

Issue 15

The Grapevine

February 2015

Blair Drummond Grapevine gratefully acknowledges United Auctions generosity in printing this and previous editions of this newsletter.



Billy Connolly with the Fotheringham Family

DOWN OUR WAY

(An occasional series of interviews with local people)

‘What we did on our holiday’...

It's something we often tell folks about but in this case it has a different significance because we're talking about the recent film, part of which was shot at the Fotheringham family farm, Robertson Lane, Blair Drummond and other local locations!

Joan, David and Lorna Fotheringham kindly provided us with an insight into the filming, which included some favourite stars, alongside some new, young and talented faces!

Q: How did you get involved?

A: The film's Location Manager was at the Safari Park, discussing the inclusion of the Safari Park's ostriches in the film story line and she asked if there was an 'old fashioned' barn anywhere nearby that could be used in part of the film. Garry Gilmour suggested 3 different farms and after visiting them, our farm was chosen.

We got a phone call from the Location Manager asking for our agreement and then visits from the 2 Directors, who decided different aspects and also checked out when they would begin to prepare for filming. From then on it was all go!

Q: When and how long were they at your farm?

A: They came in July 2013. We had to prepare for the film crew by moving away anything they did not want included in the film shots. Then 3 weeks beforehand 40 film crew came along to prepare the location. And a week before electricians came to 'dress' the set. We also had to move our cows away to another field, because they were 'too noisy'! All that for a day's filming!

Q: What did the day involve for you?

A: We were providing tea throughout the day for the crew and cast, though there was a huge mobile canteen for food too.

Billy Connolly was very sociable, he came into the house and had his breakfast with us and chatted away, just as relaxed and natural as always! He spent a lot of the time between shots sitting in the sun enjoying a blether with everyone around (and he never swore once!). The 3 young child actors were all really nice kids and played during the day with our family but Annette Crosby preferred to spend her time alone (David Tennant and Rosamund Pike weren't there at the filming on our farm, because they were not in that scene).

And, when it came to actual filming, we had to stay and watch from the farmhouse. Each time the Director was ready to film he asked for silence but still no filming began until he dropped a feather to the ground! It was strange but it worked! He then checked the film taken on a monitor and decided if a retake was needed.

Mrs Joan Fotheringham with Billy



Q: Having now seen the filming was there an aspect in it that you didn't expect?

A: What happens to Billy in the film story line, we didn't expect that! And how boring it is between takes, the actors have to spend ages waiting around 'til it's time for actual filming!!

Q: Have you seen the film?

A: Oh yes, several times. The first being when the whole family were invited to the Scottish premiere at the Film Theatre in Glasgow in July 2014, that was a great day! And we really enjoyed the film!!

Q: And reflecting on the whole experience what are your memories?

A: We all had to sign a Confidentiality document prior to the filming!

How interesting it is that they film things out of sequence.

How many takes there were 'til the Director was satisfied was unexpected.

The children improvised most of their lines, as the Director only provided them with an outline of what he was

looking for and then they did their bit, that was amazing, especially considering that the youngest girl had never been in a film before! There was a funny thing that happened that day - the crew had to have a (blown) ostrich egg ready for the filming, as in the script the youngest child has to handle the egg. But she kept dropping them! Just as well they had 5 of them!!

How nice Billy Connolly is, he is a star on screen and off as far as we're concerned!

What a great experience it was. But it was a very long day!!

PS *The film is now available in DVD format.*

HRH Princess Royal attends UA's 150th Bull Sales



United Auctions was delighted to welcome HRH Princess Royal to the Stirling Bull Sales on Monday 2 February 2015 to mark the 150th anniversary of the prestigious event.

Princess Anne attended in her role as patron of the Beef Shorthorn cattle society and it is the first time a royal has visited the Bull Sales at Stirling.

During her two-hour visit, she watched the Angus female sale, viewed the show of Beef Shorthorn cattle, visited the pens and was clearly delighted to meet breed officials and Shorthorn enthusiasts before presenting the City of Perth Perpetual Trophy for the Supreme Champion Beef Shorthorn bull from Charles Lowther, Penrith.

David Leggat, Executive Chairman at UA, said: "It was an honour to welcome Princess Anne to Stirling to mark 150 years of the Bull Sales and we're absolutely thrilled that we were able to celebrate this special occasion with our staff and customers."

Visitors were also treated to television royalty on Tuesday 3 February when BBC Countryfile Presenter Adam Henson visited the Stirling Agricultural Centre to view the show and sales after launching the salmon season on the Teith the previous day.

The second week of the February Sales continue next week.

A potted history of the Bull Sales

Macdonald and McCallum conducted the original sales of bulls in 1865. J M Fraser became a partner in 1871, and Macdonald Fraser was formed. He was widely recognised as the pioneer of the Sales and did much to develop it into an international event.

In the early sales, the numbers forward were small and it wasn't until 1872 when numbers had increased significantly – and now included Aberdeen Angus – that they warranted a separate sale day from the normal Friday market. Held on a Wednesday in mid-March, 75 shorthorns sold for a total of £1,964.

1875 saw the company move to larger premises at Caledonian Road and

a sale on March 12th 1879 attracted the largest number of buyers including, for the first time, several from overseas. In the following years buyers from Canada, the US, Australia, Argentina, New Zealand and South Africa attended the sales.

By 1892 the two breeds had separate sale dates: 286 Angus were sold on February 24th while 242 Shorthorns sold on March 2nd. The Bull Sales became multi-breed affairs in the late '60s and early '70s with the rise of continental breeds of cattle.

The event moved from Perth's Caledonian Road to the Perth Agricultural Centre in 1990 and in 2009 it moved to the Stirling Agricultural Centre where it remains one of the major events in the UK's Beef Cattle calendar.

At the February Bull Sales, no less than 1150 pedigree bulls and females will be on show and sale. The first part of the event was held on February 2nd and 3rd and will continue on February 16th and 17th at the Stirling Agricultural Centre. They are sponsored by Bank of Scotland.

Blair Drummond Community Hall Burns Supper



On Friday 30th January 90 people gathered in the Hall for our Burns Supper. It was a great night!

We were met by piper David Fisher, who also piped in the haggis, which was addressed in the usual tradition by Eric Abell (see below). The Gargunnoch Inn provided our excellent meal.

Then it was time for the speeches. The Immortal Memory came from Rev. Alex Shuttleworth, who gave us a very interesting and entertaining insight into the life of Burns. The Toast to the Lassies was from Craig McCallum and the Reply from Christa Dunn. Tam o'Shanter was recited by Duncan McColl and the Chairman for the evening was Maitland Clark, who kept the night running without any hitches. This all made for a most enjoyable evening for everyone.

T Gilliland. Chairman.



Blair Drummond Curling Club

The club is now almost halfway through the season after a slow start due to problems at the Peak.

As at mid January, Blair Drummond Club is sitting third in the Scottish Central Province League.

The Opening Bonspiel, postponed until the end of January, was won by Jenny Holl's rink, with Sam Burton's rink runner-up. A successful Burns Supper followed the Bonspiel.

The 2015 Scottish Curling Junior Championships took place at Curl Aberdeen and saw Team Moat, which included Blair Drummond Club member Derrick Sloan being crowned Junior Men's Champions.

In the next edition of the Grapevine the Club will provide a round up of the 2014/2015 season.

If you would like to try this great sport, please contact **Fred Bauer on 07500 354 004.**



The 3F Group (Friends, faith and fun)

The Group is going from strength to strength, with an average of 20 'girls' coming along to Blair Drummond Hall on the second Monday evening of the month at 7.30pm. After a highly creative Christmas meeting, when everyone went home with a colourful floral decoration for the festive table, January saw us in deep discussion of all sorts of topical issues. The behaviour of footballers, the events around Charlie Hebdo and the fictional life of an elderly Uncle Albert, all got folks' tongues wagging on the best thing to do in a situation. Fortunately we were guided by Rev Andy, who encouraged, challenged or prompted a conscience or two ! A warm invitation to our next meeting on Monday 9 February when we welcome Joyce Watson of the Stirling Embroiderers' Guild, who will speak about the Guild and also patchwork. In March we again meet on Monday 9th, when we'll break into small groups to try out Reflexology, hand massage, Indian head-massage and back massage. We're nothing if not adventurous! Do come along, a cuppa and biscuits are included. If you'd like further info, contact **Fiona Campbell Tel 860678.**

Camphill Blair Drummond

Camphill's Got Talent – 16 Feb – 25 Feb

Camphill Blair Drummond (CBD) is holding its annual Talent Auction between 16 February & 25 February. Auction lots include items made within the community workshops and talents donated by family & friends. Please visit our website www.camphillblairdrummond.org.uk to view our auction catalogue and details of how to bid.

Beaded Woven Cuffs & Bracelet Workshop

Come and spend a day in the relaxing environment of CBD and learn how to make these beaded woven bracelets. You don't need to be an experienced beader or weaver, as long as you can sew a simple straight stitch you can make these. The course is run by Alison Delaney, who is a member of The British Tapestry Group, The Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers and The Embroiderers' Guild.

The workshop fee is **£40** for the day and includes materials to make one of the cuffs shown below, complete with leather strap. Extra materials will be available for purchase.

The workshop is on **Saturday 28 March 2015**, starts at 10.00am and finishes at 4.00pm. Tea and coffee will be provided but please bring your own packed lunch.

To book please e-mail Andrea on

andrea.khan@camphillblairdrummond.org.uk or call on 01786 841573 ext 113. All monies raised will go to the Camphill Blair Drummond Appeal.



Blair Drummond Safari Park Jungle drums....

As all local readers are probably aware, the Safari Park is closed for the winter period. It is a much needed time to improve and develop the park for both visitors and animals. The economics of staying open all year round, like many other tourist dependant businesses, is impractical and vastly outstrips the value of closing our doors in order to save on costs. It is therefore unsurprising that one of the most frequently asked questions we receive at this time of year is "what happens to the animals over winter?". But what is surprising, are the amount of people that assume our animals are shipped out to warmer climes. In fact, nothing is relocated and other than 1 Herman's tortoise, named Wilson, nothing hibernates either. Instead, we change how we manage our animals to account for the cold snap.

Winter management boils down to **i)** ensuring our animals are in the best physical condition, **ii)** allowing them to exercise choice and stay mentally stimulated. This means keeping them entertained and giving them access to the elements, should they wish! Temperatures and weather conditions that we deem as miserable and uncomfortable are perfectly tolerable for the vast majority of our animals; our hawks will zoom around in strong winds and get a good work out, our elephants regularly wander around their habitat in near freezing temperatures and our big cats will sit out and endure big down-pours, whilst we would prefer to run for cover and warmth.

For their wild counterparts, we've counted up all of our visitors donations and presented Christmas cheques to our three conservation charities - Save the Rhino **£2,024.59**. These vital funds have gone to four Kenyan private rhino sanctuaries to help support their canine units which function in poacher scent tracking, protection of the rangers, detection of arms and ammunition and rhino horn detection at security posts. Without these amazing animals the enforcement by rangers and police would be much less effective, allowing the horrible trade in rhino horn to grow. We would like to say a massive 'thank you' to everyone who donated this season. International Vulture Programme **£12,888.21**. This money has gone to help fund 1) The African White-backed Vulture project, based at Kimberley in South Africa: For the first time, in 2015, this will project have a researcher working on site. This research will be investigating vulture breeding biology and the causes of nest failure. 2) The Gyps vulture restoration project in Pakistan has two components – conservation

breeding and fieldwork. Funds will be used for: a) Running costs for the conservation breeding centre (vulture food, staff at the centre, veterinary costs, etc.) b) Annual field surveys of remaining vulture colonies in Sindh Province (southeast Pakistan) and Azad Kashmir (northeast Pakistan). 21st century Tiger £1,412.34. The money will be spent supporting anti-poaching units in Kerinci Seblat National Park in Sumatra and a Citizen Science project in Malaysia, both areas where wild tigers are under threat from poaching. In Sumatra, the Tiger Protection and Conservation Units react to intelligence gained from a network of informers and undercover operations in addition to Smart Patrolling in areas designated at greatest risk.



Dudley the lion out for a walk in snow dusting

Meanwhile, our staff are busy extending our drive through to incorporate a NEW 2.5 acre Macaque enclosure. The drive through will be optional for those who choose to put their windscreen wipers at risk! Joking aside it's been a much requested development and eagerly anticipated to be a big success. We are also revamping an old enclosure, getting it ready for our tigers. It has much better building facilities and larger enclosure with a new ridge, waterfall and pool. We re-open on 22nd March and hope for a busy year so that we can continue to improve the park.

Dave Warren, Education Officer

The Blair Drummond Social Group

We settled into 2015 with a successful Burns Lunch on 26th January, when 28 folks enjoyed traditional fare. After lunch the senior pupils from KiM Primary School entertained us with superb Scottish poetry recitations and singing and one of the gentleman present (Willie Ralston) had everyone laughing at a modern humorous Scots poem recitation. A pleasant way to spend a cold (outside!) January afternoon.

The Group, for anyone over 50, is currently in its winter guise, which means we meet from 12 – 2pm in Blair Drummond Hall, on the last Monday of the month, and a warm welcome invitation is given to join us for the forthcoming meetings, it's a great opportunity to catch up with friends old and new! Don't worry if you're a GF person, as we can cater for gluten free.

February 23, 12 – 2pm, will be a Soup, Sandwiches and Chat afternoon, when a game of Beetles may well bring the 'house' down!

March 30, 12 – 2pm, is also a Soup & Sandwiches afternoon, and the National Trust will join us to tell everyone of the Trust's work both nationally and locally. This promises to be a very interesting afternoon.

In April we move over to our summertime mode, which is 2 – 4 pm.

April 27, 2 – 4pm, will have everyone having the pleasure of a guided tour around Gargunnock House Garden, with Head Gardiner Willie Campbell and afterwards we'll have afternoon tea at Gargunnock Inn.

May 25, 2 – 4pm, the British Red Cross is coming to join us and provide a workshop on 'Everyday First Aid in the Home'. We all know we should have up to date knowledge of how to deal with accidents but somehow seldom get around to gaining the relevant skills, so here's your chance!

June 29th, 2 – 4pm will be an Afternoon Tea and Chat afternoon.

We hope that if you live in the local communities, you'll come along and join us, for all or any of these meetings. If you would like more information please contact Christine Bauer (Tel: 01786 471191) or Fiona Campbell (Tel: 01786 860678).

Kincardine in Menteith Church News



On Sunday 21st December 2014 the Rev Andy Campbell presented Long Service Certificates to Mark Sherriff, John Sands and Ronald Graham, in recognition of the time and work they have given as Church Elders.

John was ordained in January 1974, Mark in March 1976. Ronald has been an Elder at Kincardine in Menteith for 'only' 15 years but also served as Elder in his previous church at Wellington Road Glasgow, for 32 years. A wonderful achievement by all three!

J Gilliland, Session Clerk

Zumba Classes

The classes in Blair Drummond Community Hall are in full swing and going well! Come along and give it a try. If anyone has resolved to lose weight, have more fun, meet new people or get fitter, then join me! All ages, abilities and fitness levels are welcome, as you take it at your own pace.

Just come along, or send me a message first –

fiona.wray@hotmail.co.uk

<http://www.fionawray.zumba.com/>

07793 914564

I'm looking forward to seeing new faces and the friends I've already made.

Fiona Wray, Zumba Instructor

Callander & District Young Farmers

Callander & District Young Farmers Club has been having a busy spell of it over the autumn and winter months! The main event was our annual Variety Concert (first in 4 years!), which was held in Thornhill Hall on the 16th & 17th January, and was a great success. More info & pics in next newsletter!

Whilst attending practices for the concert, the club had an Annual Dinner Dance in November 2014, which was a fun night for all, thanks to all who attended! The club have also been attending various Games Nights, Produce Shows, Member of the Year competitions, YF dances, and in October had a very successful Charity Coffee Morning held in Blair Drummond Hall. Thanks to the support and attendance from the community, we raised £473 for Yorkhill Charity!

Over the next few weeks, the club will be cracking on with a District Talent Spot sketch, which will be performed in the Stirling Albert Halls on 6th March, and organising a new syllabus of upcoming events. If anyone is interested in hearing more about the club, or potentially interested in coming along and getting involved, then please don't be a stranger. You can "like" the "Callander & District Young Farmers" Facebook page, or get in touch with Club Chairman **Laura Graham (07970041605)** who would be delighted to hear from you!



Christmas Fayre

The Hall Committee would like to thank everyone who came along and supported our Christmas Fayre. £200 was raised from the raffle, for the Eilidh Brown Memorial Fund. We would also like to thank all the stallholders who attended and kindly donated the prizes for the

raffle. We hope you all enjoyed this event and that you will come along again to this year's Christmas Fayre, which will be held in the hall on **Friday 27th November from 7pm**. If you, or anyone you know, would like to take a stall, please email: Catherine@grasslands.plus.com

Our Local Heroine



A year ago Blair Drummond's Catriona McBeath, daughter of Margaret and John, gave a fascinating thought provoking talk to Blair Drummond folks on her work in the Ministry of Defence Police.

Between October 2010 and October 2013 she, along with 7 fellow MOD female police officers, went to work in war torn Afghanistan to train female Afghan police officers. Catriona spoke of the dangers and difficulties faced in daily living there. Women's rights were undermined by the Taliban's rule, forbidding women to work or even leave the home unaccompanied. Education for women is rare and training therefore also presented many obstacles. Living in the environment of mortar fire and explosions, death was a daily threat and whilst Catriona never experienced direct threats, her trainees did and three were assassinated because of their work.

Recently Catriona's work was recognised when she was awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. In November, accompanied by her parents, she went to Buckingham Palace to collect her honour from the Queen. Catriona felt it was an honour and privilege and that it was also recognition for all the MOD Police officers who had served in Afghanistan.

Now back in Britain, Catriona quietly continues her role with the MOD and the Blair Drummond community is proud to have her work recognised.

Congratulations on your Graduation

Well done to local girl Melissa Hamlyn who recently graduated. Melissa is a former pupil of Kincardine In Menteith Primary School & McLaren High School.

Melissa graduated on 18th June 2014 from Dundee University with a BSc in Forensic Anthropology.

Kincardine- in- Menteith Primary School

Malawi Visitors

We had some special Malawi visitors in school from the 5th-14th November. We taught them some Scottish dances and they taught us some new songs. We had an opportunity to ask questions about life in Malawi and about the school where they work. While Detonay and Annie were here they visited other schools and Nurseries. They also got to visit different places locally thanks to our parents and people in the community.

WW1 Talk

On the 14th November, the senior class went to Thornhill Primary School for a talk with Mr Smith. Mr Smith works at the Smith Art Gallery in Stirling. He was talking about WW1 and how it started.

It was very interesting and we now know a lot more about WW1.

Skiing

On Wednesday the 19th and Thursday the 20th November 2014 the senior classes in both schools went skiing at Firpark ski centre in Tillicoultry. It was a great experience for everyone and even some of the teachers pulled on their ski boots! We are getting an opportunity to go to Glencoe in March to try out our skills on real snow.

Swimming

This term Primary 5 have been going to swimming lessons at The Peak. They do tests and if they pass they get a certificate. They do lengths and dive down to get bricks. They usually do a five minutes swim for a warm-up. They use one of their parents t-shirts for some of their tests. Thornhill and Kincardine-in-Menteith go together on a coach. They have all really enjoyed swimming and they have all got much better.

Christmas Service and Nativity

On the 17th December we had our Christmas and Nativity service. The P1-4 did a nativity called 'Born in a Barn' with lots of singing and dancing. They all did an amazing job! The P5-7s sang for everyone and even

sang 'Away in a Mange'r in Gaelic. The P6s' did the readings and the P7s' did the links. We then invited everyone over to the school for tea and coffee.

Christmas Panto and Party

On Thursday the 18th December 2014 the whole school went to see Aladdin at the McRobert Centre in Stirling University. In Aladdin it was a girl that played Aladdin instead of a boy. Aladdin was very good and funny.

When we got back we had lunch and got changed into our party clothes and then we went down to the Community Hall for our party. We danced Scottish dances and played lots of games. The Christmas party was great fun and enjoyable.

Burns Assembly

On Friday the 23rd January we had a special Burns Assembly. Each pupil performed a song or poem. Primary 5-7 sang some Scots songs, including the traditional version of 'Auld Lang Syne'. Margaret also organised a special lunch for us.

G Campbell, Principal Teacher

Kincardine-in-Menteith Primary School Parent Council

Family Ceilidh

In aid of School Funds

Saturday 25th April 2015, 7pm

Dancing to The Carse Ceilidh Band

**Tickets: Adults £7, Child £4, Family of 4 £20,
Family of more than 4 £25, Concession £5**

BYOB



The Rev's Rant

We need more ARKs this weather.



He wasn't having a good day! Parked up outside the church hall he'd left on the lights of the car and as a result the battery was flat, and it was beginning to rain. His wife wasn't being terribly sympathetic about the situation either, as he protested that he'd taken the jump leads out of the car when she had taken the car, to take furniture to the church jumble sale and he didn't want her giving them as well; but she was having none of it.

Meantime I drove my car from the other side of the road, came alongside, took out my own jump leads and began to connect up. They were glad to see it happening and joked "Well you're certainly being a Good Samaritan today, just like the guid book says!"

"In that case "Go and do thou likewise, as it also says" I replied before adding; "we could all do with a few more ARKs."

"How heavy d'you think this rain is going to get? they asked. So I explained about ARKs.

An ARK is an Act of Random Kindness and they're becoming quite popular these days. It's looking out for an opportunity to help strangers, as well as friends, in unexpected ways, which can make a real difference to life. Here are some suggestions that you could try:

1. Carry a mini-pack of Kleenex tissues with you that you can give to a mum whose kid has just been sick or to the girl who is upset.
2. Make sure you have a £1 coin handy in a pocket to give to someone who needs it – it doesn't have to be a major reason – just a simple reason will do.
3. Make sure you have jump leads in the car and simple emergency kit!
4. Put a spare pen/pencil in your pocket that you can give away.
5. Drop in on one of the folks who lives alone in your road – maybe take a scone with you – just to see how they are and show they are valued.

6. Be pleasant to a parking warden (especially if they've just given you a ticket!)

Most folk think an ARK belongs to the realm of ancient myths that serves little purpose in a scientific 21st century, but a modern day ARK can begin to help communities gel and enable people to re-connect, while solving simple problems.

For more ideas go to www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas

If you need some sort of excuse to try this out - I could remind you that Lent starts on 18th February. Lots of folk give things up for Lent, such as chocolate, sex or alcohol.

Personally I'd prefer to take something up instead – like a daily ARK. How about you?

God Bless

Rev Andy.

UA strengthens Executive Team with six new Directors

United Auctions has strengthened its Executive Team with the appointment of six new Directors as part of the Company's succession planning.

Scotland's leading livestock auctioneers have promoted Auctioneers David Brown, George Purves, John Roberts, Matt Stevenson and Donald Young to Group Sales Directors, while Christopher Sharp becomes Administration Director. The new team of Directors has a greater role and responsibility in shaping and achieving the strategic objectives of the Company. Along with Donald Morrison, Area Managing Director for Argyll and the Islands, these appointments augment the existing experience already in place at senior level.

The new directors will work alongside Group Joint Managing Directors Neil McLean and Robin Tough, and Executive Chairman David Leggat who have led the Company since completing an MBO in 2007.

Together, the new Executive Team represents some 170 years in agriculture.

UA's Executive Chairman David Leggat said: "We're pleased to see this experienced group joining the board to further strengthen the business

going forward. It's testament to how seriously we take our professional training and development programme that we're able to look within the Company to find leadership talent with the right skills, contacts and knowledge at this level."

In addition to their new executive duties, the team will continue their current remits. David Brown and John Roberts deal with the commercial and pedigree cattle sales, including the prestigious Stirling Bull Sales. George Purves and Matt Stevenson lead UA's sheep sales with Mr Purves heading up Prime Sheep Sales and Mr Stevenson in charge of Store Sheep Sales while Donald Young manages the North of Scotland. Christopher Sharp has a BA (Hons) in Business and heads up the Group's admin function.

All the Directors are members of the Institute of Auctioneers and have completed the Scottish Enterprise Rural Leadership Programme.

Voter Registration Has Changed

The UK Parliamentary election is less than 6 months away (7th May 2015), and the Electoral Registration Officer is reminding new electors and those who have changed address recently and who haven't yet applied to register that they should do so now.

As it is now an individual registration system you will need to supply your name, address, date of birth and National Insurance Number when registering.

Registering to vote is now available online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote making it quicker and easier.

Household Enquiry Forms and reminders have been posted to addresses where no-one is registered to vote or where forms haven't been returned since 2012. Anyone still to return a form should do so now as visits by members of staff will take place from January to each address.

The new Register of Electors will be published on 27th February and it's important that as many eligible electors are included as possible.

Anyone who wants to vote by post at the next election can apply now and application forms are available to download from www.saa.gov.uk/central or can be collected in your local library.

More information on the changes is available at www.gov.uk/yourvotematters.

Blair Drummond Hall Diary Dates

Weekly Classes

Monday: Metafit – 6.00pm to 7.00pm
Tuesday: Youth Club – 7.00pm – 9.00pm
Wednesday: All Dance – 7.00pm – 9.00pm
Thursday: Zumba – 6.00pm – 6.50pm
Metafit – 7.00pm to 8.00pm

Other Events

Friday 6th February: Young Farmers Race Night
Monday 9th February: 3F – Friends, Faith & Fun Group. 7.30pm
Saturday 21st February: Doune & Dunblane Show Ceilidh
Monday 23rd February: Blair Drummond Social Group. 12 – 2pm
Monday 2nd March: Community Hall Committee Meeting 7.30pm
Saturday 25th April: Kincardine In Menteith Parents Council Ceilidh
Tuesday 9th June: Community Hall AGM at 7.30pm

Badminton: Anyone wishing to hire the Hall please contact the Booking Secretary.

As always, the Hall is regularly used for meetings, kids parties, ceilidhs, and wedding receptions, to name but a few. For more information visit our website: www.blairdrummondhall.co.uk or contact Louise (Booking Secretary) on 01786 841352.

<u>BLAIR DRUMMOND ESTATE</u>	
Hardwood Logs	£170/ load
Hardwood Logs	£85/ half load
Softwood Logs	£120/ load
Softwood Logs	£60/ half load
Small bags	£4.50 for hardwood
Small bags	£3.50 for softwood
Contact: Bob	
Tel: 01786 841580	
Mob: 07732 563106	

2014 Weather at a glance

Rain – Approximately 42 inches of rain fell on us over the whole year. Interestingly this is almost exactly the average annual rainfall over the last 11 years. Last January was the worst month when 6.46 inches fell and September was the best month when only 0.72 inches fell. Perhaps more interestingly, in 2014 Kippen had almost 53 inches of rain, so if you don't like rain don't move to Kippen!

Wind – As in recent years this has come as much from the East as the West. The highest wind speed being 58mph in December but this will almost certainly be beaten by this January's strong winds.

Temperature – The average temperature over the whole year was 9.5C with the highest being 28.3C at the end of July and the lowest -5.6C at the end of December.

Talk about the weather – I came across this quotation by the Irish writer and surgeon, Oliver St John Gorgasty, who heard one Irishman say to another *"It's most extraordinary weather for this time of year"* to which the other replied *"Ah, it isn't this time of year at all!"*

R Graham

Scotland's Gardens Snowdrop Festival 2015

(February to March)

The following gardens are opening:

15th February - Gargunnock House, Gargunnock FK8 3AZ. 1pm to 4pm

22nd February - West Plean House, Denny Rd Stirling FK7 8HA. 1pm to 4pm

1st to 8th March - Duntreath Castle, Blanefield G63 9AJ. 11am to 4pm

By Appointment - The Linns, Sherrifmuir, Dunblane FK15 0LP. 01786 822 295

For further information contact Gillie Drapper on 01360 860 243 or visit the website at: WWW.SCOTLANDSGARDENS.ORG

If you would be interested in opening your garden next year, or being a member of the Stirlingshire Branch of Scotland's Gardens and the benefits it would bring, please contact Pippa at:

stirlingshiregardens@hotmail.co.uk

Kincardine-in-Menteith Parent Council

As do all Primary schools, Kincardine-in-Menteith(KiM) has its own Parents Council; and this article aims to provide members of the wider community with an understanding of the parent Council's activities and who are involved.

We are a small group of parents or carers of children attending the school, who get together every 6 weeks or so: there are 3 Office bearers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and a minimum of 3 other parents or carers of children, and there is provision for up to 2 community members. Each year an AGM is held in September, to determine the membership of the Parent Council for the school year.

The Parent Council is a valuable part of the school's make-up, aimed at –

- Promoting partnership between the school, its pupils and its parents and carers
- Developing and engaging in activities which support the education and welfare of the pupils
- Identifying and representing the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils
- Raising funds to support the activities of the school and helping to ensure that finances are available for specific items not provided through the educational budget, and
- Allowing parents and carers to affect the way that the school operates

Some of our recent discussions have been regarding music tuition for the children and how to ensure that they get the opportunity to play an instrument, alongside their usual music lessons. Also discussed recently (as you can imagine) were the Council Budget cuts and how they affect education and the school. Details on this topic can be found on the Stirling Council website at

<http://www.stirling.gov.uk/sevices/council-and-government/shapingstirling>

We have regular updates from our teachers and minutes from our meetings are sent to all parents and carers of the school.

As funding is always a hot topic, we help the school by raising money for items such as books, laptops, a wireless connection; in fact anything we can to help with the day-to-day running of the school. We generally hold a ceilidh each year to help raise funds and are always open to suggestions for alternative fund raising ideas. As KiM is a small school, we need to find ways to engage the wider community, to boost the funds we raise. On a purely social side of things, we hold a Safari Park BBQ around August and also run a Halloween Party with the school, for the children.

Nicole Minter, Chair KiM Parents Council

Issue 14 Quiz Answers

1. **11 Players in a Football Team**
2. **3 Wise Men**
3. **24 Hours in a Day**
4. **360 Degrees in a Circle**
5. **1000 Millimetres in a Metre**
6. **3 Blind Mice**
7. **76 Trombones In The Big Parade**
8. **13 in a Bakers Dozen**
9. **24 Blackbirds Baked In A Pie**
10. **90 Degrees in a Right Angle**
11. **12 Inches in a Foot**
12. **2 Peas in a Pod**
13. **3 Little Pigs**
14. **52 Weeks in a Year**
15. **10 Green Bottles**
16. **60 Seconds in a Minute**
17. **2 x Radius = Diameter**
18. **10 Millimetres in a Centimetre**
19. **12 Signs of the Zodiac**
20. **12 Days of Christmas**

Briarlands Farm

The team at Briarlands are looking forward to the farm being open again on Friday 6th February, after taking a break over Christmas and New Year.

There are lots of exciting events and plans in place for this season, so make sure you keep up to date with all the news by checking our website www.briarlandsfarm.co.uk or on our Facebook page.



Climbing wall



Pop up slide

We are excited to link up with a local company, which supplies specialist mobile play equipment, so be prepared for some exciting new play activities to 'pop up' during Easter and summer holidays. We look forward to seeing you at Briarlands in 2015!

Pippa Glennie, Duty Manager

If you know someone who would be interested in advertising in the Blair Drummond Grapevine, our rates are listed below -

¼ page £7.50

½ page £10

Full page £20

Do you have any photos, ads, articles or letters you would like to contribute, if so please email them to:

christinebauer@tiscali.co.uk

or

catherine@grasslands.plus.com

Items for Issue No 16 should be submitted **by 30th April 2015**, sent by email, in Word, and as a separate attachment.

If you wish your copy to be sent via email please get in touch, with your email address and we will add you to the developing mailing list.

Thank you.

The Blair Drummond Grapevine is a community newsletter produced and distributed by volunteers, free of charge, to approximately 250 households within the Blair Drummond area. Letters and articles published in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views, beliefs or opinions of the Grapevine Editorial Team, who also reserve the right to shorten, edit or refuse the insertion of any contribution.

Contributions will only be published if accompanied by a valid contact name and address; these will be withheld at the author's request. Articles and adverts are accepted and printed in good faith.

The Blair Drummond Grapevine is published by the Blair Drummond Community Hall Committee.

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