised the Saltire and sang "Sweet Catherine", their version of the Neil Diamond classic, a favourite of Catherine's.

Then Julie followed their guide and started to climb the In Pinn.

"It's a sheer drop at the top and I could feel my legs shaking but I had to trust the guide and just stay focussed. I had never done anything like this before - I wasn't going back."

Julie's friends watched in awe as she inched her way up to the peak, 986 metres high, where she left a final flower petal for Catherine.

Her descent back to her pals was as hair-raising as her climb as, roped to her guide, she leaned out into space and abseiled back down.

Helen said: "We watched her focused on the guide, thinking she's off her rocker but we're so proud of her.

"We all had such a sense of achievement and felt it was such an accomplishment when we got back down."

And this was just the start of a week of adventures.

After a day to rest and recharge their batteries while the skies opened, and winds howled around the little cottage they had rented, the trio were ready for their next challenge – a 15-mile trek from Glen Brittle to Sligachan with a dip in the Fairy Pools en route.

Julie said: "It had been so wild the day before and the ground was sodden, we had to cross

burns and wade through bogs, Helen nearly lost her boot - but the sky was amazing!

"We'd hoped to see a rainbow while we were on Skye, but I've never seen so many rainbows – they were everywhere.

"We saw them every day and they just kept getting more and more vibrant, they kept us going."

The rainbows brought back memories of Catherine's funeral which Helen described as "a celebration of her life" with her friends and family gathered in the grounds of St Michael's church dressed in every colour of the rainbow.

The following day the friends headed to Kinloch Forest for a tree-planting session which Helen had organised with the Forestry Commission who provided them with equipment and 500 alder trees.

But this too proved even more challenging than expected, as Helen explained. "Where we did the planting, it was in a harvested area full of bogs and old tree stumps where volunteers don't usually get to work.

"It was hard work, but we wanted to give something back to Skye."

Their final challenge was beach cleaning at Talisker Bay.

Again, Helen had contacted a local group who provided them with equipment and arranged to pick up the bags of rubbish when they were finished.

Helen laughed as she remembered this day: "We'd done beach cleans before but nothing like this!

"The boulders were massive, the wind was blowing a gale and we were slipping and sliding everywhere - it was a real challenge!"

And Julie added: "Everyone we met was lovely, they really appreciated what we were doing as they are fed up with tourists just leaving a mess



behind them.

"It's amazing what you can achieve when you put your mind to it, and it does so much for your own well-being. I'd do it all again tomorrow!"

And at the end of the week the friends had not only achieved their aim of giving back to the communities of Skye, they had also raised over £2,500 for CHSS.

Helen said: "We know times are tough for people, so we set an initial target of £500 but we'd raised this within days.

"We hadn't expected to raise so much but my friends know the close relationship I had with my mum, they were all so generous."

And the fundraising didn't stop there as Julie's employer Chivas Brothers added a £500 donation through their Doubling-up Fund and Helen's employer the Edrington Group triple-matched the total via their Giving Back fund bringing the final total to over £10,000.

Helen said: "I'm so proud to have done those challenges with my friends and to have the mental strength to do that for my mum."



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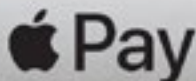
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Viva La Bankies for Life

MEMBERS OF CLYDEBANK LADIES F.C SHARE THEIR LOVE FOR THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

WORDS BY ROB, JENNIFER, NATASHA, HANNAH, NADINE & BRYONY

PHOTOS BY CHRIS MCCAUGHEY



ROB - HEAD COACH

I got involved with Clydebank ladies after replying to an ad looking for a head coach. I'd never coached in women's football before but was intrigued by the prospect of a new challenge.

The first thing I noticed was how dedicated, unified, and committed the players were. The girls were enthusiastic and wanted to better themselves. They were receptive to my ideas and suggestions for the training and match tactics. After establishing myself, I set the girls individual targets and was amazed at how ambitious and motivated the team were.

I promised I would help them achieve their goals, but they far exceeded my expectations. The development in the team and the players has been incredible. And it's all down to the players

themselves.

Initially, we struggled a bit for results, which is to be expected in any transitional period. However, the girls never gave up on me or their goals, and now they're reaping the rewards. This season Clydebank Ladies got to the last 16 of the League Cup and are pushing to be in the top half of the League table.

During my time at Clydebank Ladies I've had to re-evaluate and adjust my own coaching methods which helped me as a coach and as a person. I've built up a really good rapport with the players and they continue to amaze me and make me proud with every game they play.

JENNIFER

Football has always been a big part of my life, most of my family are very football orientated,

in particular my dad. Going to games with my dad gave me many enriching experiences and some unforgettable memories. It is a big part of why we are so close and why I wanted to pursue playing football. I joined Clydebank not long after finishing school and it really helped the transition between school and uni, as it is quite a diverse team in terms of age and personality.

Playing football and being surrounded by the girls helped me massively with confidence, which is something I always struggled with. It helped me come out of my shell, which has been invaluable, helping me in my studies and in my day-to-day life. Clydebank Ladies has given me life-long friends and a way to take my mind off the stress of uni. Not to mention, it is a great way of keeping fit!

NATASHA

Clydebank Ladies helped me massively in terms of mental health and gave me a real sense of Belonging.

Anywhere in life, I've always felt I never fitted in and the same can be said for football and in teams I played for before. There's just something different about the girls at Clydebank. They accept me for me, all the carry on and banter.

I feel valued, celebrated and encouraged to be me.

This has been essential in elevating my self-esteem and factors heavily in my footballing performance. It also transferred outside football and aided in everyday life.

Even in high pressure games, I feel somewhat at ease knowing the girls have my back irrespective of outcome, but still fuelled by the desire to win together.

Even when I've been struggling and feel overwhelmed with personal problems they have always supported me and extended help beyond football. It's like we're FAMILY NOT FRIENDS.

Viva la Bankies for life!

HANNAH

Being surrounded by a team of coaches and players who, at times, have more belief in you than you do yourself, sets Clydebank apart from other teams.

I grew up playing football but, even from nine years old, I was always far more concerned with playing a good ball through or putting in a thunderous tackle than scoring goals. I often felt overlooked and like I didn't really stand out to the same extent as others, as a result. At times, this would force me to doubt my own ability.

Since joining Clydebank where I am surrounded by players and coaches who fully believe in me and consistently push me to reach my potential, I realised just how fundamental this is to football.

Being given the encouragement and means to constantly develop myself as a player helped eradicate a lot of the self doubt which previously held me back. Losing this, I gained a lot of creativity in my game play and now take significantly greater enjoyment from the game itself.

Before joining Clydebank, my experience

of women's football teams was they could be quite cliquey. So, I would generally avoid getting overly involved in social events as I think team politics can take a lot of enjoyment from the game itself.

At Clydebank, that's not really an option.



It's like you're not just signing up to kick a ball about, or a lifetime of roly polys, there's a much deeper friendship and mutual understanding; you don't need to prove yourself as a player or person to be accepted.

Ultimately, this encourages us to work even harder for one another on the pitch.

NADINE

Clydebank Ladies was a real turning point for me and has totally changed the trajectory of my life.

After my mother passed, I battled immensely with my mental health. My life became overshadowed and consumed with grief.

It was really on the off chance I saw the team playing football in the park while walking my dog and pleaded with Bryony, who is now our captain, to join with me, under the guise of 'a laugh'.

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I played football as a kid until my early teens so was not entirely naïve to the game. However, I was very naïve in understanding the profound beneficial impact it would have on me.

Almost three years later and I'm still here; testament to how pivotal it has been. Football, for me, was an unintentional holistic approach to mental health and I'm eternally grateful to Clydebank Ladies for providing that space for me.

The football element was merely the face of what I was doing; within there was a lot of personal development, growth and personal achievements. Although some of it was minute, it was still significant and accumulative.

I always felt I was surrounded by this incessant white noise that was inescapable, be that anxiety, sorrow, anger, despair... but when it came to football it was quiet.

I still battle; however, over the years football has equipped me with an arsenal of tools to empower me, give me some semblance of 'normality' and, upon reflection, acts as something of a biomarker of how far I've come.

I couldn't have asked for a better bunch of girls who, unknown to them (until now), helped me unequivocally on this journey.

I'm currently working towards obtaining various instalments of coaching badges as a means of 'paying it forward'. Hopefully when the time comes, I can be as inspirational and instrumental in cultivating the same positive changes for others as this team has been to me.

BRYONY - CAPTAIN

Playing football has always been a huge part of my life. I've played since school and it was the one thing that always remained consistent in times of adversity.

Football accepted me before I had fully accepted myself. Football has no judgement, no ill-will, it was welcoming, nurturing and gave me a much needed outlet for my teenage angst.

When I returned to Clydebank in my late twenties, it was a friend who suggested we should go along and try out for Clydebank Ladies to blow off some steam and have a laugh at the same time.

Since then, it has grown to be so much more than that. Not only for me, but for every other person involved in the team.

We've worked incredibly hard to get to where we are now, as it has been no easy feat.

In our first season we were on the brink of folding. Numbers diminished and coaches deserted us. It would have been easier to call it a day or join other clubs, but this was not in the spirit of us as a collective and we fought tooth and nail to remain Clydebank Ladies.

This wasn't solely motivated by the love of the sport but more by the love for each other. Our bond, our sense of togetherness and sense of belonging, which still translates today.

With no-one to govern us for a period, we devised our own training, and subsequently this group of women created their own ethos, culture, and values without influence nor any real conscious effort. One of resilience, community, and inclusivity.

You still see some of our core characteristics at play today. Our stubbornness, pride and defiance. We've been consistently referred to as a team who don't know when they've been beaten. With this sentiment instilled in us, and for those joining, Clydebank Ladies have a bright future ahead.

My flatmate calls us a cult, but I prefer the terms sisterhood and family.



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KEEPING WELL in WD

BY SAM PATON, DREAMCATCHER LADY

This year we asked local therapists and well-being experts to share some simple tips and techniques we can all try at home. In this first column Sam Paton provides a beginner's guide to meditation.

Even You Can Meditate

Some of the things I often hear about meditation, 'oh I don't fancy that', 'seems a bit weird', 'I can't do that'. Well, I reckon you can do at least one of the things below.

Walking Meditation – such a simple, yet effective style. With each step count and breath. For example - Step 1 Breathe in, Step 2 Breathe out, Step 3 Breathe in, Step 4 Breathe out and keep going. This you can do with the kids, you maybe in danger of laughing, giggling and it may even turn into nonsense, but guess what... stress, worries are forgotten, and you feel better. This is a great meditation for those who have busy minds and find it hard to sit still and relax.

Silent Meditation - this can be done in a group setting or on your own. There's nothing better than turning everything off, find a comfy spot and just sit and breathe. Set an alarm in case you lose track of time. I always feel refreshed and ready for the world after this meditation. I love it.

Guided Meditation - is one of the most popular styles of meditation, you can find apps, on YouTube etc. The teacher/coach will talk you through the process of relaxing, by breathing, visualising a scene, your body and mind will feel it is there in that moment, general thoughts

and worries are forgotten. I use guided meditation to help clients deal with stress, build confidence. I also use guided meditation to help decipher dreams.

Visual Meditation - is good for those who find it hard to switch off, have busy minds, and/or have high stress levels. Light a candle, soft music playing, sit and watch the candle's flame, watch how it dances, notice the colour of the flame. You will eventually feel your body relax, and your eyes get heavy. Focus on your breathing, don't try to change the natural breathing pattern, just pay attention to it. (Always make sure the candle is sitting on a safe place and can't be knocked over). If you can't use a candle, use a light projector, there's some fab ones where the light dances on the ceiling and they play ambient music.

If none of those appeal, then another great stress relief that helps us forget our worries and stresses is music. Put on some music. If it's soft and ambient, sit back, close your eyes, and enjoy! If it's something a bit louder and noisier, get it on, sing, dance and forget all those worries.

Meditation is a great aid to help with depression, chronic pain, strengthen your immune system, stress, sleep and mental clarity. Meditation can be used and learned at any age, by anyone.

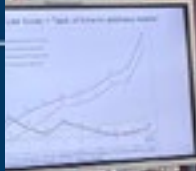
You can learn to meditate at a local group, retreat or download an app

Most important thing to remember is **Take Time Out to Relax!**



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- **10.30am** Optional tour of Clarice Pears and Byres Hub
- **11.00am** Themed discussion topic, skill sharing and networking

See our website for future dates and themes

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Byres Hub and Cafe Omni open to the public Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

STEPPING STONES – OUR NEWS

Funding Success

Thanks to recent funding successes we are delighted to offer a range of new services to help people improve their mental health and well-being. A grant from the National Lottery Awards for All programme is funding our relaxation and Tai Chi classes for a year. The classes are well underway at various times in Dumbarton (relaxation only) and Clydebank and are proving immensely popular.

We will soon be launching a new Men's Mental Health group in Clydebank as we also secured almost £10,000 from the West Dunbartonshire Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. We will be recruiting peer support workers to help facilitate this new activity and hope the new staff will be people who have lived experience of poor mental health and have used our services. We can't wait for it to get started!

It's a WRAP

Our group facilitators, Jackie Sroka and Elaine McWilliams, have given our Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) workbook a dust down and redesign and their current course is proving very popular with our members. Although that's probably also because Jackie and Elaine are very popular staff who are often seen fronting group and 1:1 support activity at Stepping Stones.

The five-week WRAP course provides techniques and tools on gaining hope, taking personal responsibility, planning for the future, the importance of support and how to advocate for yourself. We will be running this course again later in the year.

Positive Futures

Our six-week Positive Futures course is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and was facilitated by two of our excellent CBT trainees Jess and Lauren who were supervised by

Stepping Stones Team Leader, our very own Coliosa Boyle. Feedback was excellent and people commented on the quality of the training and the course materials. We hope to run this again in the near future.

New Referral Process

We have made a significant change to our referral process.

We now have a referral email address and a telephone number where direct referrals can be made. We have also done away with our referral form.

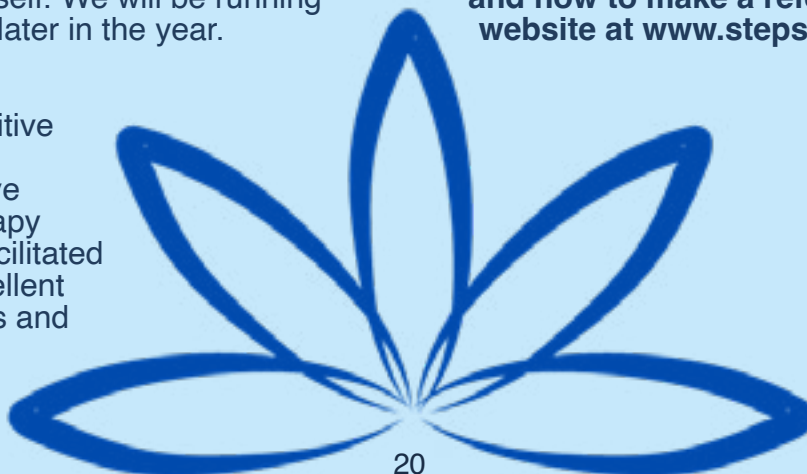
The initial referral meeting will be held via a phone call, but the choice of how people would like to be supported stays the same (either face to face, video or telephone call, or in a group).

To make a referral just call us on 0141 9412929, or email us on referral@stepstones.org.uk. Simple!

Current Services

We offer a range of 1-1 and group support to anyone in West Dunbartonshire aged 16 or older. Our current 1-1 services include person-centred counselling, peer support, general mental health support and guided self-help. Our groups include social groups, walking groups, relaxation and Tai Chi classes, bereavement and loss, peer support, women's support and self-management classes.

Information about all our services and how to make a referral is on our website at www.stepstones.org.uk





Discovering Denny

WORDS BY ANNIE JORDAN & PHOTOS BY JIM STEVENS

The Denny Ship Model Experimental Tank in Dumbarton, known locally as the Denny Tank, is part of the Scottish Maritime Museum.

To my shame, I had passed the building my entire life, but never visited, writing it off as too scientific for me...What a missed opportunity!

Thanks to Clydesider, I finally got to visit the Denny Tank and would encourage readers to do so, particularly if you live in Dumbarton...Chances are, it's part of your family history!

West Dunbartonshire has a rich shipbuilding heritage: 'Clyde-built' is a badge of honour because of our world-dominating expertise in this field.

The Denny Tank pays tribute to this genius.

On my arrival, I recognised a fellow visitor: "Wow," she enthused, "so much knowledge...my Dad was a marine engineer and they were pioneers here on the Clyde. So interesting!"

My curiosity was suitably piqued.

But who was Denny?

The name Denny features prominently in Dumbarton - the Denny Civic Theatre is a well-known local venue for music, drama and dance; the Peter Denny statue stands in front of the Municipal Building, and, most importantly, beautiful Levensgrove Park was gifted to the town in 1885 by William Denny and fellow shipbuilder John MacMillan.

Chris Woodland, commercial manager from the Scottish Maritime Museum, urged me to explore the museum first.

"The Denny family were way ahead of their time," he said, piquing my curiosity further. "You'll see...Helicopters, hovercrafts, you name it!"

But the Denny name is synonymous with shipbuilding.

William Denny, a joiner to trade, partnered with Archibald McLachlan to open Woodyard Shipyard in 1814.

All of Denny's six sons joined him and in 1844, William Denny and Brothers was founded.

They flourished and expanded, and the Leven shipyard was created. A successful venture, it continued to operate until 1963.

In the Denny Tank, a model and map of old Dumbarton lets visitors see the full extent of the Leven shipyard which stretched out in front of Dumbarton Rock.

From the upstairs windows, visitors can get a spectacular view of the castle and envisage where the yard was.

So, what is the Denny Tank?

Standing in a prominent position just off Glasgow Road, the now museum was once used to test ships

Opening in 1882 it was the first commercial, non-naval test tank in the whole world - the mother of all test tanks in fact!

Building this experimental tank was a bold and revolutionary move from Denny and Bros

As they could only build medium-sized vessels in their yard, a test tank would give them a competitive edge over their rivals and make them financially viable for years to come.

Visitors, naval architects and marine engineers would come from all over the world to learn from the Denny tank..." If you build it, they will come..." and they did!

Constructed following the plans of prominent naval architect, William Froude, the building itself is WOW.

The tank is massive, the size of an international swimming pool, although it doesn't look it from the road.

I was blown away not only by its scale but also by its position as a top world class facility.

Naval architects designed ships and compared the best hull shapes here.

However, hydrodynamics involved the contact of the ship with water, friction, the movement of the vessel through water, the effect of waves, turbulence, not to mention the hull's surface.

There were many factors to consider before you could build a successful ship and at the Denny Tank, you could assess all this using a scale model, usually made out of wax: much more cost effective than testing a full-sized ship.

They also tested propellers and paddle wheels for big steamers and the Denny Tank became famous for the bulbous bow.

So why visit?

For me, the answer is simple, we should support our local museums: they represent our proud past and we should all learn about and protect our local heritage.

Shipbuilding was HUGE on the Clyde and we should do our utmost to celebrate it. We desperately need a shipbuilding museum in Clydebank too.

Chris Woodland and I discussed the value of museums: "They are a great place to meet and spend time with family and friends, they provide an effective way of learning together: mums, dads, grandparents become tour guides and teachers, while young ones become inquisitive and learn through experiencing the past.

"Museums are full of interesting stories that provide inspiration."



I agreed a museum is all about storytelling and would love to see real figures like William Denny, the Superintendent and some of the workers from the past, just like those in Inverary Jail.

Chris agreed this brings history to life but would need more funding to achieve.

"If we had a wishlist, we would love a ground floor visitor centre as the building is currently inaccessible to wheelchair users... We have many ideas how



to change this, but it all requires funding."

He told me the Denny Tank has taken awhile to recover from Covid but have resumed workshops with school groups, and under-fives, 'Little Guppies' club.

They also engaged in the STEM Lego Challenge and are starting after school clubs and workshops involving Lego.

Right on cue, a child leaving with his grandad told me his favourite thing was the Lego.

What is there to see?

Plenty. The Denny Tank is like stepping back in time.

It is as if the workers have just gone home for the night and will resume work tomorrow.

On the first floor, apart from the tank itself, there are storyboards, propellers, model ships, the wave machine.

Tools are on the ground floor plus QR codes to scan and a listening station where you can hear the stories of former employees, including one who said it was "the happiest place he ever worked."

On the upper floor, there is the Superintendent's office, the tracing office with famous deacon boxes containing hundreds of ship designs from yesteryear, a storeroom and a pop-up museum space.

When I visited the 'Chariots of Steam' model ships collection made by Lachie Stewart, gold-medal winning athlete from the Vale, was on display. His attention to detail and intricate work astounded me.

'Following the Lights' is their latest exhibition. It celebrates the remarkable history of lighthouses, their keepers and engineers and will run until May 29.

Chris explained how museums are working together to encourage more visitors.

The Denny Tank is well connected to Dumbarton Castle and there is a discount available if visiting both.

It is also connected with Love Loch Lomond and again certain discounts apply.

Nationally, they are part of the wider Go Industrial museum network with discounts for Summerlee, Auchendrain and other industrial museums: A very exciting initiative.

Chris added: "Our aim is to get people visiting museums.

"People are not out and about as much as before so we need to encourage them to visit.

"We have a vintage tearoom here from Wednesday to Saturday, operated by the charity Alternatives, their homemade scones are delicious.

"You can even come to the tearoom for a cuppa without visiting the museum."

Do visit the Denny Tank.

Discover Denny, Dumbarton, shipbuilding, and Hydro-Dynamics...oh and play Lego and eat a scone!

Better still, become a 'Museum member' and visit as often as you like!



MARIE MCNAIR
MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie

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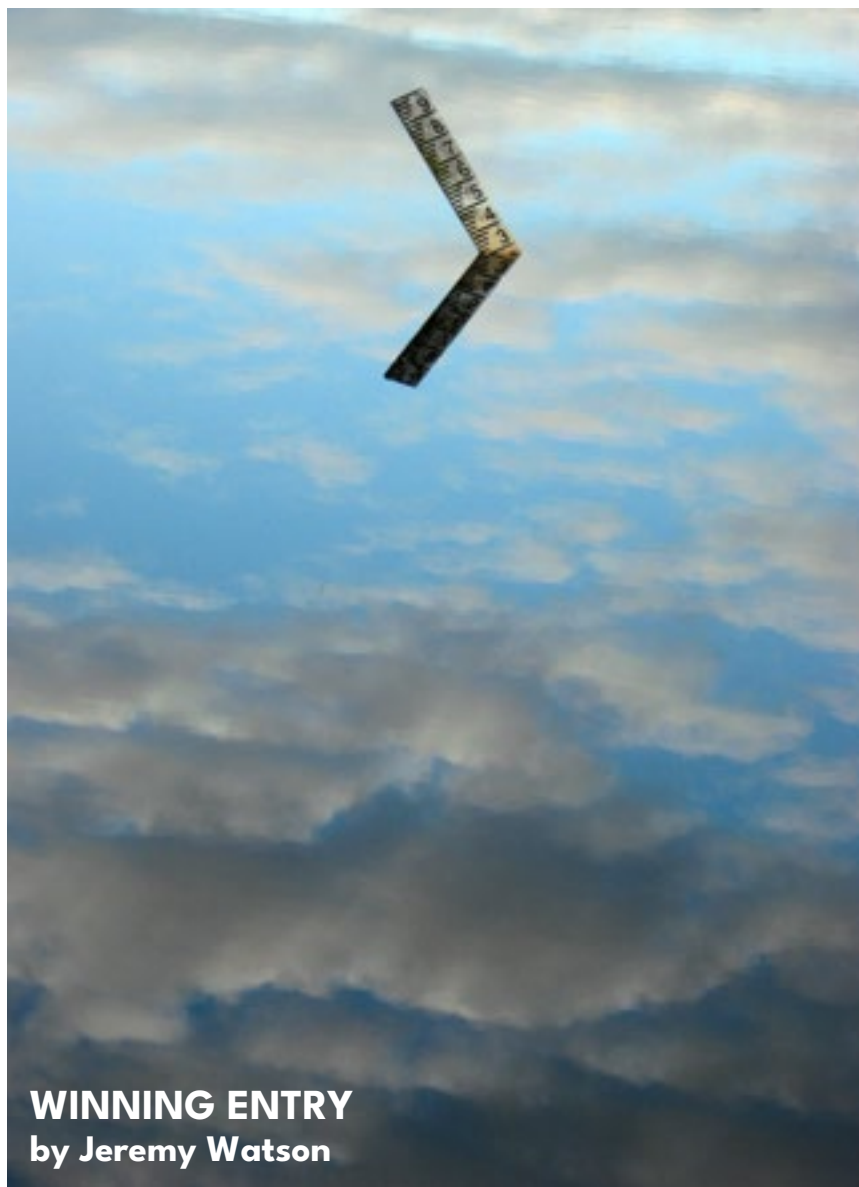
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PHOTO COMPETITION - WATER

Thank you to everyone
who entered the
competition.

Keep an eye on our social
media for a slideshow of
all entries.

The theme for our Issue
27 photo competition is
Patterns & Colours, see
pages 38 & 39 for some
tips and details on how to
enter.



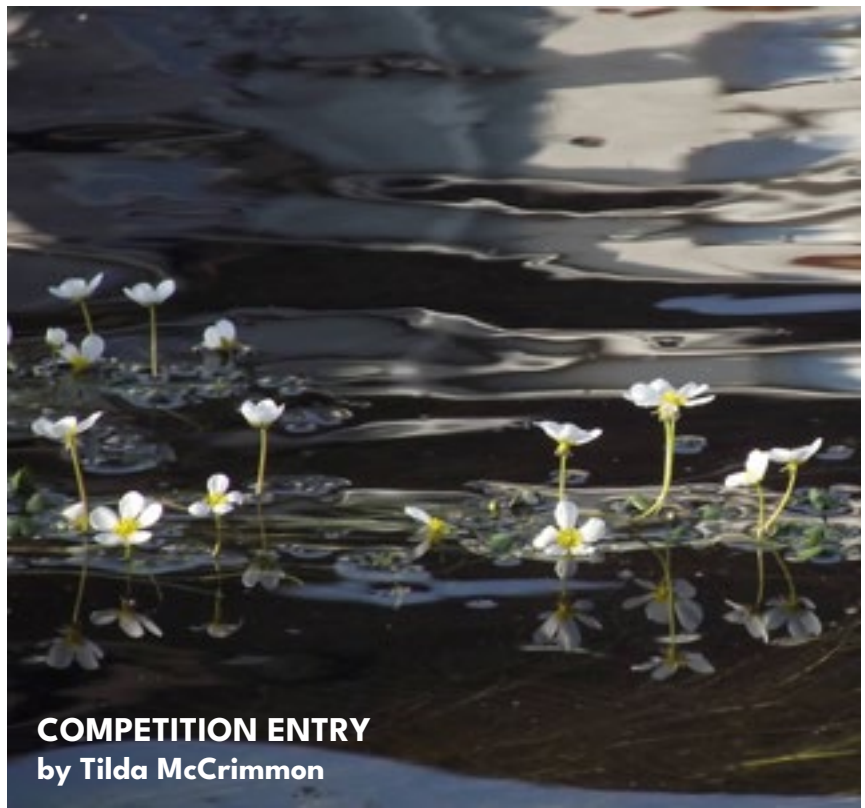
WINNING ENTRY
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RUNNER UP by Kevin Unitt



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Thanks, Martin



**Martin Docherty-Hughes
MP for West Dunbartonshire**

HERITAGE SPOTLIGHT



Welcome to the Knowes (knowes – Scots: a rough hilly area) WORDS & PHOTOS BY SAM GIBSON

The Hardgate (or Faifley) Knowes consist of a rocky ridge which runs through Hardgate between the Faifley housing estate and Hardgate Golf course.

Perhaps the terrain gave the name to Hardgate itself as it was once on the main road from Old Kilpatrick to Glasgow and Stirling.

Once part of the large Auchinleck Farm, which was acquired after the war to house the many made homeless by the Clydebank Blitz, the Knowes area remained relatively undeveloped.

In the past it had been home to two quoiting clubs and several quarries.

The Clydebank Co-op once owned the whole of Auchinleck farm, had their own slaughterhouse at 'Killers Lane' (Whitcroft Street) and their creamery in Chalmers Street.

Part of the Knowes was kept for storing cattle by the Co-op after they sold the rest of the farm in the 1920s, only selling

the west end of the Knowes to the council around 1980.

Part of that ground including quarries, was used to dump the main part of the Singer Sewing Machine factory, including the clock tower, when it had its

providing a traffic-free route from parts of Faifley to the Hardgate shops.

Some 50 years ago the area was mostly heather and whin, trees having previously been kept down by grazing sheep and cattle.

With their removal, trees gradually took over and were supplemented by more planting by the current, and three previous, improvement projects. The name being used is now 'The Knowes Woodland'.

The old right of way to Craigton was re-routed through the Knowes some years ago and called the 'Bankies Trek' and now the 'Clyde Coastal Path' follows the same path. It can also be used for walks up to the Auchnacraig Countryside Park and Cochno.

Come along and see for yourself.

Parking available behind the shops opposite Tesco, beside the Westhills Hotel, in Hardgate. Bus stops near Hardgate roundabout or at the Faifley bus terminal.



'modernisation' in 1960.

Currently the Knowes is having a makeover and, like the Saltings, is now designated a Local Nature Reserve.

Paths resurfaced, bridges rebuilt and steps bypassed to give better access for prams, bikes etc.,

The aim is to encourage more people to exercise as well as



“We’re now shipping internationally, thanks to Business Gateway’s support.”

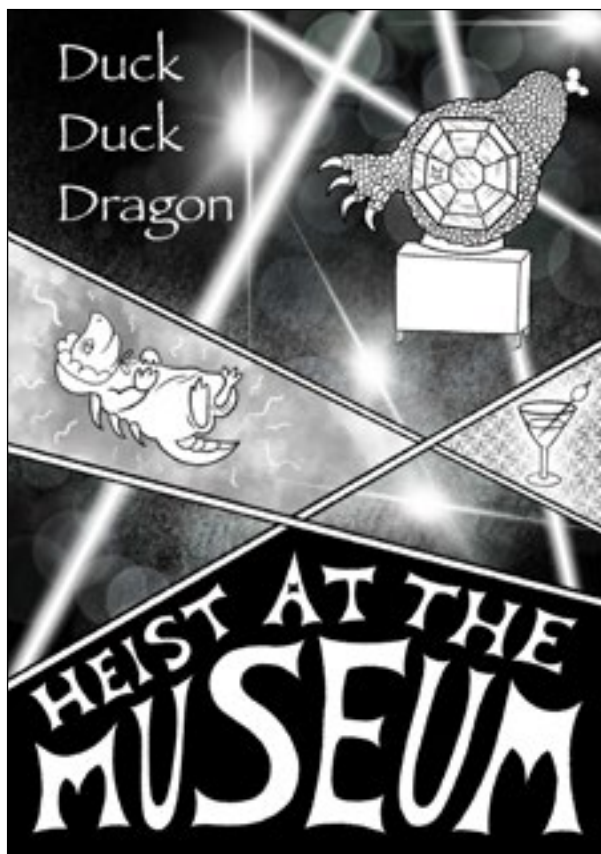
Jayne Lasley
Founder, Fairlie Curved

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A Tale of Dungeons, Dragons & Spiff the Dog

WORDS BY TIBBS WEIR, PHOTOS BY CAROLINE FINN & SUSAN LAWS

Storytelling has existed in some form or another in every community throughout all of history. Cave paintings danced on walls lit by flickering fire, theatres were packed with working folk, stories were passed down through generations.

The modern day story is locked away; to see it, you must pay. To make it, you must be a professional, placing partition between creator and audience.

It places pressure on any creative individual that what they create must be the perfect commodity.

If I could only make things on the condition they were perfect, then I wouldn't make another thing. If I could only tell a story on the condition that it made total sense, I'd never speak again.

If you want to be creative and engage with your community first, you must celebrate the beauty of imperfection, and when it comes to this there are two activities that stand out to me: Zine-making, and playing Dungeons and Dragons.

To take the last thing first, as most of my sensical stories do, let me tell you about the local

Dungeons and Dragons group I've been running in Dumbarton for a few years.

If I could describe the kinds of stories we tell in our games, I would say they're a bit like if you gave 100 tiny typewriters to 100 rats, fed them shredded Terry Pratchett novels with space dust sprinkles, and read the results upside down.

There is usually some kind of quest to complete, with a villain to defeat, using a magical feat. There will be challenges, puzzles and moral dilemmas; the team might be working for a shared prize, or to help a third party, or for the greater good.

The game is powered by pure creativity, the players each acting as their own character with complex motives and backstories. The dungeon master keeps the story moving when needed, playing an ensemble of bit parts, although mostly just a crusty little white dog called Spiff.

And yes, sometimes there are dice. And maths!

But fun though it is (especially the maths), there are opportunities for more

meaningful moments.

Unlike most games, it frames things in a non-competitive way. There is no losing in D&D; there is failure - plenty of it - but that's what makes a good story. Trying, failing and trying again, teaches resilience to people in an age group that can feel paralysed by the expectation of perfection.

It tends to reward teamwork over individualism. You and I might say that is just common sense, but in a world that is growing more cutthroat, pitting us against each other for scraps, it doesn't hurt to practice asking for help.

On top of this, D&D games are a safe space for young people to explore who they want to be through the characters they create.

To engage in a different world, as a different person, offers the escapism that many of us need, especially young people who are facing the pressure of exams, applying for further education or careers training, and worst of all the incessant pressure to be cool.

We can leave a lot of societal pressures behind as we play, creating an atmosphere at



the table where we can be as loud, weird, and flamboyant as we like.

There are many skills to be gained from the game, but we keep the emphasis on having fun. Everything we gain -the communication skills, problem solving, and confidence - are just lucky side effects.

Preparation levels vary between players, with a certain player's notes detailed enough to be admissible in court, and another bringing only a used train ticket that says "Hobgoblins?" on the back - which is sometimes just as useful!

But until recently the only lasting record of our adventures, once they were over, had been the notes we took during games.

Although this time was not wasted, it is nice to have keepsakes, because together, we've woven exciting tales worth remembering and revisiting.

The collaborative aspect, in a relaxed, social setting, sparks the collective imagination, resulting in rich, humorous, and inventive stories.

This is where Zine making comes in.

Zine making is an easy and accessible way for a person or group to create a small publication, in our case in the style of a comic, to share with our community.

You don't need a budget and an artist to make a Zine, but when Clydesider offered us these things, we jumped at the chance.

With the artistic guidance of Susan Laws (check her out on Instagram), and organisational help from Clydesider's own Caroline Finn, we created our comic Zine (with help from the notes of that one player).

It tells just one chapter of our adventure – but it's a good one: a high stakes gem heist.

The drawings were a collaboration, showcasing the variety of art styles in the group. This gave some of us that weren't experienced artists the chance to tell the story in our own way - I can tell you, it was a new one for us to sit in total quiet together as we focused!

The hard work paid off, and I am so proud of our group's creation.

If you're ever looking for something to do with your friends, family or community group, I hope this has given you some ideas.

D&D manuals are expensive, but there is no need to buy them – everything you need can be found for free online, from YouTube videos to D&D websites.

If you want to make a Zine, whether imaginative, political or a real-life story, all you need is paper and pen (though scissors and glue are useful too).

Even if what you make is a critical failure, remember you can always try again - just next time take a few extra train tickets to make notes on, and maybe some meaty bribes for little Spiff the dog!

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Voices of the Future

WORDS BY LAYLA BLACKWELL & PHOTOS BY CAROLINE FINN

From the moment you pass through the doors in Kilpatrick School, you know you are somewhere different.

The excitement here is contagious as you are greeted with enthusiasm from every member of staff and student.

The corridors are full of colourful celebrations of the students' many achievements.

There is a sense of pride, confidence and hope here that I have rarely experienced.

The staff are focused on helping every student achieve their full potential.

Through their Developing Young Workforce Initiative, they do everything possible to help the students prepare for the future and become a welcome part of the local community.

This is despite the challenges they may face as an individual.

Kilpatrick School is a shining beacon highlighting the power of inclusion.

And Kilpatrick School Radio is a great example of seeing the

hidden potential which others don't - their recording space, once a storage cupboard is now a fully functional recording studio.

They have been doing shows since 2019 and have over 258 tracks recorded.

Nerves were mixed with excitement that Friday morning, as we sat in on the weekly planning session to get a sense of the show's production process and atmosphere.

Group members are encouraged to use their interests to create content for the station. From gaming, cooking, music, to news broadcasts, their station covers a wide variety of topics.

The students learn valuable skills like planning, working to deadlines and working as part of a team. They also learn how to use the equipment necessary to record their own projects.

When asked what his favourite thing about the radio station is, recording master and technical expert Kieran, replied enthusiastically: "Everything!"

The confidence gained by the

students through this experience is clear. They learn from an early age to use their voices and express their opinions.

Seeing the focus on engagement and how successful that is, is a lovely thing to experience.

In Kilpatrick School differences are celebrated, encouraged, and used as a strength by staff members. Giving the students the vital sense of self to succeed later in life.

The recording studio itself gives students access to equipment and space to let their creativity flow.

The school's prominent guitar player Jack told us that having access to the recording studio allows him to keep teaching himself the skills needed to work on his own music.

And in addition to answering our questions, the radio team also turned the table on us and gave me my first experience of being interviewed for radio.

I was a little nervous, but the team quickly put us at ease with their friendly and enthusiastic attitudes to both their work and



each other.

It's impossible not to enjoy your time at Kilpatrick School, there's a real sense of camaraderie

Our host, Nicole, told us about her role on the radio show. "I was a wee bit nervous as this is my first interview.

"I like the phone calls because it gives you more confidence in talking to people and over these past few months, I feel I have grown in confidence doing it."

And she had nothing but praise for her teachers and classmates: "All the young people in this school are fabulous.

"The school is amazing! I couldn't thank the school enough for what they've done for us. Without the school I don't know where I'd be right now, we all love it here."

And we can't thank the team enough for sharing their experience with us. We really enjoyed our time with you.

Later we spoke to music teacher Andy Rimar about the challenges of running the radio station and his hopes for the future. He

spoke about how using the skills they build with the students gives them the keys to succeed in the community.



And added: "The next step for us is trying to regain and seek out new professional links for our pupils to then learn from and possibly gain new workplace opportunities."

Everything the staff do at Kilpatrick School, the time and effort spent, is with an eye to the future.

It's an attempt to make the journey into adulthood that little bit easier so the students can look forward to being happy, healthy and successful in life.

Whatever the challenges they face, the student will find their way.

Empowered with the feeling of acceptance, understanding and faith in their own abilities these students will no doubt achieve great things and become valuable members of society.

Kilpatrick School is truly inspiring and has rekindled my beliefs and hopes that I might be able to learn from their bravery.

I want to help teach the lesson that everyone is unique and has something to offer with the right support; to be part of the voices of the future and make a better future for everyone.

Check out the Kilpatrick Radio Station here: <https://soundcloud.com/kilpatrickradio>

COMMUNITY GARDEN SPOTLIGHT



Central Alexandria

BY HARVEY SMART, PHOTOS COURTESY OF CATRA

There is a hotbed of green activity happening in the centre of Alexandria and it's open to the whole community.

In 2022 CATRA (Central Alexandria Tenants and Residents Association) received funding to build community gardens and green spaces around Alexandria.

Since then the project has blossomed into multiple large gardens, raised beds and green areas around the CATRA base on Alexander Street, growing everything from fruit and vegetables to wildflowers.

Angela Caldwell is spearheading the green initiative with help from WDC's Greenspace team. She also

works with organisations such as the Blue Triangle Housing Association, who refer volunteers to work in the gardens.

Angela explains: "The people they support are often not in a good place for different reasons, with depression, addiction and things like that, so they refer people to us to help get their life back on track, even if it's just to help them out of depression or get a wee bit of exercise, or a new hobby.

"It's really just to get them into new habits, and there's no better habit than getting a health kick, especially at this time of year."

The nearby GP surgery also

refers patients to the project.

"We're open to all ages, disabilities and genders," Angela says. "Everyone is welcome."

For some, working on the gardens has been transformative.

One volunteer in his sixties who recently retired discovered a new lease of life working in the gardens as Angela recalls: "He stays by himself and doesn't have any family. He was really quiet, wouldn't say boo to anyone.

"Now, he's a lot more confident, it really brought him out of his shell. Some of the things he comes out with now are just

hilarious.”

The group aims to foster a sense of community in the Vale by bringing people together to work on a common goal.

Their main garden area is behind CATRA, between North Street and Alexander Street. It consists of fruit trees, strawberries, vegetables and herbs. They also have raised beds further up the street behind a block of flats, and beds full of ornamental perennials down on Lennox Street.

“We have about seven different areas we maintain, but they’re varied in the amount of attention they require from us. The wild areas really take care of themselves.”

There have been some challenges to overcome as plants in beds by the Leven kept disappearing.

“We put in fruit trees and somebody nicked them. Then I thought I’d just plant soft fruits and bushes. I put them in on Friday, came back down on Monday and they were gone,” Angela sighs.

“So this is just going to be another wild area, which is probably better as it will take care of itself and I’ll only need to come down here once every couple of weeks.”

As far as the future goes, Angela is hoping to expand the project.

“I hope more people will get involved to improve the green corridor of Alexandria.

“We’re just greening it up and making it look pretty. I want to do extensions to different parts of the Vale, at the moment it’s really just Alexander Street and the centre of Alexandria. I would like to go further down towards Bonhill Bridge.”

Even if you don’t fancy volunteering, Angela encourages starting a garden at home. “I don’t think people realise it doesn’t need to be on a massive scale. If you’re just wanting to feed yourself or your immediate family, it is doable.

“Even an hour or two growing your own produce in your own garden - it’s going to be healthy, save you money and give you something to do. These things are all positives.”

If you’re interested in giving your time to the community garden project, drop in to CATRA and speak to Angela. No matter the level of your ability or gardening experience, as long as you’re prepared to pitch in and get your hands dirty, she’ll find something for you to do.

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Trash to Treasure Eco-Warriors

Words & Photos by Caroline Finn

Armed with bin bags and litter pickers a group of young people with additional support needs are taking eco-action in their local community.

And we were delighted to team up with them to help share their story.

Unity, a charity and social enterprise based in Dalmuir, works with people who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or at risk of exclusion. They provide personalised support and group learning to adults of all ages.

As part of our Community Media project, funded by National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, we worked with their Clydebank Empower group to produce a green zine.

Through six creative storytelling workshops we explored their litter picking and community gardening activities and had lots of fun making artwork from discarded litter and household recycling.

The group have undertaken many ambitious creative projects over the years, so were full of enthusiasm for this new venture.

Service Co-ordinator David

Watson explained many people have misconceptions about adults with learning difficulties and Unity Enterprises aims to challenge these myths and stereotypes.

He said: "They are a caring and close-knit group who understand and support each other with plenty of hugs to go round.

be fulfilling as well as fun; when we plan the activities we make sure there is a learning element to them. It's not a social club."

When out on nature walks the group were horrified by the amount of litter, so they started their Trash to Treasure litter picks.



'We like going out and helping the community'

"They are also passionate about giving back to their local community and are particularly proud of their environmental activities.

"We want to show how much people with learning difficulties contribute to the local community.

"We want to give back to our community; it's our way of helping," explained group member Karyn.

And fellow participant Leah added: "I enjoy litter-picking. People say 'well done' when they see us."

"The sessions are designed to



“I love that we turned something that was rubbish into a zine”



“The garden is looking gorgeous, everyone coming into the centre comments on how nice it looks”



“People say thank you to us when we’re litter picking because we make it tidy”



“The building was so dull and dreary, especially the entrance. The group takes such an interest in it.”



The Angel of Gruggies Burn... and the history of the world

By W. Scobie

I paddled in it when I was a wee boy living in Clyde Street in the 1950s.

You'd scarcely give it a glance as you pass the small burn flowing under the road yards from Dumbarton East railway station. But that wee burn has an amazing story...

The year was 1571.

Mary Queen of Scots was a prisoner in England and Scotland was being governed by a Regent - Matthew Earl of Lennox - on behalf of his grandson, the boy King James VI of Scots.

Dumbarton Castle was, however, being held by a garrison loyal to Mary.

It was the hope of the Queen of Scots and her supporters that a fleet of French or Spanish ships would sail up the Firth of Clyde with an army of Catholic soldiers and, from the secure base of Dumbarton Castle, reconquer Scotland for Mary and the old faith.

To prevent this, Regent Lennox entrusted a body of 150 men, led by Captain Thomas Crawford of Jordanhill, with the task of capturing the castle.

From Dumbuck, through the darkness of night, Crawford's men proceeded by stealth along the Clyde shore.

To reach the Rock they first had to cross Gruggies Burn.

Their scout knew the burn was passable only at one

place, by the bridge of a single fallen tree trunk.

What he did not know, and what the men could not see in the dark, was that the tree trunk was now fractured and in a precarious state.

It was unfit to hold the weight of a man and, had any tried to cross over the burn by it, it would almost

certainly have collapsed with resulting cries of shock, alarm and probable injury.

Such an outcry would undoubtedly have been heard by alert sentries on the Rock. The garrison would have been roused and forewarned. The element of surprise lost, the raid would have ended most assuredly in failure.

However (and this is a matter of record) - precisely at the moment when the first of Crawford's men were about to step onto the 'bridge', a phenomenal light appeared before them...

It has since been rationalised as a 'willo-the-wisp' - marsh gasses igniting in the air - but Thomas Crawford was in no doubt; it was an angel.

Whatever it was, by the miraculous appearance of this mysterious luminous manifestation, the leaders could see the dangerous condition of the tree-trunk, disaster was avoided, and the men were able, by the clever

use of ropes and ladders, to construct a makeshift bridge to cross Gruggies Burn and the raid

thereafter was carried out successfully.

The castle was captured for the Regent Earl of Lennox and King James.

Had this not been achieved, a French or Spanish army could well have landed on the Rock. Catholic soldiers could have reclaimed Scotland for Mary. There would most certainly never have been a United Kingdom with a Catholic Scotland and a Protestant England.

There would have been no British Empire as such.

The world would have been incalculably different...For better or for worse.

It can be seen, then, that it is no exaggeration to say the course of world history hinged on the precarious crossing of that wee burn in Dumbarton East.

You may care to ponder these things the next time you pass it by.

Read the full story of Thomas Crawford's capture of Dumbarton Castle in 'Upon This Rock' by Alexander Tait.



Story of a Native Tree

The Magnificent Ash by Breeze

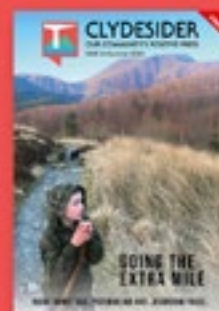
Balloch Castle Country Park is a place of great beauty and natural wonders. I believe it hosts the most magnificent ash tree in the most stunning location in Scotland. This ash is hundreds of years old and although it has stood on the lawn exposed to dozens of storms over its long life, its strong roots and the intricate buttressing on its trunk have served it well and gripped the land like a vice.

Ash is one of Scotland's tallest, most graceful and most useful trees. Almost 1,000 species use ash (more than 100 species are almost entirely dependent on ash), including wood mice, liverworts, wrens, blue tits, bats, lichens, fungi and beetles. Bullfinches eat ash keys (seeds) in winter, when food is scarce, and caterpillars of many kinds feed on ash leaves. Ash wood is used in furniture, sports equipment, tool handles and is one of our country's best native hardwoods for burning.

Ash trees are the third most abundant native tree in the UK and are a vital part of woodland diversity and Scotland's historic natural identity. Sadly 60% or more of all our ash trees are expected to succumb to the fungal dieback disease called Chalara. Many ash trees have already died or been felled.

Balloch Park's magnificent ash may have dieback but there is hope that mature ash trees can survive the disease for many, many years. Surely we must do everything we can to look after this living legend?

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Photography Tips & Techniques – Patterns & Colours

By Harvey Smart

Patterns and colours are two of the most powerful elements in photography. They can create visual harmony, contrast, and interest in your images. But how can you use them effectively to capture stunning photos? Read on for some tips and tricks!

- ▶ Look for patterns everywhere. There are patterns in nature, architecture, fabric, art, and even in everyday objects. The key is to train your eye to spot them and use them to your advantage. You'll find many by simply walking down the street or in the woods, whether on the brickwork in the wall of an old building, or the knots and burls in the trunk of a tree.
- ▶ Fill the frame with the pattern. One way to emphasise a repetitive pattern in your photo is by getting close. This can create a strong visual impact. Use a zoom or get closer to your subject to fill the frame. You can also crop your image after shooting to remove any unwanted distractions.
- ▶ Another way to create interest in your photo is to break the pattern by introducing an element or feature that disrupts the repetition and stands out. This can be a different shape, colour or size and will draw the viewer's attention, creating a sense of drama and intrigue to the odd one out.
- ▶ Use colour to create contrast and mood. Colour is another important element in photography that can affect the mood and emotion of your image. Use colour to create contrast and make your subject pop out from the background. For example, use complementary colours, such as red and green, or blue and orange, to create a striking contrast. Or try a photo editor to make your photo black and white, except for one colour. A bright red works particularly well in this case. You can do this on your phone with free apps like Picsart, Snapseed or Photoshop express. Have a play around and see what results you get.
- ▶ Use light and shadow to create striking effects. You can use light to produce complex patterns and colours, especially when the sun is low in the sky or at sunset. Shadows can create interesting geometric shapes, such as those cast by a chain link fence or venetian blinds. Take advantage of these opportunities to enhance your images.
- ▶ Experiment with different angles and perspectives. One of the best ways to improve your photography skills is to experiment with different angles and perspectives. Try shooting from above, below, or sideways to create a different view of the pattern and colour and see how it makes a boring subject interesting!

Patterns and colours are everywhere, they can make your photos more interesting and appealing. By following these tips, you can take an everyday subject which most people think of as mundane, and create stunning images.

Have fun and happy shooting!



CLYDESIDER 
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Sponsored by **JESSOPS**

Theme: Patterns & Colours

Prize: £25 + A3 canvas print
& an A4 canvas for two
runners-up

Closing date: May 14

Email entries to:
clydesidercomp@gmail.com

CLYDESIDER 
POETRY
Competition

Theme: Call of the Wild

Prize: £25



Closing date: May 14

Email entries to:
clydesidercomp@gmail.com

Rules: One entry per person for each competition, entrants must live, work or be part of a group in West Dunbartonshire; all entries must be your own, by entering you give Clydesider permission to publish your work in print or online - this in no way infringes your copyright.

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REVIEWS & RECOMMENDATIONS



The Wiz was Whizz!

WORDS BY BEN PRYDE PHOTO BY HOLLY STEEL

The Clydebank Musical Society cast a spell on their audiences with their recent production of 'The Wiz'.

With 23 songs, all performed with passion, and a plot followed and acted beautifully, the cast had audiences laughing and chuckling throughout.

CMS is a renowned theatre production company which encourages local children, teens and adults to tap into their creative tendencies.

They have been holding annual performances at Clydebank Town Hall since 1982 and Junior shows started in 1990.

Although adults are not allowed to participate in the Junior shows, young people can rehearse for roles in the adult shows - usually minor roles or part of the ensemble.

In the 2019 adult ensemble version of 'Oliver', 12-year-old Euan Reid stunned audiences as lead character Oliver, putting in a spectacular performance for one so young.

Now at 16, and a veteran of CMS, Euan returned to play the Scarecrow in 'The Wiz'.

I spoke with him about his highlights from the musical's five-

show run.

"Playing a versatile character without a doubt requires the utmost effort during rehearsal time but is indeed the most rewarding come the end of the show.

"It was just an incredible week for us all - filled with laughter, joy and lasting memories," he shared.

Euan has never failed to graft and meticulously plan his performances to ensure a cheerful and fun night for audiences.

"Preparing for such a demanding role like the Scarecrow most definitely requires a lot of discipline; both in terms of being hysterically clumsy whilst trying to not overdo it and being able to reveal a more emotional side to the character.

"Portraying this discipline helped me have more chemistry with Dorothy, Lion and the Tinman as we embarked on our enchanting journey down the yellow brick road," said Euan.

It was fellow SPTA pupil Morgan McCabe's first CMS show after being at the Mummies Theatre Group. She played Auntie Em and had a spectacular solo song at the start of the show.

Now with her debut run complete, she reflects on the start of her CMS journey.

"I think I performed well as Aunt Em, throughout rehearsals, I could feel myself embodying the character more and more.

"And I felt that affection for Dorothy as if I really was her aunt.

"As for singing, at the start I wasn't too sure about my song as it was a bit out of my comfort zone, as it was such a big, belting song.

"But with time I adapted to it and was very proud of how I performed it. I feel like achieving this role has helped me sing in a whole different style that I didn't do before."

It was also clear to see everyone in the ensemble fully rehearsed their dances to perfection with a lot of effort.

They played their part amazingly throughout the show, with choreography and movement always on point, with a plethora of tricky dances to perform.

This is going to be difficult for CMS to top!

CREATIVE SPOTLIGHT



Loch Lomond Folk Club

WORDS BY STEVEN HASTINGS AND JENNY WATSON, PHOTOS BY STEVEN HASTINGS & HUGH HASTINGS

Loch Lomond Folk Club has had a few homes and seen many faces come and go over the past 50 years, however, the same warm welcome is extended to all who love good music and great company.

"Nobody is quite sure how old the Club is, but it is certainly over 50 years old," Donald Nelson, the Club vice chairman shared with us.

"It started with local musicians just getting together and then developed into a proper club.

"It's a very welcoming, open and friendly club. You don't have to sing or join in; you can just listen."

The Club originally hosted their meetings in the old Balloch Hotel and changed location a few times.

In 2023 it moved to Mavi restaurant in Balloch (formerly known as Corries), which the Club are very happy with. The restaurant owners provide the space free of charge and also provide snacks.

It's an informal club with space for everyone.

There is no weekly entry fee but if you want to become a member,

there is a membership fee of £10 per year but you don't have to pay this to attend. Members benefits include attending their Christmas dinner and a night away at a hotel.

"We've been to Oban, Pitlochry and Stirling," Donald recalled.

"This year we are going to Fenwick. It's always a great night away. We have about 35 or 40 members, but we have space for others to join. On average about 30 people come along each week."

Clydesider volunteer Steven Hastings, started going to the Club in 2017. "To start with myself and my dad would just listen and sing along. A few months later we both decided to join in.

"My Dad had played acoustic guitar for years but mainly in the house and as there were a couple of members reading poetry, I thought I could do that.

"We both started taking a turn each week.

"My dad has learned more and gained confidence playing in front of an audience.

"I enjoy reading poetry. I also sing at least one song a week,

although my voice is not the best, and my songs are usually comedy songs.

"I mainly read pieces from other poets although I also like to read my own poems, which people seem to like."

There is also a weekly prize raffle with funds raised going to the Christmas dinner and away day. And sometimes a chocolate or two is on offer from someone's raffle prize!

Participants and members come from across West Dunbartonshire and surrounding areas and tourists regularly pop in. Some sing along and all are welcome to use any instruments while there.

A tourist who joined the Club for an evening shared their appreciation of the night: "What a surprise to come across, made our holiday. Lovely people, fantastic musicians. Welcoming and wonderful."

Lomond Folk Club is a great fun night out to enjoy all genres of live music, from the sound of Scottish Folk, Country, Rock and a few things in between, plus a few poems.

To join the Folk Club or just enjoy it for an evening pop along to Mavi's on a Monday evening.

CLYDESIDER COMMUNITY DIARY

CREATIVE, HERITAGE & LEISURE

CORRA WEST END BUZZERS

- Sewing Group drop-in. Meet Thurs 6.30pm - 9pm in Corra Foundation office, Leven Valley Centre, Castlehill

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH

- Indoor Bowls every Mon 11am - 2pm & Arts & Crafts Drop-in every Thurs 6.30pm - 8pm. All welcome

MAGGIE'S YARN BUDDIES

knitting group meet Wed 10.30am - 2.30pm in the Improving Lives Hub, Dalmuir

COMMUNITY LINKS BOOK CLUB

Mon 11am - 1pm at 63 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank G81 1BL. Contact Lisa 0141 952 4382, lisa@comlinks.org.uk

FIRECLOUD BIG HAPPY NOISE COMMUNITY CHOIR

- fun, informal group singing, no experience or music reading ability required. Meet Thurs 7.30pm - 8.30pm, Our Holy Redeemer Church Hall Clydebank, G81 1PH

LOMOND FOLK CLUB - free, friendly folk club every Mon 8.30pm, Mavi Kitchen & Bar, Balloch Road, Balloch. Join in or just sit and listen. Raffle and free snacks at the break.

CLYDEBANK LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

April - Sept periodic outings to places of local historical interest; Oct - Mar fortnightly talks, 7.30pm in Dalmuir Barclay Church. Contact elizabethpitts@btinternet.com or dotcraig@hotmail.com

KILMARONOCK OLD KIRK TRUST

- Summer meetings first Thurs of the month & Heritage Tours available at Kilmarnock Kirk, Gartocharn. To book contact Janet Beveridge kilmarnockgt@gmail.com

BALLOCH CASTLE COUNTRY PARK REGENERATION GROUP

meet first Tues of the month at 7pm in Balloch Hotel contact BCCPRegengroup@gmail.com for more info

SUPPORT & WELL-BEING

EMPOWERING WOMEN GROUP

- Space and activities for women to unite, break down barriers and reduce isolation. Fri 9.30am - 11.30am, Corra office, Leven Valley Centre, Dumbarton

IMPROVING LIVES GROUPS:

Art for Anxiety meets Tues, 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Men's Group local fishing trips on Thurs, 9am - 3pm & fishing days out Sun, 8.30am - 5pm

Autism Support & Discussion group meet every 2nd Mon, 3pm - 5pm

Providing Ongoing Ostomate Support group (POOS) meet every 3rd Tues, 6pm - 8pm

We Share We Care Support group meet 1st Thurs of every month, 11am - 1pm

QUIT YOUR WAY

- Free smoking cessation clinics at Clydebank Health Centre, Mon 9.30am - 12.30pm & Dumbarton Health Centre, Thurs 9am - 12noon. Book an appt on 0800 9168858 or www.nhsggc.org/quityourway

FREE REIKI AND MEDITATION CLASSES

every Thurs 1pm - 2.30pm, Hub C.E Centre, Kilbowie Rd, Clydebank

EMPLOYABILITY & ADVICE

SALVATION ARMY EMPLOYMENT PLUS SERVICE

- help writing CVs & getting back to work; Thurs by appointment. Contact Joanne 07552 492136

CARERS OF WD RISE PROJECT

- advice, information and support to unpaid carers living in specific areas.

Phoenix Centre, Castlehill

- 2nd Tues of the month, 11.30am - 1.30pm

Haldane Youth Services - last Tues of the month, 9am - 11am

The Recycle Room, Drumry

- 2nd Wed of each month, 10.30am - 1.30pm

Contact Clare Sweeney on 0141 941 1550 or clare@carerswd.org

WDC COMMUNITY SURGERIES

- Speak to WDC Communities Team about any matter concerning your community:

Dalmuir Barclay Church, last Fri of the month, 11am - 2pm

Lomond Parish Church, 27 March and then every 4th Wed, 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Centre 81, Whitecrook first Wed of month, 11am - 1.30pm

Concord Centre every 2nd and last Fri of the month, 10.30am - 1.30pm

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

- Fri 10am - 12 noon in the Phoenix Centre, contact Eric.Makeham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

SEND DETAILS OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES HAPPENING FROM MID-JUNE TO JENNY@CLYDESIDER.ORG BY MAY 15 TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

WHAT'S ON

WDC THRIVE - supports 16 - 24 year olds take next steps after school. Next programme starts May for 12 weeks, referrals open in April contact Eilish.McAleer@west-dunbarton.gov.uk for more information.

PS MAID OF THE LOCH LOCH LOMOND STEAMSHIP - volunteering opportunities available. Contact Anne Urquhart mail@maidoftheloch.org

FAMILY & YOUNG PEOPLE

PHOENIX CENTRE - Family Fun Hour every Tues 3.30pm - 4.30pm; Youth Club every Thurs 6pm - 7.30pm & Baby Massage on Wed 11am - 12noon

BEN VIEW - Ben View Buddies P1 - P3 activity group, Wed 4pm - 5.30pm; Ben View VIPs P4 activity group, Wed 6pm - 7.30pm Ben View All Stars P5/6 activity group, Wed 7.30pm - 9pm Ben View Bravehearts P7 activity group, Sun 6.30pm - 8pm at Ben View Resource Centre, Strathleven Place, Dumbarton G82 1BA, 01389 733030

CLIFFTOP PROJECTS ART DISCOVERERS (ages 5 - 8) Mon 4pm - 5pm & Art Explorers (ages 8 - 11) Mon 5pm - 6pm in the Phoenix Centre, Castlehill, lottie@clifftopprojects.co.uk

ANSWERS FOR QUIZ ON PG 46
1. ROBERT BURNS
2. SHARLEEN SPITERI
3. JAMES WATT
4. TOM WEIR
5. JOHN LOGIE BAIRD
6. LORRAINE KELLY
7. RONNIE CORBETT
8. CHARLES RENNIE MACINTOSH
9. MOLLY WEIR
10. SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

MARCH 23

Table-top sale at Dalmonach Community Centre. 10am - 12noon. £5 per table, pay on the day and sell your wares, also all arts and crafts welcome. Proceeds from table charge to local Women's Refuge

MARCH 26

Story Telling for Adults: Cine/photographic Club Dumbarton 'Then to Now' - how equipment has changed over ten years. Green Tree Remedies, 4, Church Street, Alexandria. Talks start 11am but access from 10.15am Come early for tea/coffee/biscuits (donations)

MARCH 30 & 31, APRIL 6 & 7, MAY 4 & 5, JUN 1 & 2

Maid of The Loch In Steam Special Weekend. The winch house boiler and the winding machinery will be fired up and operated

APRIL 2 - APRIL 12

OKFP Easter Kids Club, a variety of activities, movie days and nature walks. Full details on OKFP Hub Facebook page

APRIL 11, 18, 25 & MAY 2

FREE hearing clinics at Centre 81 11am - 1.30pm. RNID is offering free hearing checks for anyone living in WD

APRIL 19

Concord Community Cinema 'Brief Encounter' (1945) 7:30pm. £3p/p. Concord Community Centre, Dumbarton

APRIL 23

Improving Lives Open Day will have 50+ community organisations sharing information and advice. 10am - 3pm in Dalmuir Barclay Church

APRIL 23

Working4U Jobs Fair 10am - 12noon Concord Community Centre, Dumbarton

APRIL 25 & MAY 15

Dumbarton West History 12noon - 2pm. Learn about the history of Brucehill, Castlehill

& Westcliff with WDC's Arts & Heritage team and create your own photos with a professional photographer. Phoenix Centre, Castlehill. Contact arts.development@west-dunbarton.gov.uk or call 07557488421

APRIL 30

Story Telling for Adults: Sion Barrington Traditional storyteller of Celtic tales. myths and legends. Green Tree Remedies, 4, Church Street, Alexandria. Talks start 11am but access from 10.15am Come early for tea/coffee/biscuits (donations)

MAY 3

Concord Community Cinema 'Marlowe' (2023) 7:30pm. £3p/p. Concord Community Centre, Dumbarton

MAY 9, 16, 23 & 30

FREE hearing clinics at Clydebanks Library 10am - 12.30pm. RNID is offering free hearing checks for anyone living in West Dunbartonshire

MAY 13

Take a Minute screening of Clydesider Creative's short heritage films at Dumbarton Cine & Video Club from 1pm at Concord Community Centre, Dumbarton. All welcome

MAY 28

Story Telling for Adults: Paul Murdoch A Writer's journey. Green Tree Remedies, 4, Church Street, Alexandria. Talks start 11am but access from 10.15am Come early for tea/coffee/biscuits (donations)

MAY 29

Take a Minute screening of Clydesider Creative's short heritage films at OKFP Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick. Doors open 6.30pm, all welcome

MAY 30

Fish Supper Friday, OKFP BYOB Social Night. Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick. £5pp to book call 07916 310806

CLYDESIDER COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES

DUMBARTON DISTRICT WOMEN'S AID

- Confidential Domestic Abuse Helpline
Office hours - 01389 751036, 24hr Helpline
0800 027 1234

CLYDEBANK WOMEN'S AID -

Confidential Domestic Abuse Helpline
- 0141 952 8118, 24hr Helpline 0800 027
1234

GLASGOW & CLYDE RAPE CRISIS

- Support line 08088 000014 or
07743807844

DUMBARTON AREA COUNCIL ON

ALCOHOL (DACA) - Community-based
alcohol support service 01389 731456 or
0141 9520881

STEPPING STONES - Community mental
health support services, 0141 9412929 or
email referral@stepstones.org.uk

ALTERNATIVES - Community-based
recovery support for individuals and
families affected by substance use, 01389
734500 or 0141 951 2420 or
info@alternativeswd.org

**COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH &
ADDICTION SERVICES** - Mon - Fri 8.45am
- 4.45pm 0141 562 2311 or 01389 812018

OVERDOSE RESPONSE TEAM Greater
Glasgow & Clyde - 7 days a week - 10am
to 10pm, anyone can make a referral
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WDC EMERGENCY HOMELESS TEAM
- 01389 776400, Out of Hours - 0800 197
1004

WD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU -
Information and advice service Freephone -
0800 4840136 Mon - Thur 8.30am - 4.30pm,
Fri 8.30am - 3pm. www.wdcab.co.uk

IMPROVING LIVES - Support and
information for people living with a
disability or long-term condition, 627
Dumbarton Rd, Dalmuir, G81 4ET, 0141
237 4560 or contact@improvinglives.co.uk

CARERS WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

- Community-based support service
for unpaid carers. 0141 941 1550
clydebankcc@carerswd.org

Y-SORT IT - information, support, advice
and activities for 8 - 25 year olds 0141
9413308 info@ysortit.com

CONTACT CLYDESIDER

PHONE: 01389 381110 (we're not in the office
as often as usual so please try our mobiles or
email if you can't get us on this number)

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

ADVERTISING: Call Charlie on 07502460273
or email charlie@clydesider.org

COMPETITIONS: Email
clydesidercomp@gmail.com

ADDRESS: 48a Erskine View, Old Kilpatrick
G60 5JG

WEBSITE: www.clydesider.org

MONEY ADVICE

HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND - help, advice and financial
support to reduce heating bills. Call 0808 8082282
www.homeenergyscotland.org

CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP - information about
benefits in Scotland: [www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/welfare-
rights/scottish-benefits](http://www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/welfare-rights/scottish-benefits)

ENTITLED TO - free online benefits calculator blog:
www.entitledto.co.uk

ADVICE DIRECT SCOTLAND - provide free, independent
advice via phone, SMS, web chat, email, online and
through social media www.advisedirect.scot

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY - Locally work in
partnership with West Dunbartonshire Debt Centre to
offer a home visiting service for people experiencing
unmanageable debt. The service is free and available to
people of any faith or none.

To access support call their Helpline on 0800 328 0006
Mon - Thurs 9:30am - 5pm, Fri 9:30am - 3:30pm
or visit www.capuk.org

NATIONAL DEBT LINE - charity giving free and
independent debt advice over the phone and online. Call
free on 0808 808 4000, Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm and
Saturday 9:30am - 1pm or to Webchat with an advisor visit
www.nationaldebtline.org

STEPCHANGE - a debt charity providing free, confidential
and expert debt advice and money guidance. They also
campaign to reduce the risk of problem debt. To find out
more visit www.stepchange.org

YOURS FOR FREE (OR NEARLY FREE) IN WD

FOOD FOR THOUGHT -

Emergency food aid referral line; Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm, Unit 14A Artizan Shopping Centre, Dumbarton, G82 1LL 01389 743908 admin@foodforthoughtwestdun.co.uk

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ALEXANDRIA OUTREACH; Tues 11am - 12noon, CATRA base, Alexander Street, Alexandria

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

DALMUIR OUTREACH; Mon 11am - 12noon, St Stephen's Church, 12 Park Road, Clydebank G81 3LD

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMUNITY FOODSHARE

- Emergency food aid delivery Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm, 01389 764135 or freephone 0800 3457050

OLD KILPATRICK FOOD PARCELS COMMUNITY

PANTRY Mon - Fri 12noon - 2pm & **OKFP Chatty Cafe** Mon - Fri 12noon - 4pm, Napier Hall, 12 Dumbarton Rd, Old Kilpatrick, G60 5LW 07368 496836

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH COMMUNITY PANTRY & CAFE

Thurs 6.30pm - 8pm & Fri 11am - 2pm, 1 Durban Ave, Dalmuir, G81 4JH

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH DROP-IN TOTS - TEENS -

Clothing for kids. Weds 10am - 12noon

FAIFLEY FOODSHARE FOOD PANTRY

- Tues 10am - 11am, Faifley Parish Church, 164 Faifley Rd, Clydebank

TONTINE FOOD PANTRY -

Tea/coffee, food pantry, Wifi & chat Thurs 11am - 1.30pm, Trinity Church Hall, Alexander

Street, Renton, G82 4LT 07864 383 006 Tontinefoodpantry@gmail.com

THE RECYCLE ROOM

- Free recycled unwanted clothes, toys, household items, 137 Onslow Rd, Clydebank G81 2PW or therecycleroom1@gmail.com

KILBOWIE ST ANDREWS PARISH CHURCH

- Warm space, free food/hot drinks available. Wed 10am - 2pm, Tower Centre, Kilbowie St Andrews Parish Church

THE SALVATION ARMY

COMMUNITY CAFE (donation only). Weds & Thurs 11am - 1.30pm, Sylvania Way South, Clydebank 0141 941 1353

IMPROVING LIVES HUB

- Warm space offering free tea, biscuits plus advisors available. Mon to Thurs 9am - 5pm & Fri 9am - 3pm

FOOD FOR THOUGHT COMMUNITY SOUP & SANDWICH

. Wed 11.30am - 2pm, St Augustine's Church Hall, Dumbarton

SOUP CLUB

- Community Lunch. Fri 11.30am - 2pm St Augustine's Church Hall, Dumbarton

SOUP CLUB

- Community Lunch. Mon 11am - 2pm St Patrick's Church Hall, Dumbarton

PHOENIX CENTRE

COMMUNITY CAFE. Lunches & breakfasts (donation-based) Tues, Weds & Thurs 12 - 1.30pm & Weds 8am - 10.30am, Phoenix Centre, Castlehill, Dumbarton

PHOENIX CENTRE

DONATION HAIRCUTS

WITH DIZ for all residents of Brucehill, Castlehill and Westcliff (booking via eventbrite). Mon & Thurs

SOUP SPOT

- Tues 12 - 1.30pm, Lennox Evangelical Church, Risk Street, Dumbarton

TULLOCHAN SOCIAL

HUB - Free hot food and drinks, employability support, access to technology, Wifi & charging points. A place to meet new people. Thurs 10am - 12noon, 9 - 11 Poplar Road, Broadmeadow Industrial Estate, Dumbarton, G81 2RD, 01389 726962, info@tullockan.org

ISARO

- Energy-saving information & advice, recycle & reuse workshops. Centre 81, 2/16 Braes Avenue, G81 1DP hello@isaroinitiative.org.uk

HELP4THEHOMELESS

- Free shop recycling pre-loved clothes, shoes and household items. Mon & Weds 9.30am - 2.30pm and Sat 10.30am - 4.30pm Fleming Avenue, Clydebank, 07966 062495, info@help4thehomeless.co.uk

WESTBRIDGEND CLOTHING

BANK - Free recycled clothes, open Mon & Tues 11am - 3pm in Community Flat, 1 Lomond Court, Dumbarton elaine_41@hotmail.com

ST. PETER'S & ST. PATRICK'S CLOTHING BANK

- Free recycled clothes, open Tues 9am - 1pm & 7pm - 8pm, Fri 9am - 10am and Sat 10am - 12noon. St. Peter's Church House, 52 Howatshaws Road, Bellsmyre, Dumbarton. Call 07432 376450 or email stpandstp@hotmail.com

TO BE INCLUDED IN OUR ISSUE 28 CLYDESIDER COMMUNITY DIRECTORY EMAIL JENNY@CLYDESIDER.ORG BY MAY 15





It's Hogmanay, the end of the year, time for happiness and cheer. Albert the snowman isnae very happy, he wants his nose back, quick and snappy.



Now it's Easter and there's eggs everywhere but Albert the grumpy snowman doesn't care. He doesn't want to be an Easter rabbit, he just wants his snowman nose carrot.



The daffodils are in bloom, poor Albert will be melting soon. But this snowman has no fear, he'll be back later in the year!

CLYDESIDER QUIZ

BY STEVEN HASTINGS

Famous Scottish People Anagrams

Rearrange the words below to discover 10 famous Scots – there are clues to help if needed.

1. TORN RUBBERS (POET 1759 – 1796)
2. HEAR STRIPE LINES (SINGER BORN 1967)
3. TAM JAW SET (INVENTOR 1736 – 1819)
4. TIE WORM (CLIMBER, AUTHOR AND BROADCASTER 1914 – 2006)
5. HI LION BRADE JOG (INVENTOR 1888 – 1946)
6. ROLE REALLY INK (TV PRESENTER BORN 1959)
7. BON CORE RENT IT (COMEDIAN, ACTOR AND PRESENTER 1930 – 2016)
8. MINE CHOSEN ART CASH LINER (ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER 1868 – 1928)
9. ROME WILLY (ACTRESS 1910 – 2004)
10. RUIN CLAY THRONES ROAD (AUTHOR 1859 – 1930)

**Answers on page 43*

MPC ENERGY LTD



INSULATION, HEATING AND SOLAR PV

Since 2017, MPC ENERGY LTD have been providing heating and insulation solutions to customers to help keep homes warm.

MPC Energy have access to funding streams for energy efficiency measures and you may be eligible for government funding under the flagship ECO4 scheme.

We install the energy efficiency measures below, so get in touch to see how we maybe able to help:

Internal Wall Insulation • Cavity Wall Insulation • Room in Roof Insulation • Loft Insulation • Underfloor Insulation

High Heat Retention Storage Heaters • Non-Condensing Gas Boilers • Back Boilers • First Time Central Heating

Air Source Heat Pump • Solar PV

There are many ways you can save energy, money and the environment by upgrading your home and the ECO4 Scheme is your key to getting the funding you need.

We are awaiting your call - or alternatively, email, or visit our website:

enquiries@mpcenergy.org • www.mpcenergy.co.uk • 0141 951 7887





The Paul James Post

NEW FLOORING SHOWROOM OPEN

**We are excited
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We are really excited to show you around our newly revamped flooring studio. With great value twist carpets to beautiful wools, there's sure to be something to take catch your eye. We also have hard flooring, vinyl, LVT, Artificial Grass and Engineered Wood.



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