

FREE



CLYDESIDER

Our Community's Positive Press Autumn | 2025 Issue 33



West Highland Way '25



WALK YOUR WAY

Inside... A Life Well Lived | Women for Women
Celebrating Diversity

Clydesider Poetry
Competition Winner

Heroes

By Zee McCartney

My heroes aren't in print
They're not online or on TV
They're not celebrated on billboards or on the socials
My heroes are in my memories, they are in me.

My mother, grandmother, sister, aunts,
Those who aren't even aunts – they're best friends,
They've moulded me, guided, shaped me
Brought this being I am into existence.

These heroes battle the day to day,
Assumptions, inequalities, prejudice, oversights
Just in being who they are – Woman...
My heroes fight so I have rights.

My heroes live on even when they're gone
Carefully stacked in my memory banks
My aim? Maybe to do what they've done
And join my heroes in their unsung ranks.

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Welcome

Clydesider Creative – the organisation – was officially 10 this year!

We're saving the celebrations for next year when we will mark the magazine's 10th birthday, but as I was putting this issue together the milestone did make me think about all the interesting and inspiring individuals who have crossed our path over the past decade.

Some have stayed with us for a few weeks or months, others for years and we're very fortunate to have four of the original founder volunteers now on our staff/freelance team.

We've all taken very different journeys to arrive back together but what is so exciting is how many other like-minded, yet very diverse people have joined us en route!

Each fresh mind brings new ideas, interests, skills and experiences, and together helps the magazine evolve and develop.

And this issue seems to be packed with stories of other individuals and organisations who are on their own journeys.

From young Courtney Devenney who has put her heart and soul into fundraising in memory of her father, to the New Scots of all ages sharing their customs and culinary delights while learning a new language and culture, to the retired stalwart of education who has dedicated her life to guiding others on their own paths...Each has a story to tell.

And there are adventures of discovery unfolding in these pages – young minds investigating their local heritage with a helping hand (and sword) provided by slightly more senior history buffs; environmental enthusiasts sharing their love of nature with our Clydesider community and digital champions harnessing technology to open new doors – and Windows – for young and old alike.

You'll also find features about local organisations supporting people through some of the toughest times in their lives – as Blue Triangle marks its 50th anniversary staff share their passion to make a difference and founders of two new groups explain what is driving them to embark on their journeys.

So please, pick a path and see where it leads...

Enjoy!

Amanda & The Clydesider Team

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.

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.



About Clydesider

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

Clydesider community magazine, Clydesider TV, 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.



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Sponsored Editorial Your Community Needs You!



A local charity is looking for some expert volunteers to help the organisation as it grows and develops.



Old Kilpatrick Food Parcels (OKFP) celebrated its fifth anniversary this year. It has grown from a grassroots initiative to help residents access food and prescriptions during the pandemic to a thriving community charity and social enterprise.

Between them OKFP and OKFP Hub CIC offer the community a range of support including a free food pantry, surplus food collection station and the pay-what-you-can Chatty Café in Napier Hall and the Wee Chatty Café down by the Saltings.

They also host regular community events, offer room hire and provide training opportunities for their volunteers.

The organisation is backed by an amazing group of volunteers who help make sure everyone who visits is treated to a warm welcome.

Alongside the volunteers there is a small team of dedicated staff but, as founder Maureen Cummings explained, they are now in need of some specialist volunteers to join their Board and volunteer team.

Maureen said: "We've grown quickly in the past five years, this includes the range of services we can offer, the number of families and individuals we support and the number of volunteers who help.

"So we do need experts who have experience working in larger organisations to join our Board to help guide and advise the charity as it further develops."

Maureen is keen to recruit volunteers with experience in accountancy, social media marketing, policy and procedures, funding applications and HR.

She added: "These are all very specialist fields and as a small charity we don't have the budget to employ staff in these roles so they usually fall to myself.

"We're not expecting Board volunteers to do these jobs, just keep us right and be a sounding board we can bounce ideas off.

"In terms of time commitment, the Board meets every three months for two hours, this can be in person or via Zoom."

Maureen is also keen to recruit volunteers with these specialist skills to help on a regular basis possibly offering a few hours a week of their time.

She said: "This would perhaps suit someone who is retired or working part-time and can share some of their skills to help our local community.

"Again we can work around what suits the individual volunteer – most of these specialist roles can be done from home over a few hours each week.

"If you want to find out more please just give me a call or pop into the Napier Hall Monday to Friday between 12 – 4pm.

"If you drop in you'll see us in action and understand the difference this space makes to our local community."

To find out more call Maureen on 07916310806 or drop into Napier Hall, 312 Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick.

Community News

Volunteer Award

Do your volunteers go above and beyond in supporting local people or places? If so, perhaps they deserve a royal reward.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service is dedicated to honouring the exceptional work of volunteer-led groups.

To be eligible for nomination, groups must have been volunteering for a minimum of three years, benefiting communities either in the UK or overseas. Over half the group members must be volunteers with the right of residence in the UK, and the group must provide a specific local benefit.

Nominations open Sept 1 - Dec 1. Visit kavs.dcms.gov.uk for detailed information

Hospice Anniversary

Celebrations are underway at Robin House in Balloch as the dedicated children's hospice marks its 20th birthday.

Officially opened on 4 July 2005 by HRH The Princess Royal, Robin House has offered a full family support service for babies, children and young people with life-shortening conditions for the last two decades.

The specialist facility is one of two vital children's hospices operated by Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS).

Since 2005 Robin House has supported more than 3,000 family members.

To celebrate the hospice's 20th anniversary milestone teams across CHAS have been busy organising various events, the first of which was a Mad Hatter's Tea Party which took place at the start of July.

As well as making colourful hats, children and families enjoyed a lunchtime tea party, with tasty sandwiches and sweet treats, then took part in a scavenger hunt in the gardens.

The 20th anniversary will continue to be celebrated at future hospice events that will span across the year including Rebecca Rocks and Bring a Bulb Day.



Clydesider News

Summer School Success

Clydesider Creative's first Community Media Summer School came to a close at the end of August and was pronounced a resounding success by both participants and organisers.

The eight-week taster workshops included sessions in portrait photography, interview techniques, feature writing, podcasting and mobile film-making.

In total 20 people attended the action-packed tutorials in Clydebanks Library, with most sessions being over-subscribed.

Clydesider Editor, Amanda Eleftheriades-Sherry, explained: "These sessions were a great way to combine both our Community Media and Community Heritage projects.

"Most of the participants had little previous

experience of creating media content and we're asking them to work with us to make podcasts, short films and write articles for the magazine, so this was a chance to try these activities and see what they enjoyed and what wasn't for them.

"I'm blown away with what everyone achieved in just a couple of hours a week. We've got the makings of the first Clydesider podcast, established a Clydesider Camera Club with assignments agreed for our heritage project, made short films and recorded some really interesting interviews with local activists."

Most of the participants will now work on various elements of Clydesider's multimedia heritage project which will showcase the stories of local activists at West Dunbartonshire's first Heritage Festival which we are organising next May.

And there were further heritage skills workshops being delivered as the magazine went to press with experts from Wikimedia UK and the Scottish Oral History Centre training Clydesider's heritage volunteers in Dumbarton Library in September.

We were able to offer all these skills workshops for free thanks to funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Clydesider TV

We've been busy behind the scenes creating content for our Clydesider TV YouTube channel. And we now have some regular feature slots including Poet's Corner, Creative Clydesider and Community Spotlight. Our first Clydesider podcast 'Behind the Street Name' is also due to air on the channel this month. Created by our volunteers it tells the stories behind some of the street names in West Dunbartonshire - head over to www.youtube.com/clydesidertv and subscribe for free.

Coming Soon...

We enjoyed two fascinating environmental heritage walks in August with the expert guidance of local naturalist Zoe Weir (see page 28 for the full story).

As we move into autumn we have one more walk planned - this time led by Paul Murdoch through Balloch Park. The event is planned for Saturday September 27 starting at 10.30am.

To book a space contact kayleigh@clydesider.org - but don't delay both our August walks were fully booked!



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0141 435 7706

Teenage Fundraiser

Words by Suhaila Ahmed
Photos by Kellyanne Devenney



Clydebank teenager Courtney Devenney is on a fundraising mission in memory of her father Joseph, who sadly passed away in 2019 after a brave battle with oesophageal cancer.

Since then, Courtney, now 14, takes on a new challenge every year to honour his legacy by giving back to the local community.

"I'm raising money for St Margaret's Hospice because they helped my Dad when he was struggling," she shares.

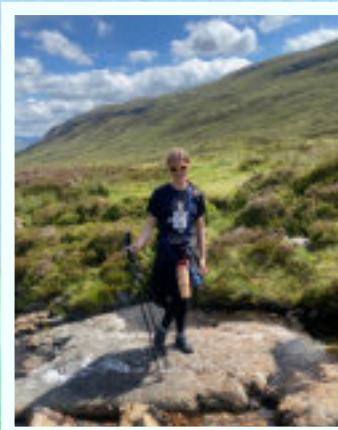
"I want to help people like they helped him."

Courtney's journey has not only raised vital funds but also taught her something profound about herself—she finds joy in helping others.

Each year, she eagerly takes on new challenges, with the Glasgow Kiltwalk becoming a cherished tradition.

To mark the sixth anniversary of her father's passing, Courtney undertook her most ambitious challenge yet: walking the entire 97-mile West Highland Way in just six days.

Moved by the unwavering support of her family, friends, and the heartfelt generosity of local businesses, she found the courage to camp outside for the very first time, determined to complete the challenge.



Alongside this impressive feat, she continues to run a lemonade stall which she loves—and her efforts don't stop there.

Her JustGiving page surpassed all expectations, raising £3,085—an incredible 308% over her original £1,000 goal.

"It's amazing," she said. "I'm ecstatic with all the people who helped me—they're very kind."

Courtney often shares live videos and personal stories on the Call Yerself a Bankie Facebook platform.

This has become a meaningful way for her to stay connected to memories of her Dad as followers share their stories of him with her.

She even sold her toys and raised £75 to support families facing cancer and set up a lemonade stand to help the Beatson Cancer charity.

By her side every step of the way is her mother, Kellyanne, who deeply understands how much this mission means to her daughter.

"It's about creating things like this going forward," Kellyanne says. "And without people being there to support, it would never be possible."

Many of the businesses who supported her this year expressed a desire to be more involved in future fundraising events.

They've asked her to notify them earlier so they

can coordinate their support and even sponsor one another. And when she participates in a walk challenge, she proudly wears their logos on her T-shirt as a sign of gratitude and partnership.

"Maybe next time, we'll be able to do something even bigger – or better," her mother spoke with a hopeful smile.

When asked if she expected this level of determination from her daughter, she responds without hesitation.

"Yes!" she says, beaming with pride. "She is just driven. She plans everything herself and excels in all that she does. She's such a hard-working girl, I'm so proud of her."

At just 14 years old, Courtney has already made a meaningful impact on her community through her dedication to fundraising.

Despite the challenges she has faced, she never gives up and always carries a smile on her face.

When asked what advice she would give to anyone hoping to honour a loved one through fundraising, Courtney doesn't hesitate.

"Just go for it," she says with a smile. "You'll be surprised by how much support is out there."

"When I started, I thought it would be something small; I never imagined raising this much, and that kept me going."



MARIE MCNAIR MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Clydebank and Milngavie Constituency



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Digital Delights on our Doorstep

By Steven Hastings



There's a 'secret' room at the end of the gym hall in Dumbarton's Concord community centre, when the door opens you are taken into a world of innovation, technology and design.

This is Bellsmyre Digital Community and Project Manager, Kathleen Smith, welcomed us in.

Bellsmyre Digital is a wonderful place bringing the community together in a variety of ways; Kathleen told me how it all began.



Photo Courtesy of Bellsmyre Digital

In 2001 a government funded project, Community Scotland, was set up to help with digital and social inclusion in Bellsmyre. As part of this initiative every resident in Bellsmyre got a PC and free training, this lasted for three years..

Then some people involved at the time got together to keep the project going under different funding. A committee was set up which included Brian McCluskey and Robert Aitken. They had five staff members and clubs were set up offering training in IT skills, photography, creating and printing greetings cards and calendars online, making and printing address labels.

Kathleen added: "A few years ago, I was asked to come along to a board meeting.

"And at the meeting I agreed to become Committee Secretary on a 'temporary' basis."

With her background in teaching, Kathleen could see there was a lot more that could be done.

She said: "I took on a volunteer job, which grew into a project

manager role. Within about 18 months we had something on every morning, every afternoon and Saturday morning. BDC was growing very, quickly. More and more people were coming to our clubs and classes."

Kathleen said: "I love what we do, and I love the people around us."

BDC was originally in the wooden huts on Whiteford Crescent in Bellsmyre. When social and affordable housing was being built on the land they hoped to get a new building there as part of developers helping the community, but unfortunately this didn't happen.

Instead, the Council found them new premises in the Concord Centre.

They worked in partnership with the Council to get the small space looking as good as it does now.

Kathleen explained: "Currently we have three operational premises - the Concord, our STEM and 3D Printing workshop in Castlehill. We also have our unit in Merkins Avenue in Bellsmyre as we're

still keen to maintain a presence in Bellsmyre, because that's in our name."

Their internet is top of the range as they need it to run smoothly, especially as they work very closely with organisations who are delivering SQA exams, for example.

Keeping people connected digitally and socially is a big part of Bellsmyre Digital Community. If you need some advice about your laptop, tablet or phone, their IT technician will help you cost free. If you need repairs, that will only cost you £10 (plus the cost of parts, if needed).

Volunteers are very important in Bellsmyre Digital Community.

Kathleen explained: "Without our volunteers- we have over 40 volunteers - we wouldn't be able to do what we do.

Our volunteers are a very talented bunch of people who help deliver many of the opportunities available in the organisation, sharing their skills and expertise.

Bellsmyre Digital offers a range of activities. There are groups for anyone from eight to 100.

The gamers start at eight-years-old and a few

years ago a gentleman called Jack Lennie who was in the Astronomy Club celebrated his 100th birthday with them. They had a wee party for him which included non-alcoholic champagne.

Kathleen laughed: "We have many fond memories of Jack. To my knowledge, he had never had a drink in his life. We gave him two wee glasses of non-alcoholic champagne. Of course, he had never heard of such a thing. He said, 'That's quite enough, I'm more than a little bit intoxicated, thank you very much.'"

The Astronomy Club meets twice a month on Friday evenings. Beginners are very welcome.

There are two gaming clubs on a Saturday.

Kathleen said: "The kids can play either individually or together - it's a bit of both."

As well as socialising, having fun and learning, online safety is very important in Bellsmyre Digital.

Kathleen explained: "One of our amazing gaming leaders created a bespoke in-house server on the game Minecraft, to make it a safe space for the children to play the game."

Bellsmyre Digital also works alongside Working 4 U for employability opportunities, including



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certificated SQA courses.

There are drop-in internet cafes in the Concord and in Bellsmyle for any age group to use the internet for free. Hot drinks and biscuits are also provided.

There is a computer club on a Thursday afternoon, where you can pop in with any problems or just questions you have with using your digital devices. Kathleen gave some examples - how to video call family and friends for free, how to do internet searches, make a word document, organise photos into albums, download apps. Lots of different things.

"People tend to come back for the social aspect, as well - for a blether and a cuppa."

A couple of years ago BDC started making rockets with the children as part of STEAM which, Kathleen explained, stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. The cones and other essential parts for the rockets are printed on their 3D printers. Sometimes the rockets crash land as they hit the ground, but that's ok, because the 3D printers come to the rescue and can print more parts.

A knitting group, which meets in Bellsmyle on a Tuesday, knits beanies for the homeless and other groups in local and surrounding areas that need them. They knitted over 400 beanie hats this year, in partnership with 'Threads'. Linda from local knitting and craft shop 'Threads' supplies wool to the group at low prices and they give her knitting patterns she can give her customers for free. They

bring their knitted beanies back to the shop and they are then delivered to Kathleen for distribution in the community.

Kathleen added: "Beginners are very welcome to the knitting club. If you don't knit but would like to give it a go, just pop along and you'll be knitting in no time."

Bellsmyle Digital hosts a variety of activities with learning and fun for all ages in a safe space and helps the wider community. Long may it continue!

If you want to find out more about Bellsmyle Digital's groups:

IT advice and repairs:
mmbeldig@hotmail.com
07745435316

Clubs and classes:
ksbeldig@hotmail.com
07561480808

Computer suite hire:
ksbeldig@hotmail.com
07561480808

Latest news and events:
Facebook page @ Bellsmyle Digital Community



Photo Courtesy of Bellsmyle Digital



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From Homeless to Hopeful

By Laura Giannini
Photo courtesy
of Blue Triangle

Did you know that Blue Triangle is 50 years old?

What is Blue Triangle?

If you have to ask, you may consider yourself fortunate; it means you have probably never been homeless, because Blue Triangle is a national provider of shelter to those who find themselves without a roof.

I find being homeless a terrifying prospect, so I was interested to meet with two of the dedicated, caring team who help run local Blue Triangle services: Sarah Louise McQuilter, Area Manager and Pauline McEwan, Assistant Service Manager in Alexandria.

"We offer different services in different areas, but our core is to give those with no other possibility a safe shelter," Sarah Louise told me.

Pauline added: "In our area we have housing or shelters in Bonhill, Alexandria and Clydebank, including six shared occupancy flats for females only.

"You wouldn't think it, but we could have double the numbers and still be looking for more. There is such a need and, at the same time, such a shortage of housing, our self-referrals and Council referrals rise each year."

"We try to be as open and fair as possible with our allocations. It is, essentially, a

first come first served basis, though women fleeing domestic abuse and those with additional support needs are prioritised a little," Sarah Louise explained.

"There are so many in need, young people too; in 2023 38% of our clients were in the 16 - 25 age group."

Pauline said there are lots of stereotypes about people who don't have a roof over their heads.

"People think of 'the homeless' as a kind of group who, due to bad choices or bad behaviour, like not paying rent or damaging property or being in some way anti-social, have been 'put out'.

"The truth is anyone could end up homeless: women who have taken one punch too many or who fear their kids being at risk, someone living alone whose company closes down, relationship breakdowns can mean one partner can be left with nowhere to go. Some people just haven't been taught how to budget and end up choking in debt.

"There are lots of reasons."

"There is still a heavy stigma attached to 'the homeless' that feeds from the idea of 'deserving and undeserving poor', truth is many of us are only a few weeks away from being unable to afford a house on our own," Sarah Louise explained.

"Even if, big if, you can find one – and that includes ever more expensive private rentals – the chances are one person could struggle to pay for it.

"If that person hasn't the skills to budget, has additional needs, an addiction, the chances shrink even further. That's why Blue Triangle is still needed," Pauline added, you can hear she is passionate about her work.

And the service provided doesn't stop with a shelter.

"To help we need information. It takes time to gain the trust of someone who has never had anyone who would help. We're usually at the end of a long, difficult road," Sarah Louise continued.

"Our clients are hurt. Sometimes they don't even know what they've been through is abuse."

How do the staff cope? How do they deal with being close to so much pain daily?

"We get training and counselling is available if we need it, but mostly our support is from and for each other.

"We learn to celebrate small wins – someone who had stopped washing to keep others from coming too close, has a shower; that can mean a major break-through," Sarah Louise explained.

"It's a hard job, every day has its own challenges, big and small.

"You couldn't do it if you didn't care, so you find rewards on the job with colleagues, with the clients.

"Each time someone leaves ready for a fresh start, it's a win, so satisfying to have been part

of giving someone another chance," Pauline is enthusiastic, then realistic.

"It takes time and sometimes it doesn't work out, so we learn to take the positives as and when they come."

The Blue Triangle staff network extensively with other organisations to help meet the often complex needs of their clients.

"There are so many different needs, it would be impossible for one service to cover them all," Sarah Louise added.

"Someone might come to us with nothing more than they stand in; others might need to be kept away from those enabling their addiction. It might be they need to learn how to budget or how to keep their space clean and tidy, how to cook...

"There are so many parts to the puzzle of living alone, so we have a lot of interaction with other organisations. Most of the voluntary help we get is through partners."

I asked about their hopes for the future.

Sarah Louise said: "I'd love to say we won't be needed, but truth is the demand is greater than ever. We have received funding for more houses and for staffing, so hopefully we'll be around to help for awhile yet."

Pauline added: "It would be wonderful to say poverty driven despair, people with nowhere to go will disappear, but they won't. Not in my lifetime.

"What we do is a drop in the ocean but we'll keep trying to make life a little better for people, some of whom have had to fight for everything they have.

"That's why we offer a few extras, a trip on the subway, a restaurant meal or a Christmas gift and dinner to someone who's never had one.

"Little things we all take for granted can mean so much. It can mean life is changing for the better at last."

What would you like those reading this article to do?

Sarah Louise immediately answered: "I'd like to make people aware that being homeless isn't just something that happens to 'those people', it can happen to the best of us.

"To all your readers I say, please don't frown on people who need help, be thankful it's not you."



Journeys Through a Foreign Language

By Working4U's ESOL Learners

Photos by Kayleigh Hirst

The Working4U Adult Learning and Literacies Team offers a range of courses for adults to develop confidence, personal skills and gain qualifications.

One of their programmes is English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), which aims to help people who are new to Scotland to learn English (and Scots!) and find out more about living here.

The free classes are friendly, relaxed, and are at different levels to suit all learners. One of these takes place in Centre 81 and learners shared their experiences with us:

Buthina

"I am originally from Sudan, but I lived in Sri Lanka for seven years before coming to Scotland with my three daughters in February 2025. Since then, Clydebank has truly felt like home. The people here are kind and helpful and we have all grown to love Clydebank.

I'll always remember the day we went to the library and met Eric. He told me about the English class and I decided to join. I've been enjoying it so far, it has really motivated me to improve my English. The people in the class are friendly and it's inspiring to be surrounded by others who are also eager to learn.

What makes it even more interesting is that all the students come from different countries and the teacher Dawn made the class enjoyable and easy. I'm truly grateful to have joined the English class. I've met new people, made friends and even the simple act of walking to the class has been a joy. Along the way I continue to discover more about Clydebank and I feel more connected to the community every day."



Maryam



"My name is Maryam and I'm from Iraq. I have been here in Scotland, Clydebank since January. I came here with a goal, to learn English and continue my education at university, where I want to study Art.

Before coming here, I studied English in school in Iraq, however I had to leave school and move to Turkey. In Turkey I needed to learn Turkish to communicate with people. That experience taught me how important languages are in lives.

When I arrived here I realised that I needed to start learning English again. I joined English class at Centre 81. These classes have helped me improve my English step by step. At first I knew only a few English words, but now I can speak and understand more every day.

Learning a new language is not easy, but it is exciting. I enjoy learning English because it opens new doors for me. I want to study Art at university and build a better future, English is the key to achieving my dreams.

Now I am going to do volunteer work and more classes to get used to the Scottish people."



Hanna

"Before I came here, I learnt English at school. But alas it was 20 years ago and only at the Elementary level.

I came to Scotland one year ago from Ukraine and I was amazed by the kindness of Scottish people.

But my English knowledge doesn't allow me to speak and understand people fluently.

I was happy to join this class and met amazing people here. When I came here for the first time, I was little nervous and worried, but I soon found out that the teacher and students are wonderful, friendly and kind people.

These lessons allowed me to learn new English and Scottish words and also practice speaking and writing. After months of studying I can now communicate with other people much better, so now I'm thinking about continuing my education in college.

These lessons also helped me to learn much more about Scotland, its culture, history and traditions. All of this allows me to integrate better.

Exploring the local community better makes me fall in love with Scotland even more. Now I can't imagine living without its beautiful nature and kind-hearted people.

I would like to thank all the Scottish people, the local community and of course the wonderful teachers Dawn and Eric for their support, good attitude and help in answering any questions."

Zahida

"I live in Clydebank. I was born in Pakistan and moved to the UK in 2010 with my husband and children. I am a housewife, and I enjoy cooking new recipes and sewing different styles of clothes.

I live in a nice and clean area. My neighbours are friendly and respectful, which makes me feel safe and comfortable in my home.

I have good sewing skills and enjoy making traditional and modern outfits. I can stitch clothes by hand and with a sewing machine. I also like to try new designs and make clothes for my family. Sewing helps me to be creative and feel relaxed.

Right now, I am learning English at Centre 81, and I really enjoy my classes. I also go to a computer class and study a childcare course, so I stay very busy during the week. I attend wellbeing classes as well, where I practise English, build my confidence, and improve my listening skills.

I feel confident speaking English. I can go to the GP on my own, explain the issue, and

understand what the other person is saying. This has made me feel more independent and comfortable in everyday life.

I have a brother and a sister who also live in the UK. We celebrate festivals together with our families, which is always a special time.

One of the most important times for me is Ramadan. It is a holy month when we fast from sunrise to sunset, pray, and reflect. After Ramadan, we celebrate Eid, which is a very joyful day. I like to wear new clothes, cook special food, and spend time with my family and friends on Eid.

In my free time, I love spending time with my children and my granddaughter. They make me very happy."

Sara

"I came to Glasgow three years ago. I went to an ESOL class, it was good. I lived nine months in a hotel, then I moved to Yoker. This is a beautiful area and access to the River Clyde, is about 15 minute walk from my house. I went to college two years ago, I liked college it was amazing.

I have one son, he is eight years old. Sometimes he has cooking, gardening or maths class and I participate. I enjoy this because it makes me feel good.

My local area has a lot of things such as shops, community centre, church and parks. I am really happy living here. My husband is going to university.

Last year, I joined the language class at Centre 81. It is a good class, Dawn teaches calmly. The class has a nice atmosphere, I feel calm.

This year, I also started a childcare course, I passed the first semester and I feel satisfied in my heart. I will continue my learning journey.

My new life here has taught me new things. Getting to know kind and loyal people. I love rainy weather, historic buildings, museums, high level of education and scientific centres. This area is exciting, interesting and memorable."

I just want to enjoy life

"My name is Mohammed, I lived and grew up in Baghdad, Iraq. I went to Turkey when I was 15 years old because of the bad conditions in my country. I lived in a cold city in Turkey, six hours away from Istanbul and luckily when I came to Clydebank I was acclimatised to cold weather 😊



I wanted to go to the UK to achieve my dream. My dream is to become a pilot. I want to travel and get to know the diversity of other countries. This is why I go to Centre 81 to learn English with my teacher Dawn so that I can achieve my dreams.

I would like to thank everyone who helped us get here and helped us mingle with the lovely Scottish people. Finally, I would like to thank Eric for helping us a lot when we entered the country and until now. I volunteer at the Salvation Army to help people and there is a kind and friendly team there."

If you are interested in any of the ESOL courses, or know someone who is call 01389 738775; email cld@west-dunbarton.gov.uk; or message their Facebook page: facebook.com/Working4UAdultLearning

Sponsored Editorial



The overarching role of Community Links Scotland (CLS) is to work with individuals from fragile deprived communities, developing partnership projects to: support the transition into further employment; develop new skills and opportunities; create social connections; increase income; sustain homes. We do this through a combination of consultancy work across the west of Scotland and the delivery of three targeted programmes within Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire.

We have been based in Clydebank for 23 years and our local programmes engage with the most isolated and vulnerable households. Our programmes aim to support individuals and households to develop knowledge, skills and confidence, to build their social connections reducing isolation and loneliness and to take greater control of their household, their energy and their finances.

Our **Healthy Pathways** programme aims to help local people step out of their comfort zones, build greater self-confidence, and actively engage with their community. Our aim is that the project will support local people to connect with others who share similar experiences, build confidence and develop lasting friendships. Through Healthy Pathways we will offer a diverse range of engaging and therapeutic activity sessions, including pottery, and various arts and crafts. New classes will be run with participants as the project develops.

Peer support will be on hand from Mindful Moments which is a group of ladies who have been past Healthy Pathways participants. They have a wide range of knowledge, skills and personal experiences and will be on hand to listen and offer support for those starting their journey with the project.

Working in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Libraries and Menopause Warriors we have successfully delivered support and information sessions surrounding the **Menopause**. All stages of the menopause are discussed, questions on HRT answered as well as peer support and individuals sharing their own experiences. Due to the popularity and success of these sessions, we are aiming to continue this partnership approach and deliver monthly Menopause Cafes.

Healthy Pathways will be delivering some **mindfulness walking sessions** in partnership with The Vale of Leven Trust in the next few

months. While walking within the local community of Alexandria, they will aid participants to work on enhancing focus and concentration, improving their mood as well as helping to increase self-awareness.

Drop in craft and chat sessions are being delivered weekly at our offices on a Tuesday from 11am to 1pm. These relaxed and informal sessions provide individuals with an opportunity to try out some of the activities we offer as well as meet Lisa, our Project Lead. All sessions are free with all resources being provided.

To keep updated on the sessions being delivered you can check our Facebook page (@comlinks). If you want to chat to us about taking part – call Lisa on 0141 952 4382 or e-mail lisa@comlinks.org.uk

We are also happy to chat to local organisations about referrals into our Healthy Pathways Programme.



— “ —
“Healthy Pathways has helped me through a difficult time, I have made some lovely friends and now have the confidence to join other groups”.
— ” —

Healthy Pathways participant



— “ —
“I now have more confidence in myself. I'm not stuck at home all time, I'm out learning new and different things and making new friends.”
— ” —

Healthy Pathways participant

COSTUMES, CASTLES AND COMMUNITY

Words & Photos by
Kevin Monaghan

In what can only be described as a glorious mash-up of creativity, cosplay and historical geekery, the Dumbarton Castle Society joined forces with Bellsmyre Digital and a whole bunch of enthusiastic volunteers to transport Primary and S1 pupils back to medieval Scotland.

The event, which packed out every room in Dumbarton's Concord Centre, included the pupils' colourful themed displays and papier-mâché models, medieval weapon workshops, a

foraging stall, period costume dress-up (along with photo opportunities courtesy of Dumbarton Cine video & Digital Club), and a retro games room and VR headset room so the kids could become noble warriors and clan chieftains within the safety of virtual reality.

The Strathleven Artizans with its merry band of volunteers in full medieval garb, brought history to life with their workshop which was complete with weapons, armour and costumes for the pupils to try out.

Whether they were wielding swords and flails or attempting to walk in chainmail without falling over, it was equal parts educational and exciting.

Robert Aitken of the Dumbarton Castle Society came up with the idea three years ago. He said: "Most of the work was actually done by the children. You will see this in their displays which they got support and direction from their teachers. Also, their parents and their grandparents have been drawn in as well.

"We ask each of the schools to pick a specific topic of Scottish history, this has evolved into each school developing their own themes and not just sticking individually to one theme. So there's been a lot of creativity from the schools as well.

"The kids are getting to pick what creative output they want to work on. It's great getting to see them have fun with it."

Kathleen Smith of Bellsmyre Digital summed it up well: "Year on year the schools have become much more competitive and their displays are becoming more ambitious - the stalls look great.

"The kids are having fun learning history of the local area in and around the Castle. And that's the important thing. It's all about the Castle and the rich history on our doorstep."



Last year many families went to visit the Castle with the parents being brought along by the kids who took part in the event.

Kathleen added: "There are many adults who are Dumbartonians who have never in their lives been to Dumbarton Castle.

"The pupils are very knowledgeable and they've had fun learning, that's the best way kids should learn, they should learn how to have a bit of fun as they do.

"The great thing is that we have a mix of confident kids with kids that are a bit shyer. The shyer kids are coming out of their shell because they've been talking to people from around the community, it's very cool."



Sponsored Editorial

BOARD MEMBER VACANCIES



Knowes Housing Association Ltd (KHA) is a community based social landlord committed to its mission of providing good quality affordable housing and services which meet the needs and aspirations of the community we serve. The Association owns and manages 1056 properties and provides factoring services to 562 customers situated mainly in the Faifley area of Clydebank. We have 22 members of staff and an annual turnover of £5m.

We currently have vacancies on our Board of Management, and we are looking for people who share our purpose, vision and values and who are passionate about the provision of good quality affordable housing to our customers.

This is not a paid position, but all expenses associated with attending meetings will be

reimbursed. Experience in the housing sector is not a requirement as training and support will be provided. The commitment we require from you is one evening meeting per month which can be attended in person at our office or from your home via Zoom.

If you are interested in joining our team, please email asweeney@knowes.org attaching your Curriculum Vitae. To arrange an informal discussion regarding what is involved in being a board member at Knowes Housing Association, then please telephone 01389 877752 and ask to speak to Amy.

KHA is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Women for Women

By Laura Giannini

Photo courtesy of Women for Women



Statistics say that West Dunbartonshire is the second worst area in Scotland for domestic violence, or perhaps it's fourth, depends who's telling. Either way the blight of domestic violence is rife in our area and 83% of those suffering are women.

A further look at the Council's website brings us to the hopeful sounding strategy to "prevent and eradicate gender-based violence" published in 2014, amended 2016, 2023 and 2025.

Therein it states "we recognise that the inequality between men and women is the cause and consequence of this violence and abuse and are committed to taking a gendered approach to tackling both."

In 2022 WDC councillors voted unanimously to "maintain funding for the duration of the administration's term."

One councillor said: "We know West

Dunbartonshire has a serious problem with domestic abuse ... it is important that they [Women's Aid] know we are behind them ... these next five years."

Excellent news. Dumbarton and Clydebank Women's Aid thought they were secure until 2027.

But talk is cheap and here actions don't just speak louder, they shriek.

In 2024 the proposal to cut funding started again and resulted in the present necessity of closing Clydebank's only outreach and refuge point for women and children facing possibly the worst moment of their lives.

I met with a passionate, dedicated advocate for women's needs and rights, who works with Violence Against Women and the Clydebank peer group Women Supporting Women, Dawn Brennan.

She has campaigned for Women's Aid for 40 years. She and her 77-year-old mum, still have a stall in Clydebank shopping centre to try to save services for future generations.

Dawn tried to explain the complexities of women in need and the challenges facing the groups trying to support them.

"In its way the constant targeting of women and the cuts to the services that support them, is also a form of gender-based violence," said Dawn.

"It says, loud and clear, women do not count.

"It's a message that empowers abusers by showing them that crimes against women are second rate and punishment – if it comes at all – will be minor.

"It is no use politicians making big statements 'we will end gender-based violence' if the next thing they do attacks women and undermines their ability to escape that violence."

Dawn talked about the legalities that affect abused women: the balancing of an abusive husband's rights to see his children with the possibility of them being used as leverage against the woman; the social fear of protests by more vocal groups overcoming the need of vulnerable girls; the cuts in Legal Aid; the extreme complexities of the benefits system; the loss of neighbourhood police who would know the parties involved in domestic complaints; the need for laws protecting women to be more firmly

enforced...

So many things that will put women's needs in second or third place, despite the huge scandals and the deaths.

"The truth is the system is about control and abusers are controllers in the extreme," said Dawn.

"Then there are social preconceptions and the derogatory labels that are, still today and despite the pretence of a neutrality of views, applied to women and girls.

"There are just so many obstacles in the way of women who need help. Sometimes it can be dispiriting."

She sighed. "But we fight on, with whatever the system will give us, then fight for more to be able to do more. That's the way it works."

So, what is next for women in need in our area?

Dawn's head comes up, her slumped shoulders straighten.

"We fight on trying to get those who hold the purse strings to prioritise women and children,

to get politicians to translate talk into fact, to make those involved more understanding.

"Truth is councillors, politicians react to those who make most noise.

"When we asked about funding going to support a golf course instead of the refuge, we were told they [WDC] had received a great many calls about the golf course but not about the refuge.

"The challenge is to get women to fight for themselves.

"The Suffragettes managed it, the WASPI women fought hard, we just need to fight harder, get more women to fight. That's what we'll do."

I thought it was a very good thing women in need have such passionate women to help them.

If any readers want to get involved in helping women in need, please email Women Supporting Women – clydebanksw@gmail.com

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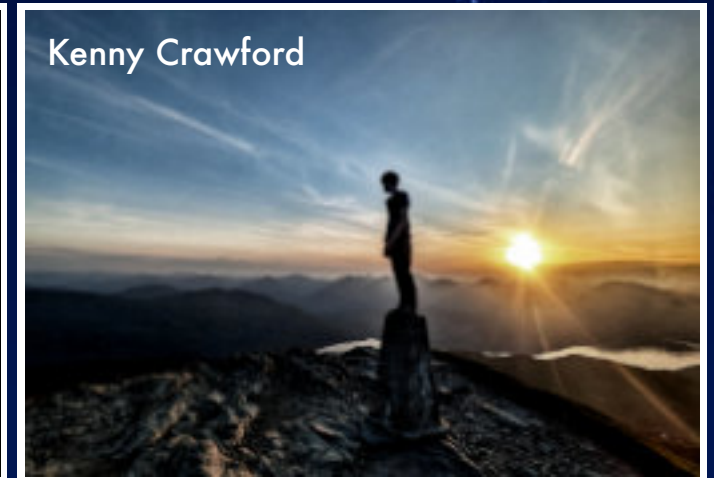
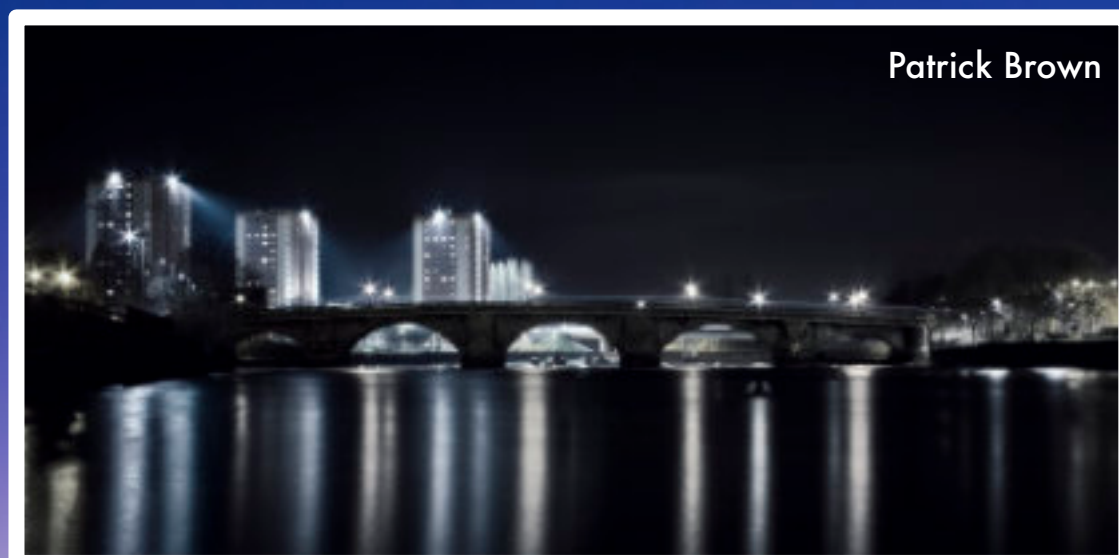
Clydesider Photo Competition - Night



Thanks to everyone who entered, our volunteers and staff all enjoyed looking at these great night photos - it was tough picking a winner!

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

The next competition theme is 'Trees & Leaves' - see pages 40/41 for some tips plus details on how to enter.



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Sponsored Editorial

Leading with welcome: how a Glasgow group is helping a refugee family build a new life

Just beyond the communities covered by *Clydesider*, something powerful is quietly taking shape. In Glasgow, a new Community Sponsorship group is forming to welcome a refugee family and it's a reminder of what's possible when ordinary people come together to offer safety and hope.

Refugee Community Sponsorship

Glasgow is one of Scotland's newest volunteer-led initiatives. The group, supported by the experienced Edinburgh Refugee Sponsorship Circle, <https://www.refugeesponsorshipcircle.org/> is working to raise funds, secure housing, and prepare the ground for a family forced to flee conflict to begin again in the UK.

Community Sponsorship is a UK-wide scheme that gives local people the chance to lead the welcome. Volunteers form a group to support a refugee family during their first year in the country helping them access healthcare, schools, benefits, and community life. It's a scheme powered by neighbourhoods, faith groups, and friendship circles.

The Glasgow group has already reached their first fundraising milestone, and they're now

connecting with schools, housing providers and neighbours to get everything in place. You can follow their journey on Instagram [@refugeesponsorship.gla](https://www.instagram.com/refugeesponsorship.gla) (<https://www.instagram.com/refugeesponsorship.gla>) or support them via their crowdfunder. <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/refugee-sponsorship-glasgow>

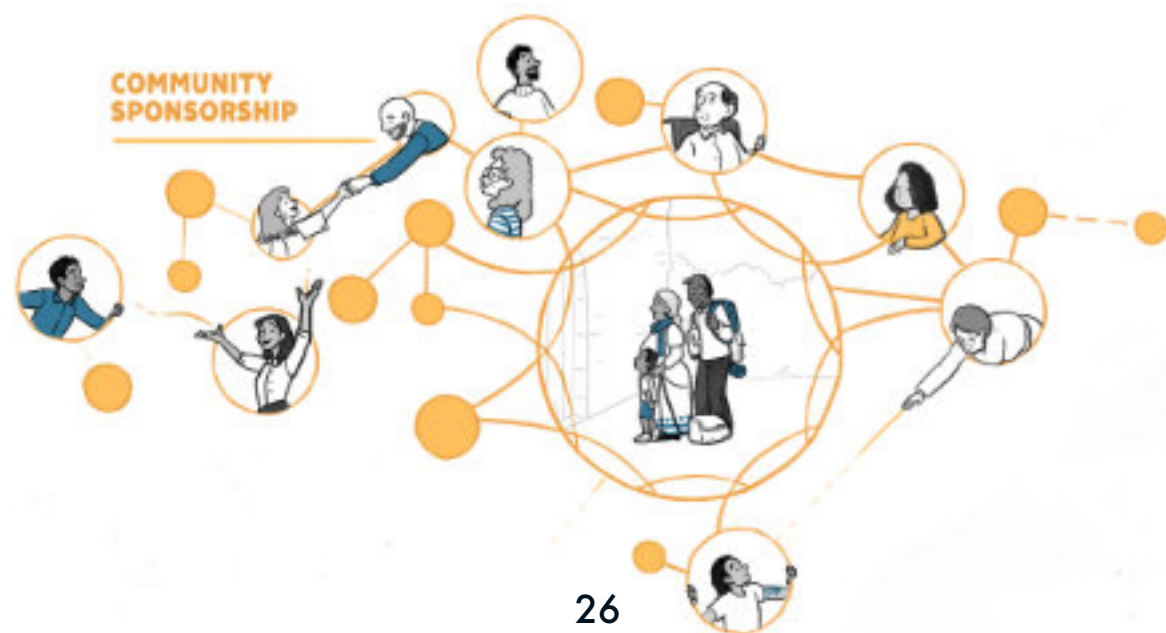
For people living in Clydebank, Dumbarton, and the wider West Dunbartonshire area, this story is more than just heartening, it's an invitation. Community Sponsorship doesn't just happen in cities. There are active groups in the Highlands and Islands, too. What matters most isn't location, it's commitment.

And the impact is two-way. Families arriving through Community Sponsorship gain not just safety, but a real chance to rebuild. Communities gain connection, shared purpose, and access to free, practical training through organisations like **Reset** <https://www.resetuk.org/>, who are supporting groups across the UK. Their resources include guidance on housing, trauma-informed support, interpreting, safeguarding and more, skills that strengthen all forms of community work.

You don't need to be an expert to get involved. You just need a handful of people who care.

If you're curious about what it might look like to sponsor a family in your area or want to connect directly with Glasgow's newest group, visit [@refugeesponsorship.gla](https://www.refugeesponsorship.gla), explore their Crowdfunder, or contact their partners via [refugeesponsorshipcircle.org](https://www.refugeesponsorshipcircle.org) or hello@greatergovanhill.com. You can also learn more about Community Sponsorship nationally at www.resetuk.org.

A quiet act of welcome can change lives. Yours included.



Clydebank Housing Association is pleased to support Clydesider Magazine



"Offering our community more than a home"

Celebrating 40 Years - 1984 - 2024



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- Welcome card from the Chief Executive



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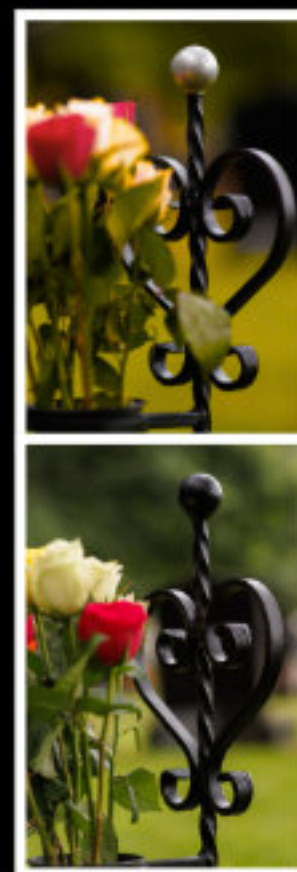
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Hidden Heritage Spotlight: Havoc Meadows

Words by Kayleigh Hirst
Photos courtesy of Friends of Havoc Meadows

If you say the word ‘heritage’, most people might think of a building or a famous person, perhaps even folk tales and traditions.

But there’s another aspect of our collective heritage that’s just as important.

Heritage can be defined as the things we’ve inherited from previous generations and want to pass on to the next - and in that sense there’s nothing more important than our natural heritage.

It was just such natural heritage that was explored on two of our Heritage Nature walks in August when we teamed up with Zoe Weir from the local community group Friends of Havoc Meadows who led a

captivating guided walk around the Havoc Meadows in Dumbarton.

Even people who are local to the area may not be aware of the fascinating history of the site and the amazing range of plants, animals and insects that now call it home.

The name ‘Havoc’ comes from Havock, which was the name of a farm that stood on the site from at least the early 19th century.

Since then, it’s been used variously as cow grazing pasture, allotments, landfill and even red blaes sports pitches - all of which have left their mark on the landscape.

Since intense human activity has reduced in the area, wildlife has regenerated remarkably quickly.

This year the site celebrates 10 years of being a Local Conservation Area, which recognises the importance of this unique environment and means it is offered special protections.

The Friends of Havoc Meadows are currently working to have this designation upgraded to a Nature Reserve, which would bring further recognition.

What makes the area so special is its unique mix of habitats.

The cliffs along the top end of the site once marked the point at which

the sea reached inland, and the current meadows would have been the sea bed.

Strange to think, now that the Clyde has receded a good quarter mile away!

The cliffs provide shelter from the elements, and since they are south facing, create a microclimate which allows a unique mix of plants and animals to be found here that are very rare even a short distance away. It also means it’s the best place in south west Scotland to see a range of butterflies, who love the warm and sheltered position.

The meadows themselves are home to an incredible 272 species of flowering plants, 22 grasses and 11 mammals (including two types of bats, and weasels!)

Many of these were highlighted on the walks, with Zoe’s expert insights helping people to notice things they would otherwise have overlooked.

Like the long horned moth which looks like a fairy when in flight, or a plant known as eyebright that has been used as a herbal remedy for centuries to improve eye health.

The site changes significantly over the seasons, with June the best time to see the native orchids which have flourished alongside other wildflowers since mowing was reduced at the site 10 years ago.

Far from being hidden, the natural heritage of Havoc Meadows is easy to find and explore.

Parking is available on

Havoc Road, or you could enjoy a walk west along the path from Levensgrove Park. Next time you’re there, stop - listen and look - and you may just spot something you’ve never seen before.

The Friends of Havoc Meadows have regular opportunities to get involved in taking care of this special site, including butterfly counts, litter picking and removing invasive species. Follow them on Facebook to keep up to date: [facebook.com/havocmeadow](https://www.facebook.com/havocmeadow)

The Orchids of Havoc

by Eveline Pye

Eschew the showy blossoms prized for a Victorian corsage. Smaller, more muted, these wildflowers are hardy natives, once common in hay meadows, grasslands, ancient woodlands.

Look closely, see exquisite forms, this one has a tall spike laden with greenish-white flowers, scented to attract night flying moths its spreading petals and sepals like the wings of a butterfly.

Seek out the broad-leaved helleborine, leaves spiralling around its stem, purple-tinged creamy flowers, heads drooping with a protruding bottom lip – an open invitation to passing bees.

Hidden under the soil of Havoc Meadow, a rubble of red blaes, burnt waste from coal mines, laid down for football pitches covering two decades of council landfill, buried deep.

Celebrate the return of our orchids, rising above the debris.





Above and Beyond: A Life Well-lived

By Annie Jordan

Often the most outstanding people are the most unassuming and humble folk you will ever meet: Margaret Rice is one such individual.

You would never guess she had recently been recognised in the Scottish Parliament for her 62 year career in education by a Motion presented by Marie McNair, MSP of which she has a framed copy in her living room.

I have a feeling her career in education is just the tip of the iceberg and Margaret has many 'strings to her bow', but she dismisses her many achievements as nothing out of the ordinary and is puzzled I should be interested in her. "I just did it," she says. "Why would anyone want to interview me?"

I suggest her education career is probably unparalleled given she firstly worked in the Education offices in Clydebank, then in St Columba's High School office, and she also taught typing in Helensburgh Academy and in Clydebank College, at night school. She has also been a Chief

Invigilator for the SQA, first at St Columba's and subsequently at St Peter the Apostle.

In addition to her working life, and life as Mum to son Gerard, Margaret volunteered on numerous committees and associations for the community. She helped set up her local residents' association in 1982...and held several roles over the years, helping out in both our Lady of Loretto and St Stephen's where she is still involved.

She also sings in St Stephen's choir and Clydebank Ladies Choir which she helped set up and where she still serves as secretary.

Not everyone gets involved in their local community, some people actively shy away from it, but Margaret, embraced a life of service, starting when she was very young, as a Guide and then a Guider.

In fact, she was my Guider when I joined the Guides.

Too shy to join the Brownies and reluctant to join the Guides, Margaret skilfully took me under her wing and made

me the Sixer of the Snowdrop Patrol.

"That was my own patrol when I was a girl..." Margaret recalls.

This made me feel ten feet tall. What an honour!

Guiding stayed in Margaret's life for around 30 years: 1st Drumry, 2nd Duntocher and 4th Dalmuir.

Who knows how many little girls Margaret transformed by her unstinting faith in them and her gentle, cajoling manner? Her 'can do' spirit made us see our own potential and believe in it.

Margaret also served as Assistant Commissioner for Fairlie and Duntocher District, training Brownie Guiders as well as Girl Guiders and testing their leadership. She was also the Catholic Representative for Dunbartonshire Guides and Brownies on the Scottish Catholic Commission for the Guide Movement.

Margaret worked as the Senior Clerical Officer, then the Administrative Assistant in the former Saint Columba's High School where she embraced her fast evolving role, changing from manual typewriter to electric, then word-processor and finally the computer.

We chat about the 'olden day' challenge of drawing a table manually using tabs and a lot of arithmetic. And let's not forget shorthand... Remember those days?

Margaret gladly welcomed new technology: her work today is on her laptop which she uses regularly.

"Everything moved so fast in the world of business, and you had to make sure you kept up, but they sent us on plenty of courses...."

And keep up, she did!

When Margaret first qualified, she was hired immediately by the Education office in Kilbowie Road, Clydebank. She particularly enjoyed Friday afternoons when workers collected their wage packets.

Till this day, she can still hear their voices and chuckles at the memory...

"Of course, that's all changed now: no pay packet any more!"

Margaret's highlight of the school calendar was the annual show where she usually helped out in the tearoom, chatting to audience members.

"When Saint Columba's was 25 years old, Leo Duffy, the headteacher at the time asked me to invite former teachers back to celebrate this milestone. He then welcomed all the ladies back with a corsage...A lovely touch..."

Another highlight was non-uniform day where the students raised funds for charity.

Margaret and her colleague Catherine, turned this on its head by dressing up in school uniform to much hilarity from staff and pupils alike: "Those were the days!" I muse.

Her capacity for organising is legendary: she even has a whole folder of documents and photos ready for me to peruse. What a fascinating kaleidoscope of a very busy life well-lived!

I notice a postcard of West Dunbartonshire Women's History Group special VE day street party in the Town Hall in 2016.

I congratulate Margaret on this event but she says: "All credit due to my friend, May Semple. She also compiled 'A Wartime Collection'- stories from more than 30 women..."

She gives me her own private copy of the book and a DVD to watch. Such a treat!

After Margaret retired, to stay on as Chief Invigilator, a role which has changed beyond recognition with many students having separate arrangements for sitting their exams.

"So much responsibility!" I exclaim, and she

confessed it had become harder and harder.

She had to spend hours on advance preparation to make sure all students felt supported and comfortable in their exams and that everything ran like clockwork for her team.

"Above and beyond," I remark, summing up Margaret's life in just three words.

Footnote: If anyone recognises themselves from her photo of the parade in Old Kilpatrick, particularly the wee baby in the pram, please get in touch with Clydesider by emailing theclydesider@gmail.com

Presentation pic at Clydebank Ladies Choir - Nan Stephenson, Sandra Young, Margaret Rice & Carol Lynn



Celebrating Diversity

Words & Photos
by Janet Adeshiyan

In a world that is more connected than ever, embracing our cultural differences is not just important - it's essential.

The first historical multicultural event held at Our Holy Redeemer (OHR) in Whitecrook, Clydebank was a resounding success, showcasing the rich diversity of cultures from around the world.

The event brought together people from different backgrounds, ages, and ethnicities to celebrate the unique traditions, from colourful traditional outfits to mouthwatering cuisines of various cultures.

Pupils and parents were treated to a

kaleidoscope of colours, sounds and flavours, with each culture adding its unique thread to the tapestry.

One of the biggest highlights was the diverse range of food stalls, offering a taste of authentic cuisine from different parts of the world.

From sweet pastries to savory kebabs to refreshing drinks, the aroma alone was enough to transport everyone across continents. The culinary offerings were a true reflection of the world's cultural diversity.

More than just celebration, it was so heartwarming to see pupils asking questions as the event provided a valuable opportunity for the children to learn about and appreciate different cultures.

Art works, exhibits and interactive sessions allowed people to engage with various cultures, fostering greater understanding and respect.

The multicultural event was a powerful celebration of the diversity that enriches our communities.

It demonstrated that despite our differences, we can come together to appreciate and celebrate our shared humanity.

This is what some of the pupils thought of the event: "It was amazing, I like how everyone from different countries got to speak their languages and show their traditional clothing," said Tyrone Boyle P7 from Scotland who also exclaimed "I didn't know that people in Africa use banana skins to make footballs! I would recommend other schools to do a multicultural event."

For fellow P7 Daniel also from Scotland, the different instruments were a highlight of the day. "I really enjoyed all the different instruments like the drums from Africa."

While Eliana Adeshiyan, a P1 from Nigeria, said: "I was happy to sing a song with the whole audience about Nigeria being my country."

And David Drynko a P6 from Poland was also delighted to share his language with his classmates: "I felt very proud that I could teach children the eighth hardest language in the world."

Faizah, a P7 from Africa expressed her satisfaction: "I liked that everyone got a chance to learn about my culture today and I really appreciate the opportunity to take part in this event."

And P7 pupil Yanni from Brazil added: "I love letting people know about how we speak and sharing food with them."

The multicultural event was a resounding success, bringing people together in a spirit of unity and celebration.

It was a testament to the power of diversity to

enrich our lives and communities, reminding us all that diversity is not just something to be accepted but something to be celebrated.

OHR Multicultural Event 2025 was the initiative of Mrs Roseanna Irving & Mrs Niven Stacy.





Growing Wilma's Wish

Words & Photos by Harvey Smart

Pupils at St Michael's Primary in Dalreoch are enjoying a new outdoor music wall thanks to a local charity and a much-loved mother.

The project was led by June Hopkins, who founded Wilma's Wishes in memory of her late mother, and the installations were built by Tulloch Trust's Timber Transitions.

The programme helps young people and adults in West Dunbartonshire develop practical skills, including maths and employability through hands-on woodworking.

"I had seen them online, I was basically looking at how we could get this done very, very cheap," June explains.

"So I contacted Kevin at Tulloch, and said, would there be any possibility that you would be able to help us out? And he said, 'Yeah, if we

can get some pallets.'

"We managed to get them from Gilmour and Aitken and we went round to schools asking if we could get any old music stuff, pots and pans, anything donated."

She explains how it all began.

"I was doing a course through the Corra Foundation, called System Changers, about what would you like to see differently in your community?"

"I thought I would like to teach kids how to grow stuff, because when I was growing up, my mum was always planting stuff for the kids.

"So I thought that would be

nice, and we started off in St Michael's Primary School. We were just basically putting in some plants, growing some potatoes and stuff."

June and her colleague Claire also cook with produce they grow with the kids, showing them where the food they eat comes from.

"Seeing the kids' faces and watching them see how it goes from seed to full plant to being eaten, it's just absolutely amazing to see," she says.

The project has been incredibly popular with the children, with schools in the local community reaching out, asking June to bring Wilma's Wishes to their pupils.

At St Michael's, they plan to build a greenhouse from recycled plastic bottles so they can be more self-sufficient in growing seeds, rather than buying plants.

Activities have even included outings to a farm in Stirling, where the kids were allowed to sample the produce.

"They went around the farm trying out different things, and they learned a lot more about growing your own stuff.

"A lot of them came back from it saying they would like to be a farmer when they're older," June laughs.

Local organisations and businesses have been supportive, providing June with not only materials but also funding, including £1,500 from the Strathleven Foundation.

Future plans include more cooking with the kids, and expanding the programme, using St Michael's as a base to see what works, and also involving more parents.

"When the kids were planting stuff with us, some of them said that it was really fun. Then the next week they would tell us they went to the garden centre shopping with their mum, and now they were starting to plant stuff in their own garden."

What began as a tribute to bring her mother's love of gardening to local kids has blossomed into a vibrant project that is inspiring children to think about where their food comes from.

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Meet Our Volunteers

Patricia Laws had a full house of fellow volunteers to interview her for this issue.

Billy: What encouraged you to become a volunteer with Clydesider?

Patricia: My daughter was working with Clydesider, she was doing a workshop and I went along. It was as we were coming out of Covid, and it was in the Bandstand in Clydebank. Susan introduced me to Amanda. I've always loved

writing since being a child, but I hadn't thought about actually volunteering, but I spoke to Amanda that day, and then discovered when the next meeting would be, and then just came along, and the rest is history.

Janet: I'm interested to know who you are in the sense of what were you doing before you decided to join Clydesider?

Patricia: I was retired. I had been a teacher, beforehand. I taught French and Italian. And I have my family, my

daughters, and my husband. We are all quite creative.

Suhaila: What's your favourite article to write, and what advice would you give to people who want to be a volunteer?

Patricia: I've enjoyed all the different articles I've done. I've recently been doing some heritage ones, and I'm enjoying these, because sometimes you don't visit things on your own doorstep, and it's interesting doing the research for something like that, and just trying to figure out how to put it

all together. And advice - I think it's good to push yourself. The interview is a very different thing from writing a personal article, because you're actually interacting with someone, but most people are happy to tell you their story, just go gradually, talk a wee bit about them as you're starting off, and then eventually go into your questions.

Katie: Do you remember a story that's particularly stuck out for you?

Patricia: There have been quite a few. I've met so many brilliant people doing amazing stuff. One of the articles was at the Vale of Leven Trust - a bike project, I enjoyed that one. Then I went to the choir in Dalmuir. I enjoyed interviewing them. I also went to Bankie Talk - that's a talking newspaper for the blind and my dad helped set that up, so that was a very emotional one for me.

There's been numerous opportunities to meet people. The most recent thing we've all done were the videos, that was very powerful. The people working in our community behind the scenes, who don't want any recognition, don't want any awards, and they're just doing such good work.

Amanda: I'm going for the obligatory what's your favourite biscuit question!

Patricia: Borders Gingers. However, I've been enjoying the Turkish Delights and the strawberries today.

Layla: I think we can all agree Clydesider is a very unique place to work. What in your mind makes Clydesider one of the best places to work?

Patricia: That's a big question! I think, because you can come in and you don't know from day to day what you're going to get to do, nothing's ever really structured. We all sort of just get to chat together and get to know each other. There's a variety of ages, people from all walks of life with different experiences. And we've had

new people joining us along the way. Some of us have been here, and known each other for awhile. I just find it refreshing, every time I come and it's great to learn about the stuff that I didn't know that is going on.

Layla (bonus question): If you were to give advice to somebody thinking about volunteering for Clydesider, what would it be?

Patricia: If you're thinking about it, most definitely go along and you'll be welcomed. And I would point out there is no pressure to perform. You can just come along and just be, just listen. It doesn't matter how old you are or how young you are, just come along and you might find your niche. Also, you can get plenty of help and advice, I think your confidence will grow.

Steven: Has your teaching background helped in any way?

Patricia: I think it's made it a wee bit easier for me in terms of when you're doing interviews. And probably the process of writing because I've been used to writing essays and stuff like that, so it's made it a wee bit simpler in that respect.

John: Do your own personal values marry up with those of Clydesider?

Patricia: I hope so. In terms of trying to report the best that is going on, because you do want to bring out the more positive and give a

balance to all the bad news. You want to shine a wee spotlight on people making a difference, or just bring a wee bit of hope and positivity. I think some of the projects we've been involved in, it is very humbling to go along to interview these people who are just there and they don't think they're doing anything great, and you're like, 'oh wow, you've really made a difference.' They're often the most humble individuals. So yes, I would like to aspire to have the values we have in the magazine.

"You want to shine a wee spotlight on people making a difference, or just bring a wee bit of hope and positivity"



Tenants' Champions

By Laura Giannini
Photo by Harvey Smart

Here's some good news for West Dunbartonshire Council tenants and home owners with WDC as their factor – you have a champion.

A Scrutiny Panel is tasked with the job of checking the performance of the Council's Housing Services.

This panel, of up to 12 volunteers, meets monthly and uses tenant surveys, interviews and visits to Housing Services, to measure performance.

Clydesider met with Fiona McClymont, member of this panel for six years, to hear how the panel works and how these checks are managed.

What training is provided by the WDC Housing Services?

"Understanding the role – we are not there to resolve individual problems, but to check the overall process, eg from report of a need to the carrying out of the work. Monitoring the way the job is handled. Confidentiality is important and this is made very clear."

Are panel members shown different standards of work to understand what is acceptable?

"No. It's not our job to be a Clerk of Works. Our role is to try to clarify the process, to make it easier and hopefully better from the tenant's point of view. We assess whether the process is carried out accurately, correctly and in good time. Then we report our findings. That is sent to the Council's Housing Improvement Board."

Mystery shopping is mentioned on WDC's website. What is meant by this?

"We can test specifics of the service offered; for example, how long it takes to answer the phone; how easy it is to find things on the website."

Can you give an example of how the Panel effected a significant change?

"One of the ways we monitor is to shadow workers. While doing this the panel noticed that after requested repairs were completed the householder would often say 'while you're here could you just ...?' The standard practice was to say, 'sorry you have to call in and book a further appointment.' This seemed a slow and frustrating way of dealing with tasks. After some discussion a suggestion to give a computer to those assigned to the tasks, so the jobs could be booked in at once, lessening the work for office staff and speeding up the process for the tenant."

Have you ever needed to progress an issue to the Scottish Housing Regulator?

"No, not so far. Our recommendations are very often taken up and implemented. We like to keep them on their toes."

What is the most satisfying aspect of your work with the Scrutiny Panel?

"Making small changes that really do make it easier and more satisfactory for tenants."

Anyone interested in the work of the Scrutiny Panel can find background and reports by searching 'Scrutiny Panel' on the WDC website.

To volunteer with the Scrutiny Panel contact the WDC Tenant Participation Officer Jane.Mack@west-dunbarton.gov.uk or call her on 07983542993.

Castle Rock 'n' Roll Review by Jennifer Carr

First you have to make your way past the indoor skatepark, but nestled in the far backrooms of Castlegreen Industrial Estate, Dumbarton, you'll find a hidden gem ready to tend to all your rock 'n' roll needs – Castle Studios.

Established by Jimmy Murray and Alec Brown, it's become a go-to recording and performance space in the West Dunbartonshire area, accommodating a spacious (and eclectically decorated) live room and control room complete with mixing console and recording devices.

Beyond serving as a rehearsal and recording space, the studio also functions as a venue for music workshops, such as the one I attended this summer.

A drum clinic overseen by Glasgow-born Ray Weston, who has played alongside such titans of the industry as Tom Jones, Lulu, Adrian Smith (Iron Maiden) and Peter Green (Fleetwood Mac), and who had flown in from his home in California especially for the occasion.

Part music lesson, part storytelling and part question-and-answer session, Ray emphasised the importance of drums as the timekeeper that holds the rest of the band together and was happy to demonstrate his skills, honed over 50 years in the business.

The highlight of the evening was definitely Soundgarden's 'Black Hole Sun.'

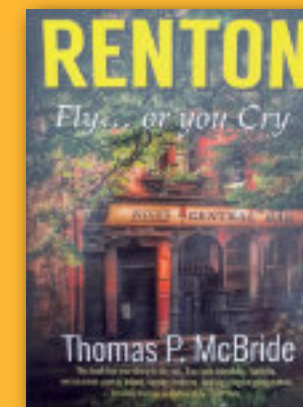
And just in case you're worried these workshops are only accessible for rock lovers, Ray also emphasised the importance of drums in contemporary pop music too, throwing in a reference to Taylor Swift, much to my delight.

Ray's clinic is just the first of many that Castle Studios wants to play host to in the future, mixing the art of recording with musical education.

The studio is open and available to all up-and-coming musicians in the West Dunbartonshire area who are eager to break into the business – local bands such as The Brian Hughes Band, The Real World and Unbuilt Cities are just a few who recently made use of its facilities.

Whether searching for a suitable venue to record your next big hit or one-to-one events hosted by artists with intimate knowledge and fascinating stories of the music industry, you'll find yourself well looked after and in good company.

Renton - Fly... or You Cry by Thomas P. McBride Review by Mary Irvine



This is a book that speaks for itself. The expression 'it does what it says on the tin,' springs to mind. Only this time it's a book, a book that contains a bit of everything. Whether you're local or not there is much with which to identify..

Although the author describes his book as 'primarily a work of fiction based on personal memoirs' the reader may suspect there is more autobiography than fiction. Although beginning with the birth of Thomas we then regress somewhat to hear of his antecedents in Ireland and their emigration from Ireland to Scotland, the trials of his parents and their 'mixed' marriage, the lows and highs of growing up in Renton, the cruelties of schooldays, the bullying of Basher Brown and his gang, poverty and disease. The characters are brought to life for us. I personally feel empathy for Philly.

But we also have description of Thomas' environs, friendships, loyalties the influence of the Church. This is a story of different times, different mores.

The author engages with the reader, the book moves on at a steady pace so the reader is soon drawn in. It is a pleasure to read such a well-crafted 'telling' written in a compelling style and, may I comment, displaying a superb command of the English language, when so many books these days seem to ignore. A worthy addition to the archives. For anyone interested in first-hand honest accounts of local history then this book is for them.

And if you're intrigued to know whether Thomas flew or cried - buy his book.

Photography Tips and Techniques: Trees & Leaves

By Harvey Smart

The theme of our next photography competition is 'Trees & Leaves'.

These beautiful, important and often ancient organisms are all around us, and make fantastic and varied subjects for photography. Here are a few simple tips to get the best shots possible!

Think about light

Golden hour (the period just after sunrise and before sunset when the sun is low in the sky) provides warm, soft light and long shadows, great for mood and backlighting, making leaves glow.

Consider your perspective

Consider the angle and position you're shooting from. Get low on the ground to create a majestic towering feel, or conversely, step back and shoot from further away, showing patterns and symmetry in tree formations. Or get in really close to highlight details and interesting features in bark or leaves.

Use leading lines and framing

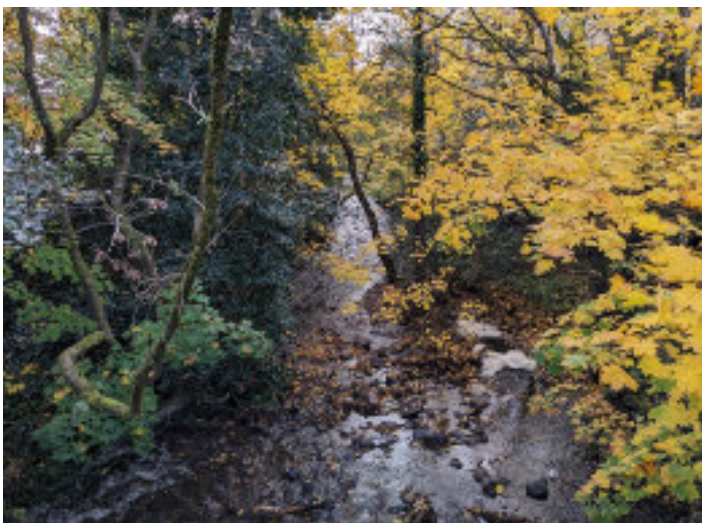
Look for patterns in branches that guide your eye through the image. Also use tree-lined paths or rows in orchards and forests. You can also try using leaves and other vegetation to frame your image, creating interest in the foreground and background.

Utilise colours

This time of year, autumn is in full swing and deciduous trees will be losing their leaves. Try to capture the full range of yellows, greens and oranges this short period offers.

Most importantly, take a minute to just relax and appreciate the majesty of these fascinating organisms. Have fun exploring and seeing trees in a new light!

We can't wait to see the images you send in. Happy shooting!



CLYDESIDER PHOTO COMPETITION

Theme: *Trees & Leaves*
Prize: *£25*
Closing date: *November 7*
Email entries to:
clydesidercomp@gmail.com

CLYDESIDER POETRY COMPETITION

Theme: *Gifts*
Prize: *£25*
Closing date: *November 7*
Email entries to:
clydesidercomp@gmail.com

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Please send form and payment to
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View, Old Kilpatrick G60 5JG



CLYDESIDER COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Local Support Services

DUMBARTON DISTRICT WOMEN'S AID - Confidential Domestic Abuse Helpline Office hours - 01389 751036, 24hr Helpline 0800 027 1234

GLASGOW & CLYDE RAPE CRISIS - Support line 08088 000014

DUMBARTON AREA COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL (DACA) - Community-based alcohol support service 01389 731456 or 0141 952 0881

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 Freephone 08088 00811

WDC EMERGENCY HOMELESS TEAM - 01389 776400, Out of Hours - 0800 197 1004

MENTOR SCOTLAND - Peer to Peer mental health and wellbeing support group. Contact admin@mentorscotland.org or 07470 461685 www.mentorscotland.org

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. 41 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank, G81 1BL. 0141 941 1550 clydebankccc@carerswd.org

Y-SORT IT - information, support, advice and activities for 8 - 18 year olds 0141 9413308 info@ysortit.com

WD ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE - Community Links contact 0141 952 4382 or energy@comlinks.org.uk for more information

WD KINSHIP CARE SUPPORT - information, advice and activities for kinship carers and their families; Meets bi-weekly Tues 10.30am - 12.30pm Level 2 1 North Ave, Erskine House, Clydebank G81 2DR, 0141 2373303

YOURS FOR FREE (OR NEARLY FREE) IN WD

FOOD FOR THOUGHT - Emergency food aid, referral now required from any local authority organisation. For same day emergency food aid please call before 1pm. If you call after 1pm then collection of food aid will be available the next working day. Open Mon 10am - 3pm, Tues 10am - 3.30pm, Weds 10am - 2pm, Thurs 10am - 3.30pm, Fri 10am - 3pm. 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 plus Fuel Poverty project; School Holiday Brunch Bags; School Uniform Bank; Baby Bank & Xmas Toy Bank. Call 01389 764135 or freephone 0800 3457050 Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm for delivery

OLD KILPATRICK FOOD PARCELS COMMUNITY PANTRY - Tues - Thurs 12noon - 1.30pm & OKFP Chatty Cafe Mon - Fri 12noon - 4pm, Napier Hall, 12 Dumbarton Rd, Old Kilpatrick, G60 5LW 07368 496836

WEE CHATTY CAFE - open seven days a week 10am - 2pm Erskine Ferry Road, Old Kilpatrick G60 5EU

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH COMMUNITY PANTRY & CAFE Thurs 6.30pm - 8pm & Fri 11am - 1pm, 1 Durban Ave, Dalmuir, G81 4JH

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH DROP-IN TOTS TO TEENS - Clothing for kids. Fri 11am - 1pm

LOMOND COMMUNITY PANTRY - Thurs 1pm - 7pm & Fri 10am - 4pm. £4 for 10 items. Available to anyone in the community in need of support with provisions. 101 Main Street Jamestown G83 8AZ

FAIFLEY FOODSHARE FOOD PANTRY & FAIFLEY UPCYCLING - Tues, Pantry 10am - 11am & Upcycling 10am - 12noon, Faifley Parish Church, 164 Faifley Rd, Clydebank

THE RENTON COMMUNITY FOOD HUB - Tea/coffee, food pantry, Wifi & chat Thurs 11.30am - 1.30pm, Trinity Church Hall, Alexander Street, Renton, G82 4LT

THE SALVATION ARMY COMMUNITY CAFE - (donation only) & Employment Plus, free use of Chromebooks to Job Search, update CV & improve IT skills. 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 SPOT - Community Lunch. Fri 11.30am - 2pm St Augustine's Church Hall, Dumbarton

SOUP CLUB - Community Lunch. Mon 12noon - 1.30pm 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

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

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

Y-SORT IT - Friday Night Youth Café for 12yrs+ offering a safe place to meet friends, have a FREE MEAL, charge phones and access WIFI. Every Friday 6pm - 8pm at Y-Sort It Hubs in Clydebank & Bonhill. Call 0141 941 3308 or email info@ysortit.com to find out more

THE RECYCLE ROOM - Free recycled unwanted clothes, toys, household items & community laundry, 137 Onslow Rd, Clydebank G81 2PW or therecycleroom1@gmail.com Open 7 days a week, check Facebook for daily opening times.

KILBOWIE ST ANDREW'S PARISH CHURCH - Warm space, free food/hot drinks Wed 10am - 2pm. Starts back in October. Tower Centre, Kilbowie St Andrews Parish Church

BEN VIEW - Breakfast Club Tues 9.15am - 10.30am. Family Food & Fun - free two course meal, games, crafts, for families with u16, Thurs 3.30pm - 5pm. Lunch Club + 65s in G82 & G83, 11.30am - 2pm Mon to Fri. All FREE Ben View Resource Centre, Strathleven Place, Dumbarton

GOLDEN FRIENDSHIPS - Weds Lunch Club, Bingo & Entertainment 1pm £5. 18 Nairn Place, Clydebank contacted

To be included in our Issue 34 Clydesider Community Diary and What's On, email jenny@clydesider.org by Nov 4 2025

WHAT'S ON... from September



Sept 21 - Wild Food Foraging Autumn at RSPB Loch Lomond, Gartocharn. Identify, harvest, and cook with wild ingredients. 1pm - 4pm. Info and tickets - events.
rspb.org.uk £26 for RSPB members/£31 non-members

Sept 23 - Child Seat Community Checking event in partnership with Road Safety Scotland. Check your child's car seat is fitted correctly. Morrisons, Dumbarton 10am - 3pm.

Sept 27 - Clydesider's Autumn Natural Heritage walk in Balloch Park with Paul Murdoch. Start 10.30am. FREE but limited spaces, email kayleigh@clydesider.org

Sept 27 - Balloch Indoor and Outdoor Market. Vintage stalls, games, crafts, treats, refreshments and live music. St Kessog's Hall, Balloch, 11.30am - 3pm

Sept 28 - Dumbarton Rocks Festival at Dumbarton FC, 1pm - 10pm. Local bands, family fun, food, drink and entertainment. Tickets £35 family/ £15 single/ £10 concession/ £7.50 child dumbartonfootballclub.com/events/dumbarton-rocks/

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CLYDESIDER COMMUNITY DIARY

Creative, Heritage & Leisure

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH

Indoor Bowls every Thurs 10am - 2pm, Community Choir fortnightly Wed 1pm - 2.30pm & Arts & Crafts Drop-in every Thurs 6.30pm - 8pm

HEALTHY PATHWAYS

- Free drop-in craft session every Tues, 11am - 1pm Community Links offices at 63 Kilbowie Road. All materials provided. Contact Lisa on 0141 952 4382

TULLICHEWAN CRAFT DROP-INS

- FREE Family Craft Drop-In - every Sat 1pm - 3pm; children must be accompanied by adult. FREE Adult Craft Drop-In - every Sun 1pm - 3pm at Tullichewan Community Flat, 2/1 McGregor Walk, Alexandria. Enquiries to Jean Mackay 07927 433 615

CRAFT GROUP

- Bi-weekly Mon 2pm - 4pm, Tower Centre, Kilbowie St Andrews Parish Church, Clydebank

MAGGIE'S YARN BUDDIES

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

DALREOCH CHURCH

- Carpet Bowls Tues 7pm - 9pm everyone welcome; Wed is Ladies Day 2pm - 4pm for arts and crafts, chat and board games

CLYDEBANK LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

- Fortnightly programme of talks from Mon Oct 6 at 7pm Dalmuir Barclay Church, Durban Avenue. For more information, www.clydebankhistory.org. Visitors welcome, or come and join on the first evening.

FRIENDS OF LEVEN RIVER

VALLEY - 2nd Sat and last Tues of every month (weather permitting), litterpicking and occasionally other activities e.g. clearing Himalayan balsam. Check FB page or email levenlitterpickers@outlook.com for details

FRIENDS OF LEVENGROVE

PARK - Meet last Wed of month at 6pm in Training Suite in the Park

DUMBARTON CINE & VIDEO

DIGITAL CLUB - meet Tues 7pm - 9pm and every Wed 12 - 3pm in Concord C.E Centre

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

CLYDEBANK LADIES CHOIR

Mon 7.30pm - 9.30pm, Dalmuir Barclay Church, 1 Durban Ave, Dalmuir, G81 4JH

CLYDEBANK DISTRICT CHOIR

Tues 7.30pm - 9pm. The Hub, 405 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank G812TX. Contact wilmamacnicol@btinternet.com

BIG HAPPY NOISE CHOIR

- Try out FireCloud's community choir for fun, informal singing. Thurs 7.30pm - 8.30pm at St Eunan's Church Hall, 1 Gilmour St, Clydebank. Free entry/ donations welcome.

PHOENIX CENTRE

- Phoenix Jam sessions - musicians can come & have a jam - everyone welcome, 7.30pm - 9pm - every 2nd Mon

Support & Well-being

EMPOWERING WOMEN

GROUP - Space and activities for women to unite, including holistic therapies. Fri 9.30am - 11.30am, Corra office, Leven Valley Centre, Dumbarton check out their Facebook page or email empoweringwomendumbartonwest@gmail.com for details

QUIT YOUR WAY

- Free smoking cessation clinics at Clydebank Health Centre, Mon 9am - 12.30pm, Vale Health Centre, Wed 11am - 3pm & Dumbarton Health Centre, Thurs 9am - 12noon. Book appt on 0800 9168858; find out more www.nhs.uk/scot/your-health/quit-your-way, telephone consultations outside these times also available

DALMUIR BARCLAY CHURCH

GROUPS - WD Boccia Group Tues 1pm - 3pm; Girls Brigade - Tues 6.30pm - 7.45pm; Savage Martial Arts with Jack Leckie Tues 5pm - 7pm; Bowls Thurs 10am - 2pm; AA - Tues 7.30pm - 8.30pm

PHOENIX CENTRE

- Mood Boosting Mondays 1pm - 2pm - women's group focused on self care, free, no booking required; Cocaine Anon Fri 6pm - 9pm

BALLOCH WALK IN THE PARK

- Wed 10.20am - 11.20am. A free, all ability health walk, led by trained volunteers Contact Fiona on 07843 842323 or email fiona@trustinthepark.org. Meet at 'The Square', opposite The Waterhouse Inn, Balloch

IMPROVING LIVES GROUPS

- Art for Anxiety Tues, 12.30pm - 2.30pm. Men's fishing group Thurs & Sun 9am. Autism Support & Discussion group every 2nd Mon, 3pm - 5pm. Wellbeing Walking group Mon 10am. Jewellery Group Fri 1pm - 3pm.

CENTRE 81 FITNESS CLASSES

- varied classes age 16+ from £3 - check Facebook page or call 0141 5337070 for details

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

EPILEPSY SUPPORT GROUP

- meet 1st Mon of the month 10am - 12noon, Clyde Shopping Centre, Clyde House 170 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank & 3rd Thurs 6.30pm - 7.30pm at Improving Lives, 627 Dumbarton Road, Dalmuir

RECOVERY CAFE & SUPPORT

GROUP - Street Connect in partnership with OKFP weekly Recovery Cafe in Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick on Wed 12 - 2pm

BRAIN INJURY EXPERIENCE

NETWORK - Community based support for Brain Injured people. Outings once a month. Contact John on 07999 441376 or visit BIEN FB: <https://www.facebook.com/BIENetwork/>

COMMUNITY CONNEXIONS

- Alzheimer Scotland groups - Quiz/ Bingo & a cuppa every Tues from 1pm - 3pm; Tea Blether on first Wed of the month from 12 - 1.30pm; Carers Café on last Thurs of the month from 2.30pm - 4pm; Friday Fun Day with a cuppa from 1pm - 3pm.

MOMENTS OF FREEDOM

- New Scots Women's Group - Free fortnightly meetings 12.30pm - 2.30pm in Centre 81, Clydebank. Contact Freya Young freya@otbds.org

INTO NATURE - free wellbeing sessions for adults at Knowetop, (end of Castlehill Road) Dumbarton. Thurs 11am - 3pm. Volunteer Sessions Tues 1pm - 4pm & Thurs 10am - 1pm - help with practical work on site, learn new skills, meet new people & get fitter. Open to anyone, no minimum commitment. For more info contact Claire 07898 593 629 or knowetop@alternativeswd.org

Employability & Advice

CARERS OF WD RISE PROJECT

advice, info and support to unpaid carers living in specific areas. Phoenix Centre, Castlehill - 2nd Tues of the month, 11.30am - 1.30pm; Mill Cabin, Haldane - first Thurs of the month, 10am - 12am; The Recycle Room, Drumry - 2nd Wed of each month, 10.30am - 12.30pm. Contact Clare Sweeney on 0141 941 1550 or clare@carerswd.org

ADULT LITERACY

- Tues 1pm - 3pm in Dalmuir C.E Centre; Thurs 10am - 12noon in WDC office Church street, Dumbarton & Adult Literacy and Computing Wed 10am - 12noon in Alexandria Library. Contact Sharon Campbell on cld@west-dunbarton.gov.uk or 07951 398980

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

- Thurs Dumbarton Library 10am - 12noon. Fri 10am - 12 noon in the Phoenix Centre, contact Eric Makeham on cld@west-dunbarton.gov.uk or 07900052290

Family & Young People

PHOENIX CENTRE

- Baking Buddies Mon 10.30am - 12noon; Mini Youth Group (P1-3) Tues 3.30pm - 4.30pm Youth Club (P4-7) every Thurs 6pm - 7.30pm 50p per child; Baby Massage on Wed 11am - 12noon. Phoenix Fun Toddler Group Thurs 10.30am - 12noon. Empower Youth group for S1+ Weds 4pm - 6pm free. Zumba Class 45+ Thurs 12.15pm £3

BEN VIEW YOUTH GROUPS

P1 - P3 Weds 4pm - 5.30pm; P4 - P6 Weds 6pm - 7.30pm; P7 & S1 Weds 7.45pm - 9.15pm at Ben View Resource Centre, Strathleven Place, Dumbarton, to book email youth@benviewcentre.org.uk or call 01389 733030

TULLOCHAN YOUTH ACTIVITIES

- Mon Employability Programme (16+) 1.30pm - 4pm Tues Timber Transitions (16+) 9am - 12 noon; Furniture Fix Project (14 - 25s) 1pm - 4pm Wed LGBTQ+Action Group (16+) 5pm - 7pm; Thurs Green Skills 12.30pm - 4pm. Free meal or packed lunch provided + travel expenses reimbursed. Contact info@tullochan.org or 07931228462

AWESTRUCK MUSIC SCHOOL

- Wed 4pm - 6pm for P3 - P7 and 7pm - 9pm for S1 - S6, £5 per session. 36 Sylvania Way South, Clydebank

PATCHWORK PONIES

- Pat and chat sessions every Thurs and Sat 2.30pm to 4.30pm at Overtoun House; free for all to enjoy.

WHAT'S ON.... from October

Oct 4 & Nov 1 - Dreamcatcher Making workshop with the Dreamcatcher Lady. Materials provided. Studio 3, Overton Farm, Alexandria (also known as Muirhead Dairy). 12.30pm - 2.30pm. £15 per person, contact dreamcatcherlady1@gmail.com to book

Oct 5 - Amphibians, Reptiles & Pond Dipping workshop. Free, run by WD Outdoor Woodland Learning (OWL), Balloch Country Park 12 - 2pm. Book via Eventbrite

Oct 6 - Elspeth Crocket - 'What Mary did Next' talk for Clydebank Local History Society about young Mary Queen of Scots' time in Dumbarton Castle. Dalmuir Barclay Church 7pm

Oct 11 - Nature's Glow Biofluorescence Night Walk at RSPB Loch Lomond, Gartocharn. Discover a different perspective on nature as it glows in the dark under the light of a UV torch. Walk starts 6.30pm - more info and tickets from events.rspb.org.uk £25 for RSPB members or £31 non-members

Oct 17 - Decal your Dinnerware with Laura Lightbody. Free arts and crafts taster at Clydebank Museum. 1pm - 3pm. Search WDC Creative Learning on Eventbrite or email arts.development@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Oct 18 - Top Dogs at Loch Lomond Shores. A pawsome day out for the whole family. Free entry, 10am - 4pm. Loch Lomond Shores, Balloch

Oct 20 - Iain Wotherspoon, 'Otago Lane - the Architectural Development of Kelvinbridge.' Talk for Clydebank Local History Society in Dalmuir Barclay Church 7pm

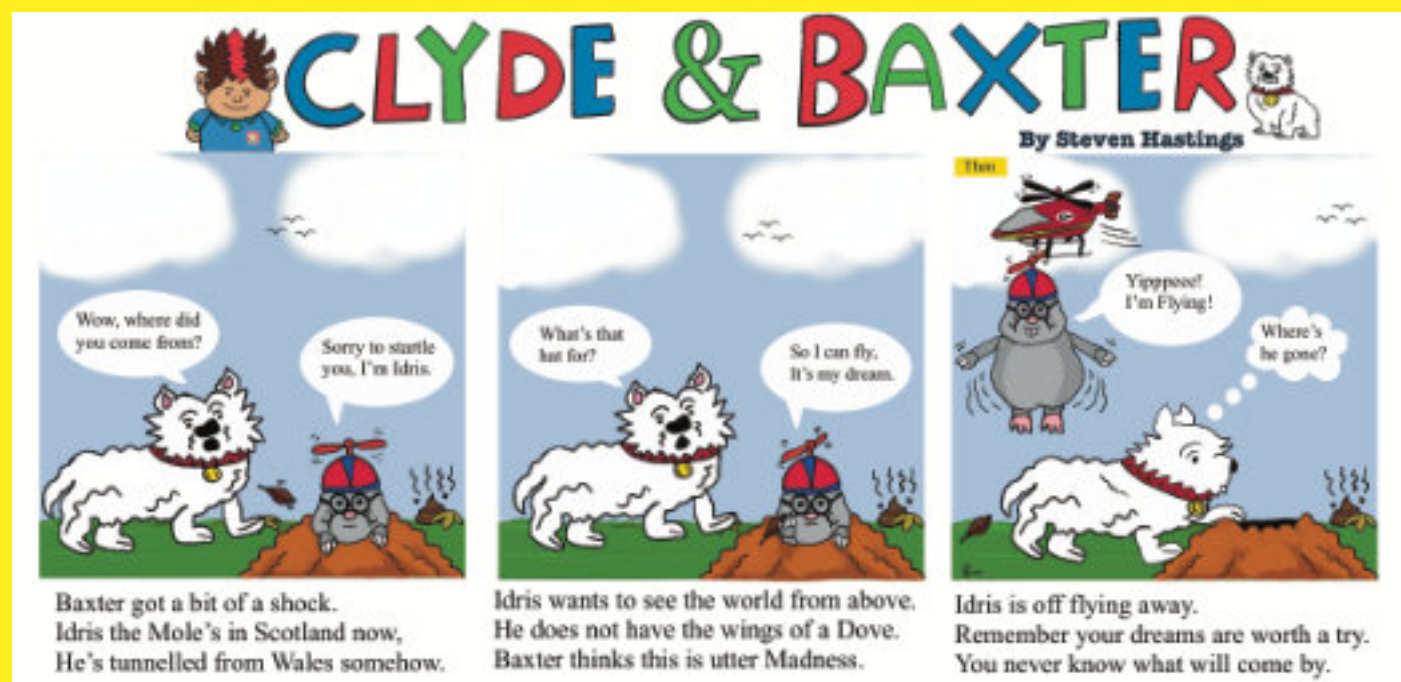
Nov 3 - Suzanne Hall, 'Cousin Jack - he never came back: a Search for a First World War Pilot.' Talk for Clydebank Local History Society in Dalmuir Barclay Church 7pm

Nov 8 - Seaglass jewellery with Laura Murray. Free arts and craft taster at Clydebank Museum. 10am - 12noon. Search WDC Creative Learning on Eventbrite or email arts.development@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Nov 22 - YSortIt Christmas Fayre, Ladyton Community Centre, Bonhill 12noon - 2pm

Nov 22 - Mixed Media workshop with Claire Kennedy. Free arts and crafts taster at Clydebank Museum. 10am - 12.15pm. Search WDC Creative Learning on Eventbrite or contact arts.development@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dec 4 - Balloch Castle Country Park Regeneration Group quarterly Members Meeting. Side room, Balloch House Hotel 7pm. Come along and get an update on their activities. Contact Gillian for details - 07487668604



Time for a Riddle....

The answer is pictured
somewhere on page 43...

My first is in Catch and also Caught
My second's in Teach as well as Taught
My third is in Cares but not in Cared
My fourth is in Stare and also Stared
My fifth is in Sleep as well as Slept
My sixth is in Leap and also Leapt
My whole might be in a fairy tale
In real life it may contain a jail

My name is Thuria Ahmed and I moved to Scotland in February after living as a refugee in Sri Lanka for seven years.

Since arriving, I've experienced many happy moments, but one memory stands out deeply as an artist.

I had never been to an art gallery before visiting the National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh, and I never imagined I would see an original Van Gogh painting in person.

It was one of the happiest and most inspiring moments of my life.

Since then, I've visited many more art galleries, and while each visit feels magical in its own way, nothing will ever compare to that very first experience.



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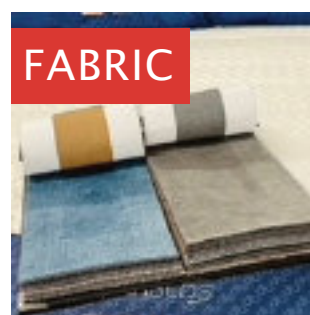
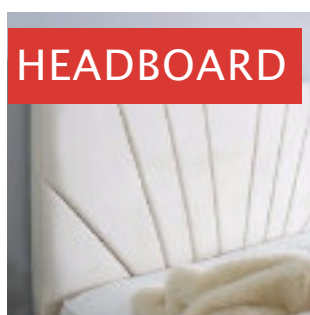
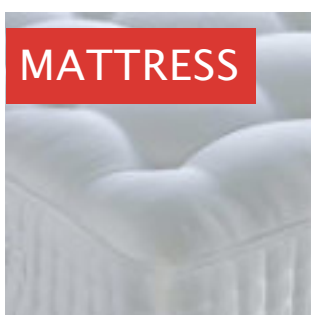
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