

THE BLAIRDRUMMOND GRAPEVINE

ISSUE EIGHT

AUTUMN 2001

FREE

A CURLY HEADED BOY WHO SMILED...

Sandy was nearing the end of his holiday with his grandparents on a remote and beautiful lake in Canada when he tragically drowned while swimming. He was a thousand or two miles from his home and the rest of his family. The following night the haunting wail of the loons that had gathered uncharacteristically on the still waters of Georgian Bay filled the moonlit air in their sorrowful wake.



The telephone at the Broich rang shortly after midnight. The call that every parent lives to fear woke us from a deep sleep and hereafter August 12th will never be glorious again. "Please tell me it's not true" a plaintive but muted plea that was repeatedly repelled like waves on a rocky shore. Disbelief, desperation and desolation preceded our descent into numbness, solitude and a slow, painfully slow, acceptance of reality. True friends shone in their stoic support, occasionally stumbling over untrodden ground as they tried to comprehend the loss of a fourteen year old son, whose only wish was for us all to have smiling eyes. Happiness is always so fragile.

It is little consolation to be told that time is a great healer, as the tears continue to mask one's complexion, but in an incredible way it's so true. A year on, life, while never quite getting back to normal, is resuming its seasonal pace. Anniversaries now grow in frequency and significance while the trees planted in memory of Sandy, down by the

river he loved so dearly, gain in stature and presence. At the same time our three other wonderful children have grown older and wiser.

The belief that any goodness can follow such sadness is a truth that is reflected in the Sandpiper Trust. This charity, named after the bird that was often seen on the river and set up by Sandy's family and friends, helps fill a gap in medical services and at the same time begins to close a gaping hole in all our lives. A feeling of helplessness is gradually transformed into an infectious need to do something positive. The aim of the Trust is so worthwhile, "to provide medical equipment for use by specially trained doctors and nurses in remote and rural areas of Scotland". In close cooperation with BASICS (The British Association for Immediate Care) we are designing and producing comprehensive kits of first aid equipment. One day, it is hoped that "The Sandpiper bag" may even become an international standard for accident and emergency care.



We all dread the thought of any accident occurring in places where help may be many miles away. It is widely recognised that a rapid response to a heart attack or serious injury during "the Golden Hour" - that crucial period before getting a patient to hospital - can save lives. A local, BASICS trained GP may be the first on the scene before the arrival of emergency services and with the right equipment essential and vital medical care can be given.

Support for the Trust, from every quarter of Scotland and beyond has been quite humbling. We would like to extend our grateful thanks to all of you who have helped raise an overwhelming £ 92,000 so far. A special thanks goes to, where Sandy reluctantly spent his early schooldays, Blair Drummond Primary School, which made a generous donation after holding a Sunshine day - a wonderful tribute to a curly headed boy who smiled....



Sandy had a "No Fear" poster pinned to his bedroom wall which perhaps says it all: "Living : it's the only thing worth dying for" .

It is ironic that Sandy's great grandmother, who also lived at Lanrick, drowned in Loch Lubnaig way back in the 1930's in what was believed to be the first car crash in Perthshire. Both are deeply missed but their memories will live on in the work of the Sandpiper Trust. As the autumn leaves start falling we continue to derive strength from the poem "Togetherness" which begins -

***Death is nothing at all -
I have only slipped away into the next room.***

By Alistair and Penny Dickson

Alistair and Penny have set up the Sandpiper Trust in Sandy's memory. Their children all went to Blairdrummond Primary and the school have been involved with the fund raising and the charity trustees and committee are all local (they have Gavin Hastings as a patron). The photos show some of the children from the school taking part in the fundraising event - the school had a Sunshine Day to raise money for the Sandpiper trust.

YOUTH CLUB

We started back on Tuesday 16th October. We will have our usual Halloween fun on the 30th Oct [wear something old!!]. Can I ask members to wear trainers to Youth Club as it is safer when playing games.

I have managed to get 2 workshops arranged so far, the first is Tie-dyeing on the 20th November, the second is Circus skills on 11th December. Information on these will be given at Youth Club.

I need to know if we are interested in going to the panto in Glasgow. This year's performance is Aladdin with the Krankies. If parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers or friends are interested please speak to me as soon as possible to give me an idea of the number of tickets to order. We normally go on the last night [23rd January]

We desperately need parents to take a turn helping at Youth Club. Please get in touch and let me know what evening you can do.

HALL FOR HIRE

Remember the Community Hall is available for hire. Costs are remarkably reasonable - one wonders how they keep the costs so low!

£4 per hour for Blairdrummond residents

Louise 841352

HALL NEWS

In August the hall committee received a grant of £4,956 from Awards for All to purchase new tables and chairs and Architects fees to draw up plans for a new hall. Since then we have bought 10 tables and 52 chairs. We have engaged A H A -Architects LTD of Stirling. They have presented us with a plan

which will be considered at the next committee meeting on 31st October 2001.

This will enable us to make a further grant application to Community Fund [a division of the National Lottery Charities Board].

We need as much community involvement and support as possible if we are to succeed with our application. Anyone interesting in supporting this project should speak initially to Jimmy Maxwell (841352)

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Since we came back from our break we have been busy with projects. P1 - 4 are studying Early Man and P5 - 7 - Wars of Independence. We hope to arrange a visit to the Bannockburn Heritage Centre. P5 - 7 are also studying Oil. Our R.E. programme is taking in aspects of Early Christianity. We are so lucky to have the church so near, and Rev. Weir from Doune has been to talk to the children.

This week we are madly practising our dances for the Ceilidh. Enthusiasm and enjoyment more than skill. Soon we will start rehearsing for our Christmas entertainment and arranging panto visits. Senior pupils were delighted to receive an award certificate for their entries in a Farm Safety Competition designing posters.

Our swimming lessons start next month. Table tennis coaching is already under way.

The new P.1 class have settled in superbly, we welcome Louise Wilson, Sean McBeath, John Graham and Jack Brisbane. They are "old hands" at school now - and keep us all right!

AEROBICS

The aerobics class has become a "bums and tums" class. Everyone is welcome to come along and try. The class is held in the hall on a Monday night from 7.30 to 8.30pm, classes cost £2.

If you need more details contact Eleanor on 472523

FAMILY CEILIDH

The school board held its annual family ceilidh on Saturday 20th October. A great night was had by

all. At the last count approximately £200 was raised. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of the evening.

CHILDREN'S 2000 POEM

In recent Grapevines we've been featuring some of Jimmy Reid's poetry. This has prompted the idea of a poetry competition. Children of school age living in Blairdrummond were invited to write a poem about life in Blairdrummond in the new millennium. The length, style and content was up to the writer.

We decided that since all the poems were excellent, all entries would receive a book token for £5.

We're featuring a couple of poems in each of the next few Grapevines. So here are a couple sent in:

Right from the first of January to December the
thirty-first,
Unexpected things have happened,
Some have been good,
Some have been bad,
And some have been unpredictable.

Unpredictable, that changes a lot,
It makes things much more different,
But to the good, old Blairdrummond folk,
Its just another day of life.

So all these people that visit Blairdrummond,
Remember this one thing,
Play about in the wonderful sun,
And have fun throughout the year

By Laura Graham (aged 10)

Blairdrummond Weather

The suns shining out to play
But then the rain comes out
To make the sun run away
Then the snow to say hello
Lying deep oh no!
And then back to a pleasant day
With the birds singing, singing away
Then we've had all four seasons in just a single day!!

By Lauren Beattie (aged 12)

Millennium Celebrations

On the last evening of the year one thousand, nine hundred & ninety-nine
Gathered at the Community Hall was every family,
yours and mine,
At the stroke of midnight fireworks lit up the sky
To the cheers of everyone standing nearby.
The party was in full swing in the hall
With dancing and singing by one and all
The new Millennium was greeted by handshakes,
kisses and hugs
And all the school pupils received Millennium mugs
To mark this special year and for future pupils to see
The schoolchildren all helped plant a tree.
The first baby born in this special year was Callum
Fotheringham, a fine wee lad
Who brought great joy to his mum and dad.
David and Catriona Turner were the first local
couple to marry
We send them good wishes and their future is
starry.
May this new century bring the world peace and joy
To every nation and each girl and boy.

By Danielle & Andrew McLeod (aged 10 & 8)

THE STORY OF THE CARSE (PART 5) - THE KAMES CONNECTION

Henry Home was a truly remarkable man. He made exceptional contributions to three diverse disciplines, the law, philosophy & science, and industry, transport and of course agriculture. He was born in 1696 at Kames in Berwickshire. He qualified as an advocate in Edinburgh in 1723, and became curator of the Advocates' Library there. He made good use of his facilities, and published several books which became indispensable to the legal profession, including the history of case-law in the Scottish Civil Courts.

In 1741, his father died, and he became the laird of Kames. He married Agatha Drummond, sister of George Drummond of Blairdrummond. They had two children; George, born in 1743, and Jean, born in 1744. Edinburgh at that time was entering the Age of Enlightenment, with luminaries like Sibbald, Cockburn, the Gregorys and Bruce all leading aspects of Improvement. Having an estate to run, Henry was keen to hear news of new crops and of new methods in farming. During the '45 Rising, he cannily kept his head low, and wrote essays on

uncontroversial topics like archaeology and moral philosophy. The Rising over, he was appointed a Law Lord, and took the title of Lord Kames. Many of the Jacobite estates were forfeited, and in 1755 he joined the Commission which administered these, and found himself involved in planning new roads and bridges, canals, fisheries and the linen industry.

His circle of friends was widening, and included David Hume, Adam Smith, James Boswell, Allan Ramsay and the American philosopher Benjamin Franklin (who twice visited him for periods of six weeks!) Lord Kames somehow acquired the title of 'Father of the Enlightenment'. James Boswell undertook to write his biography, but as Boswell was at this time having a short-lived affair with Kames's daughter Jean, his motives are not too clear. (He did succeed in finishing a later work, his life of Johnson!)

It's 1763, and Kames is already 67. Ready to retire? Not Kames! This was the year when he became a Judge of the High Court of Judiciary, the Criminal Court. He had to take his turn as a Circuit Judge, with twice yearly tours of the High Courts in places as far apart as Inverness and Dumfries.

At Blairdrummond, there was joy in 1765 when George's wife, Frances, produced a son and heir - James. But the joy turned to sadness when George himself died, the same year. James scarcely lived beyond his first birthday, so the Blairdrummond inheritance fell to the next in line ... Aunt Agatha! Henry and Agatha had possibly never dreamt of such an eventuality, but they took it in their stride. In particular, Henry had been keen on seeing some kind of land reclamation scheme taking place on Kincardine Moss. Here was his chance!

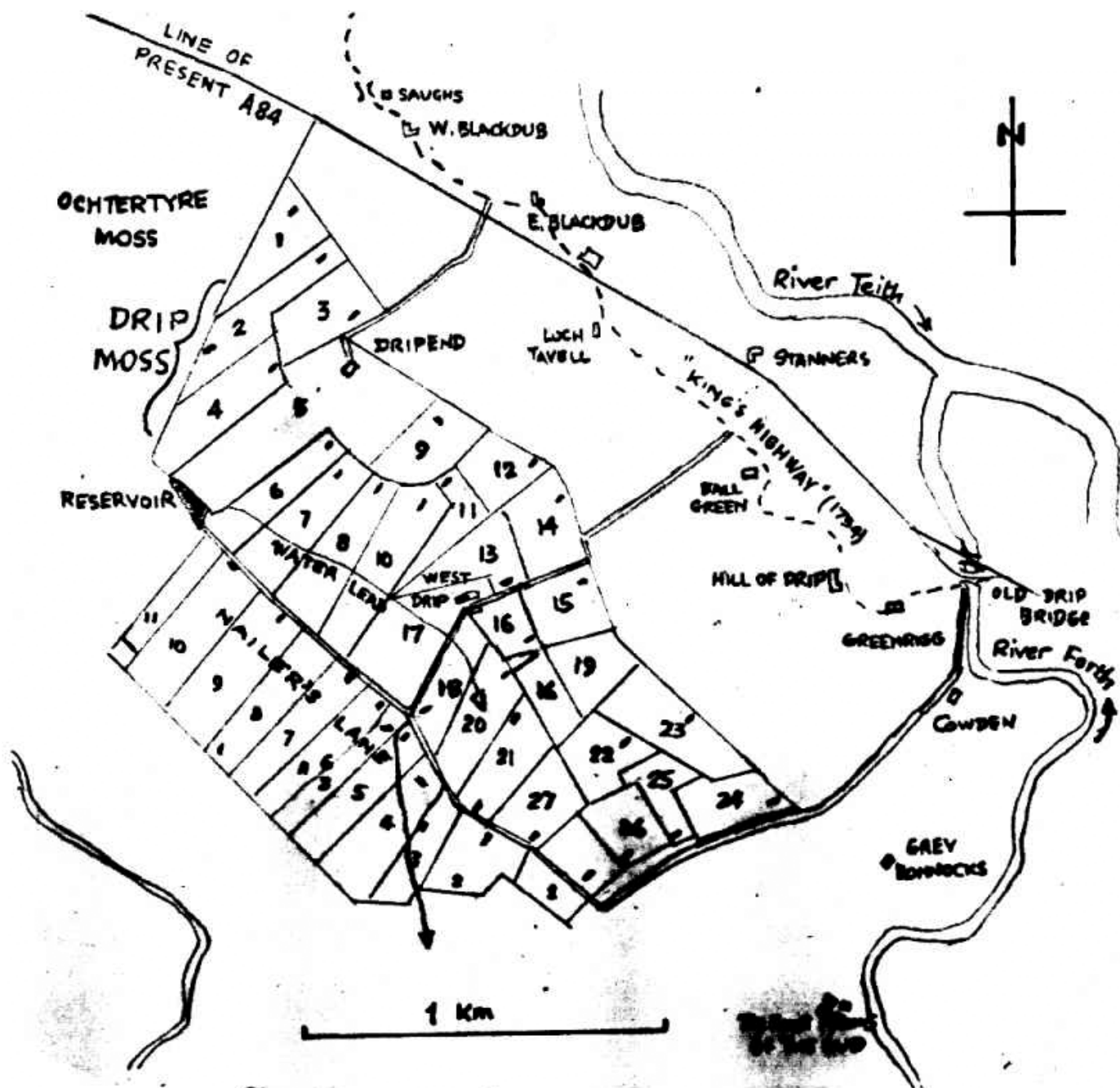
Applying philosophical principles, Kames conducted a series of work studies to determine the most effective method of clearing the 1600 acres of 10-foot-deep peat to get to the fertile clay below. He wanted to use water as the means of transport, and the spades of hundreds of workers to cut and cast the peat. What an expense! Well, why not allocate small ten-acre holdings of moss-lands to each tenant, and offer incentives to promote hard effort. It might take a long time (40 years?) but it would hardly cost a fraction of the alternative. He chose the Drip Moss as his trial scheme, where much of the peat was only 3 feet deep.

For a water supply, he used the Camsdrainy Mill lead, closing that mill down with the tenants' consent.

The real problem was to find the volunteers to take on the tenancies, in spite of the favourable terms. When he launched the scheme in 1767, he only had one taker. Perhaps that wasn't so surprising..Since clearance would be seasonal, the worker would have to live away and travel in, at least for a year or two,

until he had cleared enough ground to build a house and start cultivating; he would need another job to support himself and his family until the new holding was producing an income. There were 27 plots on Drip Moss, and another 11 on the nearby Nailer's Lane District; but it took 13 years to get all these holdings let. And there were always complaints that there wasn't enough water!

Lord Kames still hadn't retired from being a Circuit



THE DRIP MOSS AREA AROUND 1780
SHOWING THE NUMBERED HOLDINGS LET
DURING LORD KAMES'S LIFETIME.

Judge. Transport being important to him, we find him initiating the building of Old Drip Bridge in 1770, and straightening the King's Highway at least between the Bridge and Blairdrummond. Saughs Cottage Bridge shows signs of having been widened, at some time between 1754 and 1800.

December 1782 draws to a close. Lord Kames bids his colleagues in Edinburgh a characteristic seasonal greeting. "Fare ye a' weel, ye bitches!". A week later, they learn he is dead, at the age of 86. He is buried in the Kincardine-in-Menteith Kirkyard, and the memorial tablet records in fulsome detail his contributions to the law, to philosophy and to industry, but never a mention of moss clearance, the idea for which he is now renowned.

He deserves a greater monument. It's there if you know where to look - a few hundred yards east of the kirkyard, obscured by trees, an obelisk with an inscription, erected by the great man himself in 1780. Its inscription says it all...

"For his neighbours as well as for himself was this monument erected by Henry Home.

Graft Benevolence on Self-love; the fruit will be delicious".

RECIPE CORNER

Devilleed Kidneys - Serves 4

10ml/2tsp Worchester sauce
15ml/1tbsp English mustard
15ml/1 tbsp lemon juice
15ml/1 tbsp tomato puree
pinch of cayenne pepper
40g/1 ½ oz butter
1 shallot finely chopped
9 lamb kidneys (skinned halved & cored)
salt & ground black pepper
15ml/1 tbsp chopped parsley to garnish

1. mix the Worchester sauce, mustard, lemon juice, tomato puree, cayenne pepper & salt together to make a sauce.

2. melt the butter in a frying pan, add the chopped shallot and cook, stirring occasionally until it is softened but not coloured.

3. stir the kidney halves into the shallot pan and cook over a medium/high for about 3 minutes on each side.

4. add the sauce to the kidneys and quickly stir so that they become evenly coated.

5. sprinkle with freshly chopped parsley and serve immediately.

Scottish Lamb Steaks with a Mint & Sherry Marinade - serves 6

6 large Scottish lamb steaks

For the marinade

30ml/2tbsp chopped fresh mint leaves

15ml/1tbsp black peppercorns

1 medium onion chopped

120ml/4 fl oz sherry

60ml/4tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 garlic cloves

1. blend the mint leaves & peppercorns in a blender until finely chopped, add the onion and blend again until smooth. Add the rest of the marinade ingredients and blend until completely mixed. The marinade should be a thick consistency.

2. add the marinade to the lamb steaks and cover with cling-film. Leave in the fridge to marinate overnight.

3. cook the steaks for 10-15 minutes basting occasionally with the marinade.

4. serve with boiled new potatoes and mixed vegetables.

Recipes supplied by Ian Mackenzie, Head Chef, Woodside Hotel, Doune.

FORMER HEADTEACHER REMEMBERED

Mrs Waugh was headteacher at Kincardine-in-Menteith School for many years --she sadly passed away recently. Below is a poem by Mrs Waugh referring to a few of the Blairdrummond folk that she knew . . .

Kincardine School Nonsense Song

Here is our bit of nonsense
Which we hope is not too long
Will you all join in the chorus
And Improve this crazy song

Chorus - Did you ever hear, did you ever hear
Did you ever hear such a silly thing before?

In our district we have farmers
Tommy Bryce and Davie Arnott
They are busy in the Springtime
Sowing seeds and fertiliser

John Sands he has a farm
Which he keeps so spick and span
One day he fell off the trailer
And we found him in the baler

Blairdrummond has a teacher
Her name is Mrs Waugh
She occasionally gives a roar
That would blast off all the doors!

John McBeath he is our joiner
Whom all of you know well
Hit his thumb with a hammer
And let out a dreadful yell!

Our next door neighbour Jim
Played for the football team
They thought so much about him
They played every game without him

We have a marvellous minister
His name is Mr Brown
He always keeps us cheery
Never, never makes us frown

We have a cook supreme
Mrs McAnish is her name
She makes delicious menus
Which are never twice the same

Mrs Cobban is our cleaner

She comes in at half past three
She works hard to keep our school
Bright and shining as can be

The Sherriff's have a Daddy
Kate says he's always teasing
So we thought we'd turn the tables
And hope this won't displease him

You know those Miller sisters
Who are always at the ready
At baking they are experts
And making gorgeous Teddies

Look out for our special constables
T. Miller and A. Rattray
Be careful what you're up to
The charge might be assault and battery

There are many other characters
We could name them by the score
Like Grannies Wood, McBeath and Graham
And many, many more

This song is oh so silly!
And at this rate we fear
To include everybody
You'd be here until next year

MOTHER & TODDLER GROUP

Thornhill Mother & Toddler Group would like to welcome any new babies or toddlers with mums, dads or carers to Thornhill community centre Mondays 10 - 11.30. There is a lovely relaxed atmosphere and it gives you a chance to meet other mums. Just turn up or call Fiona on 850215.

KINCARDINE-IN-MENTEITH CHURCH NEWS

At last we are near the end of the complicated selection process for a new minister. If the Presbyteries of both Stirling and Glasgow agree, then the Rev. Richard Campbell should be inducted on Thursday, 29th November. He will live in the Gargunnoch Manse and his other two parishes are ourselves at Kincardine-in-Menteith and Kilmadock in Doune. The induction service will probably be at 7 o'clock in our church, followed by a social in the Muir Hall, Doune.

Richard and his wife, Anne, are no strangers to this part of Scotland as he was the Minister at St. Ninians Free Church, Stirling from 1993 - 2000. He

is aged 56 and after periods as a technician at Strathclyde University, the Western Infirmary, Beatson Oncology Centre, etc, he went to training for the Ministry at Trinity College, Glasgow University from 1990 until 1993.

(460637), Mandy McLeod (841825), Ian Brisbane (841722), David Turner (463810)

Forthcoming Church events are as follows:

Sunday, 4th November

Celebration of Holy Communion at 9.30 a.m.

Friday, 9th November

Wine and Cheese Party in Community Hall, combined with a Quiz Night. Tickets available from Church Elders and Board. Members price: £4.00 for adults £1.50 for children.

Sunday, 11th November

Armistice Sunday service at 9.30 a.m.

GLORIOUS GARDENS

Well done to Tam Miller of 1 Woodside Cottages who once again won the best cottage garden competition at the Thornhill Flower Show. This is the 3rd year in succession. What about an open day next year Tam!!

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

... will be in the new year - so if you have events planned (Valentine's Day, Easter, etc) 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, 2 West Drip Cottages or 471455 or dave@westdrip.freeserve.co.uk

Eleanor Graham 472523 or

eleanor@westdrip.fsnet.co.uk

Maggie Sherriff 841236 or msherriff1@aol.com

Catherine Killen 860246 or

markkillen2@farmersweekly.net

or anyone on the Hall Committee. Deadline for the next edition is 15 January 2002.

Your Hall Committee is ...

Allison Coates (860531), Annette Paget (841709), Catherine Killen (860246), Dave Simpson (471455), Eleanor Graham (472523), James & Louise Maxwell (841352), John & Joanne Inglis (841309), Diane & Jon Darby (841679), Lesley McKenzie (470894), Mark & Maggie Sherriff (841236), Robert Muir (841207), Susan McMillan (447664), Tom Gilliland