

# The Grapevine

Autumn 2011

## STIRLING AGRICULTURAL CENTRE - THE STIRLING MART

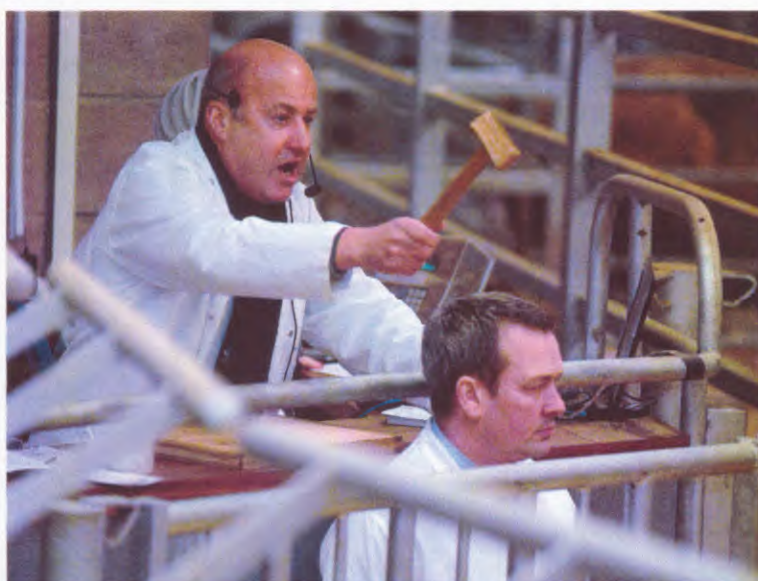


Since its' opening by the First Minister in July 2009 the new Stirling Mart at Stirling Agricultural Centre has featured prominently in the local scene. Costing approximately £15 million and employing over 100 full time and part time staff the Mart operates the businesses carried on by the former markets at Kildean and Perth. Originally owned by Elphinstone there was a management buyout in 2006 by the then, and current directors, David Leggat, Neil McLean and Robin Tough, who now own and run the business under the name of United Auctions. This company also runs auctions at Dalmally, Islay, Lairg, Huntly, Tiree and South Uist, including a dedicated lairage facility at Oban. Indeed a quarter of the livestock sales in Scotland are carried out by United Auctions.

In addition to the 400 livestock pens, two auction rings and galleries (one mainly for cattle and the other for sheep) the Mart has adjoining retail outlets - Country Store selling feed, fertiliser and livestock medicines; Stirling Saddle Fitters; Scottish Equine & Pet Supplies and in a month or two The Stirling Angling Centre will be moving to the Mart. One of Scotland's leading independent rural estate agents, CKD Galbraith also recently opened their national farm sales office. The Mart also has, within it an area, one of whose walls display four very fine renovated livestock sculptures, which come from the former Perth Market. It is appropriately in this new home and area that the Perth Bull Sales continue to take place, as this is a brand name known throughout the livestock world.



Record prices still continue to be fetched. In October this year a UK record price of 70,000gns was paid for a Charolais bull and in July 90,000gns for a Suffolk tup sold by an Irish farmer to a Welsh farmer, thus involving all four countries in the UK. More frequently than Pedigree bull and ram sales are the weekly sales of store cattle, sheep or lambs at which it is not uncommon for the turnover to be in excess of £1 million pounds.



Supplementary to their main work and activities at the Mart, United Auctions are strong supporters of the local community. They support and sponsor several charities and public institutions. Recent activities in this area have been the lunch in our Community Hall for the Preshal Trust in Govan and the Scottish Gardens Scheme, the Big Beast exhibition at the Smith Institute on which Elspeth King recently gave a talk in our Hall. Indeed the Hall is quite often used by customers of the Mart for their functions. United Auctions conduct a wide variety of charity sales throughout Scotland, the most recent one being for the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust.

The Mart's integrated structure of pens, auction rings, offices and restaurant, together with the adjoining retail outlets make up an impressive building and centre overlooking the junction of the Teith and Forth rivers. It is hoped that the links between United Auctions and the Blairdrummond community will continue and flourish to the mutual benefit of both.

## **Christmas Fayre**

**This year's Christmas Fayre takes place on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November, from 7pm till 9pm in the Blairdrummond hall.**

This is the third year we have been running this evening and again we have over 20 stalls coming along. The stalls this year include –

Briarlands Farm; Mary's Kitchen; Mac Books; Kidney Kids; Phoenix Cards; Pampered Chef; Partylite Candles; Judes Jewels; Virgin Vie; Purple Herb Soap; Rednock Trekking; My Handbag Heaven and the local Primary School.

Again we will be having a Charity raffle – the prizes being donated by the stallholders, which will be drawn on the night. The money collected from the raffle will be donated this year to the Scottish Paediatric Orthopaedic Club (SPOC). Last year we raised £250 for Stirling Young Carers. Thanks to all who supported us last year.

Admission is £1.50 for adults and 50p for children; and includes Mulled wine/ Tea and mince pie/shortbread.

We hope you will be able to come along and support us, as well as buying some unique Christmas gifts.



## Blairdrummond Church of Scotland: Kincardine-in-Menteith

The kirk is definitely open for business and, thanks to the hard work of a few folks chopping down undergrowth, can once again be seen while travelling south on the A84. Now, if only we could get these massive trees trimmed, our church would really be a landmark.

Many of you will have met (or received one of his introductory cards) the relatively new minister, Rev Andy Campbell, as he gets around the parish and at the regular worship services at 9.30am of a Sunday morning. One of the newer aspects of these is the Family Faithshare service on the last Sunday of each month, which endeavours to involve young families that Andy has been meeting on his regular visits to the Primary School. Head teacher Fiona Anderson recently spoke to the congregation of her Malawian exploits and we hope to welcome folk from there later this year. The Church's Ceilidh in the autumn was great fun and a good fundraiser, and thanks to all who arranged it and supported it. It was grand to see so many youngsters dancing and learning as they did so.

Harvest Thanksgiving was muted this year recognising there was not a huge amount to celebrate. None the less we know farming, nature and the God of creation somehow work together, even when we're struggling to plant, grow, harvest and make a living. In November the kirk celebrates different things – the baptism of young Rory Graham, grandson of Ron and Mirren and Holy Communion on the 7<sup>th</sup> and we mark Remembrance Sunday on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Then will begin the inevitable build up to Christmas. Please put 9<sup>th</sup> December in your diary, for the Christmas Concert with the Brightons Praise Group, in the Church at 7.30pm. We know you to be a generous group of people so, no tickets, and an entrance donation. The Christmas Eve watchnight service will be at 11.30pm in Blairdrummond Church, with Christmas Day services in Gargunnoch and Doune. New Year's day worship will also be in Blairdrummond (at the later time of 10.30am).

Huge thanks are due to Mark Sherriff, for the time and effort he has been putting in as Session Clerk, through eighteen years. He has served now with three different ministers and through three vacancies. As we go to press, Mark has announced he'll be stepping down from this role in November. All of us, but especially Rev Andy, are grateful to him for all he has achieved, in the kirk and for the community.

Please know that the Kirk and minister are here for you, and are as keen to be involved in things that are important to you, as we are for you to be involved with the kirk's life. I'm hoping to ring the bell of the remaining doors not yet reached in the parish, before Christmas, and you'll be most welcome at our door too. Thank you for the warmth of your welcome, and for being truly a community – watching out for, and caring for, each other; sharing celebrations and catastrophes. May God bless you today and every day.

Your minister

Rev Andy Campbell

Tel: 01786 860678

email: [andycampbell53@btinternet.com](mailto:andycampbell53@btinternet.com)



## **Blairdrummond Youth Club**

The Youth Club meets in Blair Drummond Community hall every Tuesday, from October till Easter holidays, from 7pm till 9pm. All young people from Primary 7 upwards are welcome. The cost per night is £1 and there is an annual membership fee of £10. Come along and join in the fun and games.

If you have any questions then contact Doug, on 841032 or Catherine 860246.

## **Youth Club News**

Doug & Nikki McMillan have now taken over as Youth Club leaders. There are 9 members at the moment and new members are always welcome. We had our Halloween party last Tuesday night with the usual fun and games!

### **B & Q "Youth Can Do It" award**

During the summer we were approached by Youth Scotland to see if we would like to be considered for an award from B&Q. Every B&Q store has been twinned with a local Youth Group, thanks to a new, three years partnership with national youth development charity, UK Youth. We were awarded a grant of £250 from B&Q, Stirling. We spent this money on much needed shelving for our storage cupboard and with the surplus got some paint to create a chalkboard in the cupboard and also to plant up some tubs for the front of the hall. We would like to thank Sonia from B&Q for her help with the project and Doug for his shelving skills.

## **Blair Drummond Curling Club 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner, 12 Nov 2011**

A 'Sports' dinner was held in the Community Hall to celebrate our Curling Club's 150<sup>th</sup> year in existence. 126 members and guests enjoyed a fun evening, of friendship and good food, along with 'entertainment'.

Marjory McCulloch welcomed guests to the evening, before Rory Duff conducted the 'Heads & Tails' pre-dinner game, which was nearly won by Emily Holl.

The Toast to the Club was made by Forbes Gauld, an ex-member of the Club, whose speech was much appreciated by the audience, for his relaxed and entertaining style, along with a number of amusing stories.

After dinner Nigel Holl conducted an Auction, which was very successful, raising £1,380. Items auctioned included a Day's fishing on the Teith (courtesy of J Muir), a Season's Pass for Briarlands Farm (Courtesy of J&J Inglis) and a Helicopter ride. The Raffle raised then £585. Thank you to all those members who contributed prizes.

The evening closed with a game of 'Inside Curling' and the Vote of Thanks was proposed by Fred Bauer.

All funds raised on the night will be used by the Curling Club, to promote and assist young curlers, in the years to come.

*Rory Duff.* On behalf of the Curling Club Committee.



## Safari Park News

Rhinoceroses are an important feature of the Park - particularly the Southern White Rhinos. In October the Park said a fond farewell to rhino Jane and hello to rhino Emmi. Jane arrived at the Park in 2003 with the other resident adults, Dot and Graham.

The Park is a proud member of the European Breeding Programme for Southern White Rhinos. Dot has raised two calves so far at the Park but despite good intentions and effort from Graham, Jane never conceived.

Allwetter zoo in Munster asked if they could take Jane in exchange for their Emmi, who has successfully conceived but never successfully reared a calf. It is thought that if she could come to a place like the Park with an experienced female like Dot and observe Dot with her calf, Emmi may be able to succeed in raising her babies to independence. Fingers are crossed at the Park for this to happen!

The Park reopens after the winter closure on 24 March 2012.



Emmi

### Wet, Wet, Wet.

Weather, that unfailing topic of conversation, has saturated our talk and the land this summer and autumn. The statistics reveal that saturation and precipitation has indeed rather depressingly been the case. In June there were 21 days in which rain was recorded, followed by 16 in July, 21 in August, 26 in September and 27 in October when 108.4mm fell (about 4.3inches). Our annual average is 31 inches. But cheer up things could be worse. At Dalmally by Loch Awe 22 and ½ inches fell in the month of September alone!



## Blairdrummond Hall Burns Supper

After the success of the Burns Supper 2 years ago, the Hall Committee will now be holding another, on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012, in the Community Hall.

Maitland Clark returns as Master of Ceremonies. The Immortal Memory will be given by local Stirling GP John Rankin. Other Speakers are Joanne & John Inglis and Matthew Carrick. Tam o' Shanter will be recited by Duncan McColl.

Mary's Kitchen will provide the traditional fayre. Bring your own bottle.

As tickets sold out quickly last time, order your tickets soon, so that you are not disappointed!

Tickets are available from Catherine – Tel: 01786 860246, or email:

[Catherine@grasslands.plus.com](mailto:Catherine@grasslands.plus.com)

## Briarlands Farm

Normally at this time of the year things are a bit quieter on the farm, not this winter however, as we are busy with our new building The Farmer's Den'.

Having started selling strawberries in 2002 and with our maize maze in 2006 our business has continued to grow. After finally accepting that summer in Scotland means rain we decided to build somewhere warm and dry to shelter during the typical Scottish weather, gone is the draughty marquee, wooden admission hut and portaloos!!!! In their place is a lovely new building, heated using renewable energy in the form of an Air Source Heat Pump. The new building will also allow us to open all year round offering somewhere for young children and their families to enjoy the fresh air whatever the weather.





## **Kincardine-in-Mentieth Primary School**

### **Rugby Festival**

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> of October, the Primary 3 pupils travelled to McLaren High School for the Active Schools Rugby Festival. The quality of play and good sportsmanship was brilliant and it was agreed by all that the pupils could have given some of the teams in New Zealand a run for their money. Well done!

### **World Porridge Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

As part of our on going commitment to supporting our linked school in Malawi, we held a World Porridge Day Celebration on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> of October during the morning. We asked all pupils to 'walk to school' on this day, by walking up from the Hall in the morning. All pupils at Kapalamula Primary School walk to school each day, up to 2km, and we made the walk as a symbolic gesture. A member of staff was on hand to ensure that pupils were escorted onto the pathway in safety.

At breaktime, our porridge kitchen opened to share a snack of porridge as our friends in Malawi do each day. Finally, after playtime we held a sponsored walk to raise funds for Mary's Meals and the World Feeding Programme. Pupils were asked to walk approximately 2 kms around the school garden and paths in order to symbolise a typical walk home for our friends in Malawi.

In total we raised £371 for Mary's Meals which will be handed over to Tony Begley on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of November when he visits.

### **Committee Groups**

This year we are going to be busy! As part of our on going commitment to enhancing pupil experiences within school, we have now made four clans, Fraser, Douglas, Ross and Munro. Each clan are responsible for one of four committees that include Healthy Tuck Shop, Eco committee, Pupil Council and the Playground. We believe that these committees are an excellent way in which ALL children are able to be active in the school life and have their own voices heard.

### **Malawi**

If you haven't already seen it, the Stirling Observer ran a double page spread on our visit to Malawi and our partnership with Kapalamula Primary School. We have had many positive comments from the article. Reverend Campbell invited me to speak during the service on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> of October which was a great honour. The congregation asked some very interesting questions about our time there.

Our guests arrived in Scotland on November 16<sup>th</sup> and their first impressions were that there so few people walking on the side of the roads and the lack of rubbish as well. They were very tired after their 26 hour journey but are looking forward to their two weeks with us. Everyone is welcome to attend the Family Ceilidh to be held on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> of November at 7:00pm in Blairdrummond Hall. Reverend Campbell has also planned a special service to welcome our guests on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> and everyone is welcome there.

Other activities that are planned for our visitors include farm visits, trips to the Scottish Parliament and Stirling Castle, visits to other schools and of course, learning and teaching with the children at school. We will be hosting a farewell coffee afternoon on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> of November to which everyone is welcome as well.

*Mrs. Fiona Anderson. Headteacher*



## Farming Perspectives from Blair Drummond Area

### *Hay*

As most of you know, Timothy Hay has been a major cash crop grown on the Carse of Stirling for many years. We thought we would share a first hand account of what it was like harvesting this year's crop, having had to contend with truly atrocious weather. It started off growing well in the spring and by early July was a good average crop ready for cutting. The weather in July was mixed with short dry spells that were good enough to make hay but did not last long enough for farmers to complete haymaking on most farms.

August saw us facing very heavy rain, which made making hay very difficult. Some of the crop at that time had to be saved as haylage, and by the beginning of September there were many fields of hay still to do. A short spell of dry weather allowed the crops still standing to be made into hay and lodged fields were baled for haylage. Some fields had to be left uncut because of water logging and now at the beginning of November are still the same.

Some farmers have taken a second cut as silage, despite the wet conditions, as this was required for a vital winter feed for housed cattle, as a result of the poor summer the tonnage of dry baled hay available for sale has been greatly reduced.

*James Maxwell*

### *Dairying*

It is so important to get as good quality forage for the cows as is possible, as this forms the basis of a good diet, to produce good milk. Silage qualities have however been variable around the country. It was difficult this year for various reasons, with short spells of dry weather making it harder to get high dry matter. A lack of sunshine kept sugars low and in many cases later cutting meant lower proteins. The one thing we did have was plenty of bulk, so we should have sufficient to take us right through 'til next season's crop comes in. The first cut analysis came out as average but the cows seem to be eating good amounts of it considering the dry matter, and milking reasonably well. The cows milked well throughout the summer and autumn, with the quality holding well considering the weather. Through autumn the milk price has edged up slightly, moving the average to 27p–28p per litre. There has been a reasonably good percentage of female calves, so we have a good number of replacements for the herd. Male calf prices are still very poor; for a 3 weeks old calf sold at market the going price is about £45.

We can only hope that next year is kinder to us with the weather!

*Tom Gilliland*



## Farming Perspectives from Blair Drummond Area

### *Beef & Arable*

Cattle housed indoors had a good winter last year, as the temperature was lower than previous years, which is good for keeping health problems like pneumonia to a minimum. The extremely low temperature in December did however cause problems for stockmen due to frozen water pipes and machinery which wouldn't work properly. Cattle turned out in the springtime had a good start to summer, with the dry and warm April. May was very windy and unusually cold and the rest of the summer months had very few dry days, however the cows and especially the calves seemed to come through the summer in good condition. The ground conditions held well until late October, when most cattle had to be brought in for the winter. Prices have been good this year for those selling fat cattle, which is good, as the cost of keeping cattle and fattening them is higher this year because of the high price of grain and straw. Summer 2011 has been difficult and challenging for anyone farming in this area, especially those trying to get crops in from the fields. The autumn sown crops came through an extremely cold winter looking well, but along with the spring sown crops they had to endure a very windy and cold May. This along with a lack of summer sunshine delayed the ripening of the crops, resulting in a later than normal start to the harvest. When harvest did finally start, it was further delayed by a lack of dry days to proceed with field work, and now into November some crops have still not been harvested. This year the grain price has been good, which has compensated for extra drying costs resulting from unusually wet grain being harvested.

*Ian Brisbane*

### Blair Drummond Hall Diary Dates.

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011.** School Ceilidh for Malawi visitors.

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2011.** Christmas Fayre. (Charity Fundraiser. Organised by Blairdrummond Hall Assoc.)

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2012.** Burns Supper. (Organised by Blairdrummond Hall Assoc.)

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2012.** Ladies Lunch. (Charity Fundraiser. Organised by Blairdrummond Hall Assoc.)

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012.** Election Day

#### **Youth Club -**

Tuesday 7.00pm – 9.00pm, from October 'til 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012, in the hall. Open to all young people aged 11 – 18 years. Contact Doug McMillan on: Tel 01786 841032.

#### **Yoga -**

Wednesday 5.30pm – 6.45pm. Contact Maya Savati on: [www.mindyouryoga.com](http://www.mindyouryoga.com) or Tel 07799 736611.

#### **Zumba -**

Thursday 8.15pm – 9.15pm. Contact Janice Klemer on: Tel 01786 860244.



## Scottish Paediatric Orthopaedic Club

Each year the funds raised from the raffle at the Christmas Fayre are donated to a chosen charity or cause. This year the money raised from the raffle as well as the money raised from the Ladies Lunch, which is to be held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2012, will go to the Scottish Paediatric Orthopaedic Club. One of the beneficiaries of this practice is Grace Stirling who lives in our local community.

The Scottish Paediatric Orthopaedic Club had its first meeting at Bridge of Earn Hospital in October 1988. The founder members of the club were the late Mr Jimmy Innes, Bridge of Earn Hospital, and Mr Malcolm MacNicol, Edinburgh. Initially the meetings were held yearly but since 1992 the group has met every six months. The meetings are attended by Consultant Surgeons and Registrars from all areas of Scotland and sometimes the north of England. Recently a connection has been established with a similar group in Sweden.

At the meeting an invited speaker gives a talk on a pre-arranged topic related to children's orthopaedic problems – e.g. clubfeet, dislocated hips, spinal deformities etc. Following the talk, the surgeons and registrars will present X-rays or discuss difficult cases with their colleagues in order to find the best options for the patient's treatment. These meetings are invaluable in as much as they are a forum for exchanging ideas, discussing new treatments and teaching Registrars.

Mr JGB MacLean, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Perth Royal Infirmary is President of SPOC and Mr Simon Barker, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Aberdeen Children's Hospital, is Secretary.

Mr MacLean has given Grace and her family so much support and advice over the years, that they would like to give something back and with the help of the Blairdrummond Community, the money raised will give invaluable support to the Scottish Paediatric Orthopaedic Club.



**Blairdrummond  
Christmas Fayre**

Friday 25th November  
7pm - 9pm  
In Blairdrummond Community Hall

**Over 20 Stalls which include:**

- Jewellery
- Home Baking from Mary's Kitchen
- Briarlands Farm
- Christmas Cards
- Candles
- Pampered Chef
- Welly Warmers
- Handmade Gifts for sale from  
Local Primary School
- Virgin Vic
- MacBooks

Proceeds from Raffle to be donated to the Scottish  
Paediatric Orthopaedic Club

Admission: £1.50 adults  
50p for children  
includes Tea and a mince Pie



***Christmas Holly Wreaths***

***Available from 10<sup>th</sup> December***

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***Contact: Fiona Donald  
Tel: 01786 842909***