

THE BLAIRDRUMMOND GRAPEVINE

ISSUE FOUR

SUMMER 2000

FREE

MILLENNIUM PLAQUE

There has been a good response to the millennium plaque. Many residents have returned their form with their details. **If you haven't returned your form please do so as soon as possible.** Details can be given to any member of the Hall Committee or sent direct to Joanne Inglis at Briarlands Farm, Blairdrummond or send an email to Joanne on briarlands@btclick.com

Failure to return your form will result in your name not being on the plaque . . . which would be a great shame.

COMMUNITY HALL REFURBISHMENT

There has been some discussion over the possible refurbishment of the community hall. There is the possibility of getting a grant from Stirling Council for part of the work. But the question is what do we want doing?

There are a number of maintenance jobs required, but the hall committee would be interested in what the community would like to see developed. **What improvements would you want to the community hall?**

Suggestions have included refurbishing the toilets, better insulation for the roof/walls, extending the size, etc. The real question is what do we want to use the hall for? Do we want more ceilidh-type events like at new year? Concerts? Informal get-togethers?

In the next Grapevine we may canvas peoples views but in the meantime if you have any ideas please contact a committee member. Also if you have any skills that may be of help - an architect will be required for the grant application - then please get in touch.

MILLENNIUM HIGHLAND GAMES

On Sunday 4th June the youth club took part in the Millennium Highland Games for Central Region Youth Clubs.

Tug Of War - the senior tug of war team did Blair Drummond proud by finishing 1st. Team members were Chris McLeod, Kris Fotheringham, Andrew Drummond, Graham Gilliland, Jennifer Moben (Deanpark Y.C.) and Gemma Rose (Deanpark Y.C.).

The junior tug of war team were Scott and Ross Drummond, Laura and Fraser Graham, Danielle and Andrew McLeod and Stuart Watt came in 2nd place cheered on by trainers Louise Maxwell and Lesley Gentles.

Athletics - Andrew Darby gave a fine display on the athletics course receiving a medal for all his hard work.

Football - senior team Chris, Kris, Andrew (Drummond), Graham and Scott did well in this event winning 3 games out of 4 to finish 2nd. Junior team Scott, Andrew (Darby), Ross and 2 Crainlarch Y.C. members finished 3rd. Well done boys. George McLeod and Bob Fortheringham stood in for Louise and Lesley to play Dunblane in the over 14's playing very well and keeping the St Andrews first aider in a job. Unfortunately youth was on the other side and they were no match for the Dunblane team.

A big thanks to Louise and Lesley, to all the children who took part and to the parents who came to cheer the children on.

ANDREW WINS THE DAY

To celebrate his 7th birthday Andrew McLeod (East

Coldoch) invited his friends to a party at Hollywood Bowls in Stirling during the Easter hols. Andrew came out tops with a score of 108 to win the day. This however was not enough to secure a victory for his team. The winning team were Danielle, Laura, Stuart, Craig and Callum closely followed by runners up Andrew, Chris, Fraser, James and Rauraidh.

CARSE WOMEN GET ORGANISED . . . WELL NEARLY!

Rumours are abound about the as yet unnamed (Ed: suggestions on a postcard!) Carse Women's Group that has been formed in the area.

The group meet a some point during the last week of every month in the community hall, and is aimed at giving women a chance to catch up with each other. Each month a different activity will be planned, last month wine tasting, this month is a *Body Shop* party, next is interior design, we also hope to have a night out in the town, try armotherapy, and possible a garden theme night.

At present the group is not highly organised (perhaps the best way!) planning one month ahead and doing a flyer drop to anyone interested.

So if anyone is interested in coming along and would like more details could they give

Katie Brisbane on 860209 a phone.

FOR ANYONE WHO HAS EVER SERVED ON A COMMITTEE

Thanks to **Isobel MacAlpine** who sent in this little story about four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**.

There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it.

Somebody got angry about that, because it was **Everybody's** job.

Everybody thought that **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realised that **Everybody** wouldn't do it.

It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done.

Sound familiar?

GYMNASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Andrew Darby (9) of Hillview Cottage at the top of Kirk Lane has been notching up a few victories in gymnastic circles recently.

At the Scottish NDP Competition in the purpose built stadium on the outskirts of Cumbernauld, Andrew won individual gold in

his age group, and a team silver. He has subsequently won an individual gold and silver at regional competitions. Andrew trains with the national coach three times a week at the Alloa Gymnastics Club in the Spiers Centre. Well done Andrew...keep up the good work!

YOUTH CLUB

The Youth Club had a good night at the Ten Pin Bowling. David Fotheringham gave everyone a Baseball cap and provided a cup for the best player. This will be played for on a yearly basis.

As Louise Maxwell gets word of forthcoming Sports or Art workshops to do with this event she will contact club members. If anyone else is interested get in touch with Louise as soon as possible

There will be a visit to Tunnocks biscuit factory on 27th June 2000. The minibus will be at Blairdrummond hall at 5.00pm and leaves 5.15pm **prompt**. Return at approx 9pm. **Cost is £2.00 per person Payable by 4th June to Louise.**

The Youth Club's new treasurer is Tom Gilliland. The club still needs volunteers to becomes Youth Club Leaders - if no volunteers come forward then the club may not be able to continue. Anyone

interested should contact Louise Maxwell on 841352.

THE PRINCESS ROYAL TRUST FOR CARERS

What exactly is a carer?
Carers are ordinary people

like you and me who look after relatives or friends who, because of disability, illness or old age, cannot manage without help. Carers can be adults and young people under 18. We have around 10,000 carers in the

Stirling Area.

Are you a Carer? Is someone you know a Carer?
We can help you access the support services which are available to you. In the UK, 60% of carers receive no

THE STORY OF THE CARSE (part 2) by Dr Ken Mackay

In our introduction, we set the scene geologically. Now it is time to bring on the actors. But we are still centuries, if not millennia, from the era of written records. Deductions have been made from studies of soils, plants and archaeological evidence, a continuing process. So the experts may have to revise their accounts as new discoveries are made.

When the last traces of the Ice Ages disappeared from the Forth Valley, vegetation spread on to the soils exposed; not suddenly, since winters would still be bitter. Hardy species such as mosses, dwarf willow, alder, hazel and scrub birch would be the first to colonise the gravelly soils, followed by native conifers such as juniper and Scots pine. As vegetation spread and diversified, animal and bird life would begin to take advantage of the extended habitat, and grazers such as primitive wild sheep, goats, deer and oxen would make seasonal migrations into the area, attracting predators and scavengers like wolves, bears and birds of prey.

The disappearance, some 12,000 years ago, of the thick ice-cover led to a rise in the level of the land, but not all at once. The Forth valley was submerged for 5000 years or more, first as an arm of the sea, then as tidal mud-flats. We know this because whale carcasses have been exposed during agricultural and other developments throughout the Carse; 18 in total above Grangemouth, and 5 of these in the stretch west of Blairdrummond - at West Carse, Meiklewood, Burnbank Lane, Ballinton and Cardross. Traces of human activity - antler-tools for butchering the stranded whales - were found beside the Meiklewood and Burnbank Lane strandings. These mesolithic hunters are thought to have been summer visitors, perhaps exploring the coastal reaches in dug-out canoes. Extensive shell-middens of the same era, near Grangemouth and Alloa, suggest centuries of such periodic visitations, possibly by isolated family groups.

If the Stone Age (c.4000 - 2000BC) brought few permanent settlers, the subsequent Bronze Age (c.2000 - 500BC) saw the growth of an established population, whose main legacy is the ritual and funerary sites of which this area has a generous share. Standing stones like the one on Boreland Hill are difficult to date precisely, but are generally attributed to the Bronze Age period. A Bronze Age burial cairn near the caravan park was excavated fully in 1920. It was 25m in diameter, and 3.3m high, and contained a stone-slab coffin or cist, covered by an inner cairn of stones. In the outer earth casing was another cist burial, and above the central cist was an inverted urn containing cremated bones; the rim of the urn had an impressed cord-pattern. Another smaller cairn near the Mill of Torr was explored in the 19th century; it contained urn fragments and pieces of calcified human bone. Still more Bronze Age cist burials and urn-cremations have been turning up in the sand-and-gravel quarry (now a lake) between Blairdrummond and Doune, from 1824 right up to 1990, qualifying the site's description as a 'cist cemetery'.

The Iron Age (c.500BC - 300AD) saw a continuing rise in the numbers of inhabitants, now well-practiced in arable and animal husbandry. Traces of timber or wattle-and-daub dwellings can be detected by 'crop-marks' visible from the air during prolonged dry spells. Four examples at least have been identified near East Coldoch and Mill of Torr. Territorial disputes, or perhaps just a need for protection from wild animal attacks, led to stronger defences, ranging from ditches and palisades, to stone structures such as the broch at Coldoch. Though brochs are more associated with Caithness, the Hebrides and the Northern Isles, the Coldoch example is a true broch, with 5.5m walls around a living space 8m in diameter. With its entry passage facing east, it possesses the characteristic stairway and three mural chambers; its walls are reduced to 2.4m high at most, but originally might have been 10 metres high.

The Roman must have known the area, since they established a temporary camp at Craigarnhall on the north side of the Teith above Ochertyre, and would have had to ford the Teith, possibly at 'Broadford'. An intriguing find during the moss clearance period may have had Roman origins - a 70m stretch of a 'corduroy road' or timber trackway, near the south end of the surviving portion of Ochertyre Moss. It was 3.6m wide, and had 3 layers - a bottom layer of tree-trunks, lesser branches above that, and a top layer of brushwood; a practical means of permitting military movement over the treacherous marshes of the Great Moss of Kincardine.

regular support services at all.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers offers a free, impartial and confidential service of information and advice on a wide range of subjects including respite care, welfare benefits, community care and support groups and can provide contact with other Carers, through drop-in sessions, social events and other activities. The Centre is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.

Contact The Princess Royal Trust Stirling Carers Centre at The Norman MacEwan Centre, 41 Cameronian Street, Stirling FK8 2DX. Tel/fax: 01786 447003 or email: centre@stirling.carers.net
Do you look after someone who has suffered a head injury? The Head Injuries

Trust for Scotland will have a representative available at The Princess Royal Trust Stirling Carers Centre on the first Wednesday of each month between 11am and 12noon. For more information contact Stirling Carers Centre - see details above.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Local representative Jimmy Maxwell reports the following items discussed at the recent meeting.

A planning application for new house to be build in Somers Lane, Blairdrummond was turned down for various reasons.

An application to renovate Blairdrummond Cottages was approved subject to conditions imposed by Historic Scotland.

FUNDRAISING FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The school has just taken delivery of a new computer. This is the second computer which has been funded by the school board recently.

Fund raising is always ongoing and the next event is a home produce/baking stall at Cuthil Brae Caravan Park on Sunday 28th May from 11am. Donations of home produce will be most welcome and can be handed to any board member or parent.

OLD MANSE MYSTERIES

When **Maggie & Mark Sherriff** arrived at the Old Manse in 1961 and were attempting to tame an unruly garden, they dug up a large rectangular stone which was attached to an old fruit cage standard. It was engaged with the initials **WC/FW** and dated **1767**. Maggie's father suggested it was possibly a marriage stone. The minister at Kincardine-in-Menteith Church in 1769 was Samuel Charters - might his initials have been **WC** and those of his wife **FW**? Did he bring his marriage stone with him to the original Manse next to the present Graveyard? Was it then taken to the site of the new Manse, which was built in 1821, when the old Manse was pulled down? The Stone is safely reburied in the



**Computers Built to Order/Upgraded
Advice/Help at Reasonable Rates
Hillview Cottage
Kirk Lane
01786-842473
info@comp-u-build.co.uk**

garden but any ideas as to its history would be very welcome.

Another find in the gravel at the front of the house was a battered, pretty old brooch with three small crescents set with semi-precious stones. How sad its owner must have been to have lost it - was it at a christening party, a wedding or another family occasion- all of which could have taken place at the Manse. Can anyone remember their mother, auntie, or grannie losing such a brooch?

Maggie & Mark also found, tacked to the back of an outhouse door, a faded and slightly torn card entitled "A sixteenth century prayer for a blessing on the garden" which reads:

*The holy sprite of God which
has created all things
For man and has given them
for our comfort and joy
Name O Lord we set, plant
and graze, desiring
Thy mighty power, they may
encrease and multiplye
. in bearing plentie
of fruite to the
Profite and comfort of all
thy faithfull people
Through Christe our Lord.
Amen*

This came from a book of prayers (1572) by Leonard Mascall who was clerk of the kitchen to Archbishop Parker in Queen Elizabeth's reign. His house, Plumpton Place, is still standing, also the moat into which he is

said to have put the first carp brought to England.

HOME HELP WANTED

Just general cleaning tasks, etc - Interested? contact Arlene Brisbane (tel 443479)

SILENT AUCTION

Well done to the school board at Kincardine In Menteith Primary who raised £305.66 by holding a silent auction in the hall on Saturday 29th April.

Thank you to all who supported the event. Special thanks to Catherine Killen who took the left overs to the car boot sale on Sunday and raised yet more money.

KINCARDINE-IN- MENTEITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Frances Berry reports on the recent school news.

The school have, to date, collected approximately 3000 Tesco "Computers for Schools" vouchers. The school would like to thank all members of the community who have sent in vouchers and it is hoped to use the vouchers to update the software being used. The school would also like to thank the parent's fund raising group for the computer purchased by them.

As reported in the last Grapevine and the Stirling

Observer (but a scoop for the Grapevine!!) the school kitchen has re-opened and pupils are now enjoying meals cooked on the premises. The school welcomes Mrs Stevenson to the staff.

P.1-3 pupils visited Tesco store at Dunblane as part of a project on food. They enjoyed seeing the stores, freezers and the making of bread. They are now all experts in "healthy eating".

Senior pupils are having swimming lessons once a week as usual this term. Mr Bond is giving cricket coaching to P.5-7. Let's hope for success at the cricket tournament. Last term the school team was runners-up at the Table Tennis tournament.

Next the Council will be presenting all children a Millennium Medal.

The school has been given a chestnut tree - from Tilhill Forestry. The tree will be planted at the back of the school at a tree planting ceremony. Any V.I.P.'s out in the community - please offer your services!

Schoolchildren are having a concert in the Community Hall on Tuesday 20th June. Please come along and be entertained. More details from Frances Berry.

School trips and sports events for the summer have yet to be organised but its

sure to be another busy term.

PRIMARY SCHOOL "100" CLUB

The winners of the February 100 club draw, as draw by Mrs Berry's P.7 class were 1st Mrs I Shaw (£25), 2nd Mrs C Killen (£10) and 3rd Mr E O'Donnell (£5)

If you're interested in being included in the "100" club, and thereby helping raise money for the school, contact Mhairi Osborne (860625)

JIMMY REID

Jimmy Reid (right) lived for many years in Gargunnoch and worked for Stirling Council as local roadman. A weel-kent character he spent some of his early years working in Blairdrummond at Briarlands Farm where he developed a love for the area as ca be seen from this poem.

Blairdrummond a' sae fancy aye,
Roam round your woods sae bonny,
Your mossy banks and bosky haws,
Where happy days I'd mony.

Had I the power o' life and death,
I ca', I die when summon'd,
I'd set again to this fair spot,
Tae the old Laird of Blair
Drummond.

Frae Brig'o' Teith tae Ochtertyre,
By the ruined Mill o' Torr,
I followed up the river brim,
I hear the Mill Dam roar.

The Kennel Wood and Sandy Hill,
Set spots for lovers' roaming,
The distant hill reflects the licht,
On some sweet summer's gloaming.



On winter nights I hear the hootch,
O'er horse and cattle pool,
The water kelties eerie laugh,
When auld wife's talk on dole.

The hoolets in the Loch Hill woods,
Complain of eldrich screaming,
And bogles seen at Witches Tree.
But maybe here I'm dreaming

Your fame was aince a household
word,
Weel kent in sang and story,
Now it's but an empty husk,
Yet but reflecting glory.

The men wha's shrined ye in their
hearts,
Sleep sound in auld Menteith,
Beyond the shadows o' the woods,
Blair Drummond on the Teith.

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

... will be in the autumn - so if you have events planned for the dark winter nights, let us know the dates. Any articles on any subject welcome. Don't worry about typing - we'll do it if you can't. Articles to Dave Simpson (tel 471455 or email dave@westdrip.freeserve.co.uk) Joanne Inglis (tel. 841309) or anyone on the Hall Committee. Deadline for the next edition is **30 August 2000.**