

THE BLAIRDRUMMOND GRAPEVINE

ISSUE THREE

WINTER/SPRING 2000

FREE

PARTY-ON AT THE COMMUNITY HALL

You could have been squashed in Princes Street or queuing to get into the Dome. But the smart people celebrated at the Millennium Party at the Blairdrummond Community Hall. **Stuart Burnett** reports on the goings on at the Hall . . .

A great time was had by all in Blairdrummond Hall on the eve of the Millennium. Jimmy and Louise Maxwell did a great job of organising the event and the hall was bursting at the seams. Everyone braved the cold night air to watch the excellent fireworks display which was followed by a delicious buffet organised by all the mums who attended. Afterwards the party got into full swing with Murray Buchanan and his band, the Buckfast Brothers, who wrote their own song to bring in the new year with. After the bells many people boogied until the wee small hours. On behalf of everyone who attended I would like to thank Jimmy and Louise for organising a brilliant night.

Louise Maxwell reports that it seemed to be a great success. It stopped raining at just the right time. The

fireworks were brilliant. Good food, good company and good music. Thanks to the Youth Club for the use of their new music system and to Murray and Christine for making up tapes of music. Finally thanks to everyone who helped with the party and the cleaning of the hall before and after the party.

SCHOOL KITCHENS TO REOPEN

Stirling Council have announced that they are to reopen the kitchens at Blairdrummond Primary after shutting them 2 years ago as part of a cost cutting exercise.

Well done to everyone who campaigned for this to happen.

COMMUNITY HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It's the event of the year, not to mention the Millennium (so far anyway) - the cup final? A royal wedding? No - the Community Hall Annual General Meeting of course!!

Do you have views on the use of the Hall? Ideas for future events? Comments on the Grapevine? Then come along and make your views

known! The Committee would like to hear from you. The AGM will be held in the Community Hall at **8pm on 27 March 2000**. There will be tea and biscuits, there's nothing on TV, so come along - we'd love to see you.

TREASURE HUNT & BARBECUE

Thought that the Millennium Party was good fun? You ain't seen nothing yet! The Hall Committee is starting to organise a community event for May.

The idea is to hold a treasure hunt starting at the Community Hall at 5pm on 20 May 2000 finishing at the Safari Park (there's a big hint for the final clue!!) for a barbecue.

If you're interested in helping with the organisation contact a committee member.

Tickets will be available from committee members from the end of March, probably priced at £5 per adult, £2.50 per child. Bring your own booze. So remember keep Saturday 20 May free and look out for those tickets.

**KINCARDINE-IN-
MENTEITH PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Headteacher **Frances Berry** reports the school had a busy end to last term, with a good number of parents and friends attending the Christmas Nativity Service. The pupils sang and played recorders well despite coughs and colds.

The party was also a great success - all the children received a Millennium mug designed by pupils.

All pupils have contributed to a stitched wall hanging depicting scenes from Blairdrummond to Stirling. Parents and grandparents have commented favourably on this.

As the new term starts the roll has risen to 30.

Senior pupils are busy learning Scottish poetry and tunes in the hopes of gaining a Burns certificate.

The local table tennis tournaments will take place soon. Some senior pupils are taking part in competitions at Bridge of Allan and later this month at Blairgowrie. Best of success to them.

The school will be collecting the Tesco's Computers for Schools vouchers again this year. So don't throw them away - hand any spare vouchers over to Primary School pupils or send them to Catherine Killen, South Kirklane Farm,

Blairdrummond.

BLUE PETER SALE

Well done to Laura and Fraser Graham (West Drip Farm) who along with best friends Danielle and Andrew McLeod (East Coldoch) organised a bring and buy sale to raise money for the Blue Peter New Life Appeal.

The sale was held at West Drip on Sunday 12th December. All their friends from school were invited to bring and buy. There were books, bric a brac, toys, baking, face and nail painting and lots more. Everyone had a fun time especially when the some of the adults had their faces and nails painted. (There is a rumour going around the carse of a farmer spotted loading hay with a nice set of painted nails, not just a rumour!)

Thanks to everyone's support and all the hard work put in by Laura, Fraser, Danielle, Andrew and their team of helpers the amazing sum of £163.02 was sent off to Blue Peter.

**PRIMARY SCHOOL "100"
CLUB**

The winners of the December 100 club draw, as draw by Mrs Berry's P.7 class were 1st Mr A Beattie (£25), 2nd Mrs J Barber-Fleming (£10) and 3rd Mr Wm Aitken (£5).

SPRINGTIME WORDSEARCH

Laura Graham has put together this rather tricky wordsearch. See if you can find the following Spring-related words in the grid?

Easter Snowdrops Daffodils Ploughing Sowing Tulips Eggs
Lambing Calves Good Friday March April Showers

L Y A D I R F D O O G E
A O C A L V E S F L P A
A P R I L S H O W E R S
F G E L F O G E D N N T
G D L F L F O L P O L E
N D A A M W O D W L O R
I L M F C A D D D L L L
H P B L F F R E M O N E
G G I N G O A C L N A F
U N N F P E D C H E M G
O O G S D G Y I D G B S
L P T U L I P S L G I G
P L O W G N I W O S N E

The winners of the January 100 club draw were 1st Mr A Beattie, 2nd Mr & Mrs Gilliland and 3rd Mrs G Drummond. (Ed - Drinks are on Mr Beattie, I think!)

If you're interested in being included in the "100" club, and thereby helping raise money for the school, contact Eleanor Graham, West Drip Farm, by Stirling (472523)

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Unfortunately there is no report from the Community Council this time.

In future issues we hope to get an article from the local councillor. Any questions for the councillor should be forwarded to Dave Simpson.

CHURCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Congregational A.G.M. will take place in the Blairdrummond Community Hall at **7.30pm on Monday 13th March.**

The usual reports will be presented, including the Church Accounts. This year we will also begin discussing two issues raised at the joint meeting in February of the Kirk Sessions of the linked charges of Kincardine-in-Menteith and Gargunock:

1. The times of Sunday services - At the time of the linkage it was agreed that Kincardine-in-Menteith

KINCARDINE-IN-MENTEITH PARISH CHURCH DIARY

Worship - every Sunday at 10am

- 12th March: 1st Sunday in Lent. Service includes the Sacrament of Baptism
- 2nd April: Mothering Sunday
- 9th April: Passion Sunday
- 16th April: Palm Sunday
- 20th April: Joint Maundy Thursday Service, including the Sacrament Of Holy Communion - 7pm, at Kincardine-in-Menteith Church.
- 21st April: Joint Good Friday Service - 7pm, at Gargunock Church.
- 23rd April: Easter Sunday Service for all the Family including an informal celebration of Communion for those who wish to stay after the short family part of the service.
- 7th May: Quarterly Celebration of Holy Communion
- June: Summer Time Worship begins with the shorter 9.30am service at Kincardine-in-Menteith, and the traditional 10.30am service at Gargunock

should move from 10.30 to 10am - which seems to have worked quite well; and Gargunock move from 11 to 11.30am - which has not worked so well. The Kirk Sessions are considering the options: (a) leave the times as they are, (b) alternate every 6 months or every year so each congregation has a turn at being early / late, (c) change the times to 9.30am (all the year round, not just in summer) and 11am. No quick decision will be made - There will be a thorough discussion with your help.

2. How can we better build up links between the two congregations - the occasional shared service, visits to each other's churches, social occasions?

What do you think? Come to the A.G.M. and share in the discussion or speak to your Elder or the Minister.

All members, Adherents and those with an interest in the good of the congregation are welcome at the A.G.M. and the usual tea and goodies and fellowship will be shared.

A BOOK FOR THE MILLENNIUM

George Bell, travel agent, author and publisher has lived for many years on the Blairdrummond Estates. Founder of the travel agency chain known as Bell Travel, the first outlet opened in 1969 in Bridge of Allan. This was the first of numerous offices throughout the North and East of Scotland

and the North of England. During the 20 years that George was Managing Director of the Company, ably assisted by his wife, June, and son, Kevin, Bell Travel grew to 17 offices and 85 staff members.

Ten years ago, when George relinquished his shareholding to new owners, he and his business partner, Susan Harris, launched the *Scottish Travel Agents News*, the weekly magazine which still regularly services the whole of the Scottish Travel Trade from its offices in Bridge of Allan.

What George's staff, business associates, friends and neighbours did not know was that in every available moment of his spare time he studied philosophy, psychology, religions and the paranormal, as well as keeping up to date with scientific developments, especially in the fields of physics, cosmology, medicine and archaeology. The result of all this research is a book called *Why Are We Here?* which George has written and has recently been published for the new Millennium.

The fascinating theories put forward in this book go a long way to present the reader with new and logical explanations for the meaning of our existence. It covers the span of billions of years from before the birth of the universe to the emergence and development of mankind.

THE STORY OF THE CARSE

In the first of a series of articles local historian, **Dr Ken Mackay**, plots the history of the Blairdrummond area

The Carse of Forth extends westwards from Stirling almost to Gartmore, about 15 miles long and on average miles broad. A thousand or so years ago, the Carse was a continuous swamp, a peat bog, with a general level around 50 -75 feet or less above the sea. It was a barrier to communication, crossed only by a handful of tracks radiating from two or three fords. In Gaelic, it was called *A Moine Fhlanrasach*, the latter being an ancient pre-Celtic name of uncertain significance, but clearly the origin of the modern version - *Flanders Moss*. (Two hundred years ago it was always written *Moss Flanders*.)

Why did the peat bog develop in the first place? And how did the Carse reach its present state of agricultural development? The first question will be tackled in this first article. The tale of the second question will be told in succeeding articles.

Let's go back 20,000 years - to the later stages of the last Ice Age. An ice-cap covered the Scottish Highlands perhaps to a depth of 1 kilometre. The Forth Valley was occupied by a glacier which stretched from Ben Lomond to beyond Cardross. Under the immense weight of the ice-cap, the land surface was depressed by around 50 to 100 feet, so that the glacier snout probably calved icebergs into the tidal arm of the sea which extended west from the 'gateway' islands which we now call Abbey Craig, Castle Rock and Craigforth. The evidence for this stage is two-fold; the alluvial clay or silt which underlies the peat, and the *terminal moraine* (the irregular line of hillocks) left by the glacier between Arnprior and Port of Menteith.

Warmer and drier conditions appear to have put paid to the last of the ice around ten thousand years ago. The sea still occupied the Carse area, but with the departure of the ice-cap, the general land-level started to rise. Mud-flats were exposed at low tide, and these would tend to be colonised by salt-tolerant plants, then by reeds, willows and alders, and later still - as soils built up and dried out - by grasses, heathers, hazels and birches.

Shortly before the beginning of the present era, the weather pattern seems to have become much wetter, to such an extent that the drainage on the level carse couldn't cope. The saturated soil supported the growth of mosses which flourished in the nutrient-poor rainwater. As the moss-cover increased, a layer of peat was formed - at a rate estimated at 1mm/year. Being highly water-absorbent, the mosses tended to lead to the death of the trees, which in time were blown over by winter gales, and so became preserved within the developing peat-layer. In a matter of 2000 years, the peat reached a depth of over 6 feet. In places it was relatively firm and supported hummocks of heather, separated by hollows where water would collect, populated by floating mosses. In other parts, the dreaded *flow mosses*, the consistency would be reminiscent of porridge, and these would become notorious as 'bottomless mires'.

The Carse of Stirling had reached the status of *raised bog*, the condition so much valued today by naturalists, though a challenge both to agriculture and communication.....and an opportunity for developers, as we shall soon see!

Is it all chance? Is there a purpose? What is God in scientific terms? These are a few of the many questions addressed in this book which is a must for all inquiring minds.

Why Are We Here? costs £6.99 and is available from most good bookshops, or direct from the publishers on 01786 834238

BLAIRDRUMMOND YOUTH CLUB

Louise Maxwell reports on the happening at the Youth Club...

The Youth Club received a grant of £1,650 from the Lotteries Charities Board at the beginning of December, reports Youth Club Leader, **Louise Maxwell**. Murray Buchanan kindly offered to take a few YC members to Edinburgh and help select a music system. Anyone who attended the Millennium Party in the Community Hall will agree it sounds fantastic!

The Youth Club has also bought a table football game. Any parents who fancy a game are welcome to come along and try it! Some board games and CDs are next on the list.

The Gruff Kids Project at the graveyard is now nearing completion. Special thanks to Hugh Cullens for hedging.

The building of new pillars is now completed.

JOB VACANCY! YOUTH CLUB LEADER & TREASURER REQUIRED

Louise has been Youth Club Leader for more years than she cares to remember and has thoroughly enjoyed it. However she feels she would like to "retire". However there is a need for volunteers to continue the running of the club. The job can be shared by several people.

Youth Club Leader (s) can be very rewarding and is essential if the club is to continue. So any of you parents or responsible adults (as opposed to those irresponsible ones!) who want to get involved in what must be an important part of a rural community. The more people volunteering - the more fun and the less work involved!

Louise is willing to continue to help the new leaders settle in. Contact Louise for more details on 841352.

MINI HIGHLAND GAMES

The mini highland games organised by the Youth Club Association will be coming to Stirling in June. They will possibly be held at Stirling County Rugby Club. Youth Clubs from across Central Scotland will be entering teams. Anyone of high school age who is interested

in taking part come along to the Youth Club - 7pm to 9pm on Tuesday evenings at the Community Hall.

MILLENNIUM PLAQUE

The Hall Committee is co-ordinating the submission for funds to erect a plaque commemorating the Millennium. The idea, as regular Grapevine readers will know, is to have a plaque showing the names of all residents in Blairdrummond as at the turn of the Millennium (we'll quick step past any discussion as to whether 1 Jan 2000 or 2001 is the start of the new Millennium!!).

Attached to this Grapevine is a form which you should complete and return to any committee member or send to Joanne Inglis, Briarlands Farm, Blairdrummond as soon as possible - in fact **DO IT NOW** so you don't forget!

HOWLERS FROM CHURCH BULLETINS

Thanks to **Isobel MacAlpine** who sent in the following unintended (we assume!) extracts from various church publications:

1. Don't let worry kill you ... let the church help
2. Thursday night - Pot luck supper - Prayer and medication to follow
3. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community

4. At the evening service the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.
5. During the absence of our pastor we had the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when A B Doe supplied the pulpit
6. The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind - they can be seen in the church basement on Saturday
7. This being Easter Sunday we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the alter
8. Today - Christian Youth Fellowship House Sexuality Course - 8pm. Please park in the rear parking lot for this activity.

More howlers please!

CURRENT LEAGUE TABLE					
	Played	Won	Lost	Pts Diff	Pts
J Inglis , H Sloan, M Robson, I Brisbane, S Phillips, S Walker	5	4	1	+21	8
R Duff , F Trott, M-A Donaldson, I Scott, C Fergusson, S Ritchie, D Simpson	5	3	2	+11	6
B MacAlpine , Mk Sherriff, B Howie, P Hendry, U Muirhead, V Duncan	5	3	2	-7	6
A Brisbane , S Bryce, R Black, G Cordner, J Brisbane, A Christie	5	2	3	+6	4
H Watson , J Sands, M Phillips, A Younie, Mg Sherriff, I Watt	5	2	3	-22	4
J Cuthbertson , G Murdoch, F Welstead, N McFarlane, A Galloway, F Gauld, I Stanley	5	1	4	-9	2

The **Community Hall Committee**:

Richard Muir, James Maxwell (841352), Joanne Inglis (841309), John Inglis (841309), Robert Muir, Maggie Sherriff (841236), Linda McKinstrey (841728), Eillen Smith (841821), Jon Darby (841679), Lesley MacKenzie (470894), May Killen (860280), Dave Simpson (471455), Hugh Cullens (841025), Catherine Killen (860246)

Articles for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to Joanne Inglis, Briarlands Farm, Blairdrummond or Dave Simpson, No. 2 Cottage, West Drip Farm. Alternatively phone Joanne or Dave or email Dave on Dave@westdrip.freereserve.co.uk

**BLAIRDRUMMOND
CURLING CLUB**

The season is now over halfway through and there has been some very good curling on view reports club secretary **Isabel Sands**. At this stage John Inglis and his team top the league table but still plenty of time to go yet!

The Pairs semi-finals and final gave us some great curling but there had to be winners - John Sands and Alan Brisbane beating Scott Ritchie and Ian Brisbane.

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER
... will be in the summer (a traditionally vague timescale!). We welcome any articles opinions, event notifications, etc from budding reporters or columnists, young or not so young. Don't worry about typing - we'll do it if you can't. Articles to Dave Simpson (tel 471455 or email dave@westdnip.freemove.co.uk) Joanne Inglis (tel. 841309) or anyone on the Hall Committee. Deadline for the next edition is **20 April 2000**.