

Issue 23

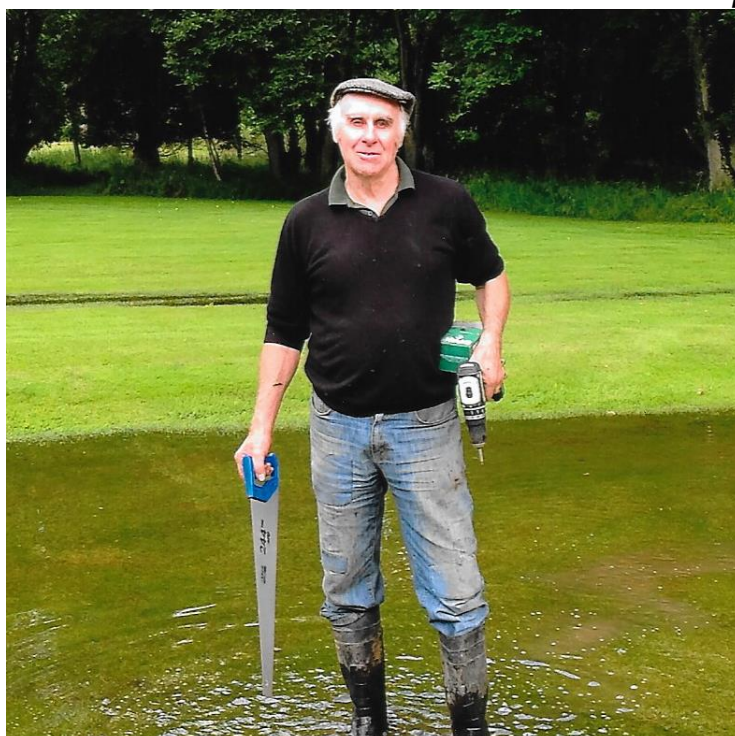
The Grapevine

February 2017

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

Down our Way

(An occasional series of interviews with local people)



The Blair Drummond area, like any other rural area, continues to change in many ways, with new businesses, houses, road realignment and families coming into the community. And yet there are always familiar things and people who anchor it and make it unique in itself.

The McBeath family are certainly people who contribute fully to the community they live in and have done so for generations. Recently, through conversation with John McBeath (above), of Joiners Cottage, the Grapevine gained some insight into the role they have played and continue to do, here in Blair Drummond.

Q. How long have the McBeath family been in the area?

A. My great grandfather came to this area from Blackford in the 1860s and to Ramoth, on the Coldoch Road in 1896. He was a stonemason and one of those who built the Wallace Monument.

Q. And the joiner side of the family, who began that aspect?

A. My father was born in 1903 at Ramoth, and the family moved to the Post Office (now our home) in 1910. He became a time served joiner.

I followed on from him and now there's our son Gordon and his son Sean, making it over 100years since we began the business.

Q. So whom do we have in the McBeath family now?

A. Well, Margaret and I married in 1959 and we went on to have our eldest son John, followed by Catriona and then the youngest Gordon who, with his wife Pauline, has 4 sons – James, Sean, Andrew and Fraser.

Q. Tell us a little bit about what you took part in locally and enjoyed in your spare time?

A. I was a Church Elder here at Kincardine in Menteith Church for a long time, and a Special Constable for 28 years. I enjoyed curling for many years and of course dancing! Margaret and I used go to ceilidh dancing all over the area, often 5 evenings a week, when we were younger and fitter!

Q. Can you tell us a little about the history of the house you live in now?

A. The house, which was built around 1820, before being called Joiners Cottage, was called Kincardine Toll and had a workshop, a stable and a byre for 4 cows.

My grandfather rented Carpenters Park field, opposite the house for many years. During the war years the local Home Guard had a wooden hut, which sat outside the workshop, next to the phone box.

The house was also the Post Office for the area from 6th January 1845 until it was closed on 30th September 1954. The mail used to be delivered by mounted carrier to the Post Office initially, then delivered locally by bicycle (My father told me that my aunt used to cycle round the area delivering mail, rain or shine, on her bike) and latterly by motorcycle and sidecar.

My grandmother took over the running of the Post Office in 1910, helped by my mother, until it closed, following the previous 4 female Postmistresses. There was also a limited range of other goods for sale in the shop. You can still see the sign for the Post Office on the building, if you know where to look!

Mum died in 1994 and then there was some discussion about the building being made into a hotel but that didn't happen and so eventually we bought the building, upgraded the house, moved from the Saughs and it became our home.

Q. As Joiners Cottage, share a memory for us of things that have changed?

A. We used to make coup carts, hay wagons, slipes and wheels for carts out at the back, in the yard. The wood for the wheels and spooks came in pieces and we had to make sure we carefully aligned them together. The iron hoops for around the wheels were done at the Smith, across the road, where the fire had to be hot enough to heat the metal rim to go around the pieced wheel, then the hot ring was put onto the wheel and quickly cooled down in cold water, so that it held the wheel precisely in shape. A heavy and hot job but enjoyable!

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about the interesting road junction beyond your home?

A. In 1972 the road was realigned because, with increased volume of traffic, it had become dangerous. I remember a car that had been entered in the Monte Carlo rally, took the corner too fast and came crashing into our garden completely uprooting our plum tree! Thankfully no one was badly injured, except the plum tree! Then one evening a gentleman was using the public phone box that sat outside the house when it was struck by a car, removing the door and one side of the phone box, he too was unhurt! The AA box at the junction was damaged several times, so eventually the Council decided to create the present road line.

Q. Any interesting people you've met that you care to recall?

A. We had a visit once from Andrew Cruikshank the actor, who played the lead role in the original Dr Finlay's Casebook. His son lodged with us one summer, while he worked at the tattie roughing and his father came to visit and thank us for our hospitality. What a character! He just plopped himself down in an armchair, made himself at home and we had a great time!

It was a great pleasure to speak with John. He has so much knowledge of local social history and we have shared only a few of his memories here.

Thornhill & Blair Drummond Community Council News

Public Transport

It was noted that the Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service is now being extended to include stopping at the Blair Drummond Safari Park, in order that travellers can connect to the First 59 service. There remains an issue regarding availability however, particularly around school start times, when many of the taxi vehicles are otherwise deployed.

The altered route for the First C11 service is to be reviewed in due course.

Police Matters

There has been very little criminal activity in the area during the reported period. The police would welcome intelligence from locals regarding any suspicious activity in the area.

Stirling Council Update

It was noted that The Smiddy at Blair Drummond received licensing approval in November.

From the Council's perspective the new arrangement with refuse bins is working well. Significantly less landfill is arising. Some CC members however have received feedback on concerns regarding missed collections on prescribed days. This, we are told, is a transition issue, the problem being the delay in procurement and setting to work the new refuse vehicle fleet, coupled with the growing unreliability of the old vehicles.

Council Tax is set to rise in the next financial year, for the top 4 bands, in order to comply with Scottish Government legislation.

A special Stirling Council meeting is to be held on 9th February, to discuss future arrangements for the provision of sports and leisure facilities in the area. Open tenders, including one from Active Stirling, are to be considered.

Planning Matters

It was noted that road access will need to be granted for machinery entering fields opposite Nyadd Farm, in order to conduct forestry work.

The next 2 meetings of the Community Council will be held on

28th February 2017 at 7.30pm, at Thornhill Primary School

and

11th April 2017 at 7.30pm, at Blair Drummond Community Hall.

ALL WELCOME.

Ken Ingle, Community Councillor

Blair Drummond Community Hall

Thanks to all the stallholders and to everyone who came along and supported our Christmas Fayre in November. £195 was raised in the raffle and together with monies raised at our Fun Afternoon a cheque for £250 was handed over to Trossachs Search & Rescue.



We held another Defibrillator /CPR Training Workshop evening at the end of January, when over 20 people benefited from the Trossachs Search & Rescue volunteers input. This invaluable training was our 2nd workshop to enable local people to deal with a situation should they come across it.

On 3rd February we held a Beetle Drive which was very fast and noisy especially when it came to announcing the winners and drawing the raffle! Well done to Archie Inglis for winning and to everyone who came along and joined in the fun.



On Friday 24th February the hall committee are hosting an Antiques Evening, when Gordon Foster, from the Antiques Roadshow, will share his knowledge of antiques. If you have an item that Gordon can tell you more about, please bring it along (at your own risk). Gordon makes his skills and experience in this field into a fascinating evening.

Tickets for this event are £5.00, which includes cheese and wine. Please contact Louise – 01786 841352, or Catherine – 01786 860246, or Christine – 01786 841191, or any other committee member, for tickets. We look forward to seeing you there.

Janette Gilliland, Chairperson

The Rev's Rantabout a carpenter, too few joiners and lots of waiters!

Recent research, and evidence in our own lives, shows that fewer people sign up to membership of organisations, societies and clubs than ever before. It's felt by political parties, golf clubs, the WRI, the church and many a committee. Nowadays, folk want to sign up to Twitter, Facebook and the gym, where we can do our own thing, express ourselves and spend some '*me-time*'. So agricultural shows can't find committee members, because folk 'don't want the responsibility', Community Councils struggle to get representation, and churches like ours see membership drop off as folk decline to commit.

We protest that 'we just haven't got the time', but seem to find it for "*Strictly*" or watching football. 'Our family comes first', we say, which is great – but what are we creating for our family in the community. A litany of: "too busy / not my thing / it's my family / I tried it once before / I'm too old / I like to be free to go away", becomes a tired list of excuses for not engaging, while our good neighbours struggle on for another year to keep things going.

We all want to belong, (and that's shown by the great sense of friendship displayed at Christmas Fayres, Blair Drummond Blethers, and the like) – but too many folk are content to let somebody else be on the committee, organise it, and clear up afterwards; and they'll just turn up (if it's not raining).

A long time ago, I decided to follow the Galilean Carpenter, who turned fishermen into joiners! They were the folk who joined Jesus of Nazareth on a mission to change the world for the better. They made sacrifices, sometimes leaving family for a time, to build a community. Thank God for folk like that! You may not want to join my particular group, but I'll be really happy if you do. However you should commit to those things you want to see thrive. It was a wise person who said; "What we water with our attention, grows."

'Belonging' means really getting involved, promising the time and energy, taking responsibility, shouldering the criticism, committing to the committee.

Become a joiner.... instead of just waiting for something to happen.

God Bless,

Rev Andy

Need to contact me:

Acampbell@churchofscotland.org.uk

or

07523420079

And remember the website – www.blairdrummondchurches.org.uk

Weddings



Andrew Duff, son of Vanda and Rory Duff, Carsedyke, Sommers Lane, Blair Drummond, married Alice Tozzi, daughter of Sara and Nigel Tozzi, of Hildenborough, Kent, on 22nd October 2016. The wedding took place in Kent. Alice and Andrew are now living in Edinburgh.

Births

Elizabeth and Hector Muir, Bankhead, Blair Drummond are delighted to introduce their daughter Amelia Elizabeth, born on 24th February 2016, weighing 6lbs 10ozs. A lovely baby sister for Georgina.



Weather news

So the prediction was incorrect, we finished 2016 two inches below average on the annual rainfall, and 2017 is carrying on the theme, with a very dry month in January. The farmers in the area will be quaking in their boots, wondering when the rain is coming.

You will meet many tractors on the roads at the moment, buzzing back and forth, feeding cattle and mucking out. Be careful if you come across muddy roads, they are very slippery!

The warm weather does cause hassle for the animals indoors. I especially feel for the poultry, which are to be kept indoors as a precaution against bird flu. At present this lock down is in place until the end of February.

Callander Young Farmers

The Club put on a brilliant concert for three evenings in mid January, at Thornhill village hall. The cast of 30 members entertained everyone with a series of hilarious skits and some nice musical and dance pieces.

The next competition for the Club is the Talent Spot, which will be held in the Albert Halls, Stirling, in early March. Good luck to everyone!

Katie Brisbane

Briarlands

It's the start of a new era at Briarlands Farm, as a different branch of the Inglis family - Robin and Mary, along with their daughters Lucy and Janey, pick up the reins and challenges of running this diverse operation! They are looking forward to welcoming friends old and new.

We've added a fab new indoor Play Frame, complete with slide and ball pit, which will be SO much fun. And while the kids play, you can enjoy a coffee and some delicious home baking, courtesy of Mary Inglis, who comes equipped with a wealth of catering knowledge and great baking skills. Mary can also be contacted for Outside Catering, for any occasion.

Outside, we've extended the Animal Petting area. So you'll get to see and feed more lambs and meet some of our own calves, up close and personal.

We also have a new mini Play Barn, with sand pit and ball pool, for your wee ones to enjoy.

Our soft Archery is now more accessible and the Football Golf, introduced at the end of last season, gives great family competition!

All this and more is in store for the 2017 Season. Why not purchase a Season Pass and get great value for your money?

Our Pick Your Own Strawberries will re-open around the end of May, weather depending, and keep an eye on our website for more information nearer the time. We hope to see you again this season and Thank You for your continued support. Please remember to LIKE our Facebook page, for all our news and visit our website

www.briarlandsfarm.com



The Vine Trust

The festive season seems a long time ago now, but thanks are due to the good folk of Blair Drummond for their generosity and support of the Vine Trust. Several events were held across Doune, Blair Drummond and Gargunnock during December, the largest of which was 'Carols in the Kirk', to celebrate 200 years of Kincardine in Menteith Parish Church. An audience of more than 100 filled the Kirk to hear a varied programme of songs and readings, with a great contribution from the pupils of Kincardine in Menteith Primary School.



Over £1,000 was raised that evening and put together with the other events, cheques to a total of £1,690.15 were handed over to the Vine Trust. The picture shows the Very Rev Albert Bogle, Co-chair of The Vine Trust thanking some of the children from Kincardine in Menteith School for the donation. This money will enable the Trust to help families living in

poverty in Peru and around Lake Victoria in Africa, through ships equipped with a range of medical and dental facilities and professional staff.

Thank you to all who supported this event and gave so generously.



Friends, Faith & Fun

This monthly ladies' group continues to enjoy good support from the Blair Drummond area, and new friends are always welcome. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm, in the cosy Kilmadock Church room, on the main Balkerach Street in Doune (beside the bus stop). Meetings for the rest of the session are as follows :-

Tuesday 28 Feb: Jo Dallas from Gargunnock tells us about her work in Zambia with Christian Aid.

Tuesday 28 Mar: Greg Stokes of Tayside Search & Rescue will speak and demonstrate the work of this service.

Tuesday 25 April: Fran Thow of Stirling charity 'The Food Train' will speak on their work locally.

All meetings £3 including tea/coffee. A warm welcome to ladies.

Informal Bible Study

From time to time I run an informal evening discussion group around the Manse fireside in Gargunnock, to which anyone is welcome to come along. We'll be meeting again in the Spring and usually the pattern is four meetings, once a fortnight at 7.30pm, with tea/coffee, and occasionally cake! If you would like to receive details of our next set of studies, please e-mail Fiona Campbell on artistatwork@btinternet.com.

Fiona Campbell.

<u>BLAIR DRUMMOND ESTATE</u>	
Hardwood Logs	£180/ load
Hardwood Logs	£90/ half load
Softwood Logs	£130/ load
Softwood Logs	£65/ half load
Small bags	£5 for hardwood
Small bags	£4 for softwood
Contact: Bob	
Tel: 01786 841580	
Mob: 07732 563106	

Website

Our new look website is back up and running. It is still a work in progress but Fred and Catherine are working away in the background trying to improve the content. All past issues of The Grapevine can be found on the website in the What's On tab under Newsletters. If you have any ideas of what else you would like to see on the Blair Drummond Community Hall website please get in touch with Fred 07500 354 004 or Catherine 01786 860246.

www.blairdrummondhall.co.uk

Youth Club

The Blair Drummond Youth Club meets every Tuesday, between October and Easter, from 7pm to 9pm and is open to anyone aged 10 and over.

Currently there are 11 kids coming along on a regular basis, a wee bit less than in previous years but this doesn't stop them from having a fun time, playing games, running around and most importantly, catching up with and meeting new friends.

The Youth Club ran a very successful bottle stall again at the Community Hall Christmas Fayre, on 25 November 2016, and raised the great sum of £120. This money will be put towards an end-of-year treat! Many thanks to all who donated bottles and came along on the night to support us.



Kayleigh from Youth Scotland teaching us some dance moves

This year we have been lucky enough to have Stuart, from Youth Scotland, come along to do some games with the kids. During the season he will come to meetings for 10 weeks and do a variety of different games and bring on other instructors to do dancing etc with the members. The end goal is for the kids to gain a Dynamic Youth certificate.

On the last evening parents will be invited along, to see some of the leadership skills the members have learned along the way. The sessions with Stuart are always fun filled and the kids usually go home with very rosy cheeks, from all the running around they have done.

If you would like more information on the Youth Club, please contact :
Mary on 07443455978, or Lorna on 07851364227.

Youth Club have a page in the Blair Drummond Community Hall website.
www.blairdrummondhall.co.uk

Blair Drummond Blethers

It's such a while ago but worth recalling – the end of November meeting was the Christmas lunch, when everyone enjoyed good food and company in equal parts. The school children came along and provided a lovely singing concert. All agreed it was a successful start to the festive season.

December was an informal catch up afternoon, whilst enjoying the soup and sandwiches, mince pies and shortbread.

And January saw 50+ people coming to enjoy the Burns lunch of haggis, tatties, turnip and whisky sauce; followed by trifle, cheese and biscuits! Afterwards one of the members did full justice to a Burns poem and the school children joined us again, but the programme they gave us this time around had a Scottish theme. They really were excellent, providing introductions, songs and poems for the pleasure of all.

Next month sees the membership bringing along a childhood photo, so that we can all try to guess who's who!

And the March meeting, being the last meeting of the winter timetable (12 – 2pm), will have a Beetle Drive. Our summer timetable begins in April, when the members come together between 2 – 4 pm on the last Monday of the month, for the next 6 meetings.

Thank you to all who make this group possible through their volunteering and attendance.



Kincardine In Menteith Primary school's recent visit to the Blethers Burns Lunch

ANTIQUES EVENING

With Gordon Foster



In Blair Drummond Community Hall
On Friday 24th February

7pm for 7.30pm



Tickets £5
(Includes Cheese & Wine)

For tickets please contact:

Louise – 01786 841352

Christine – 01786 841191

Catherine – 01786 860246

Or any committee member

If you have an item that you wish Gordon to tell you more about its history and merits please bring it along (at your own risk) on the night.

Safari Park

The cold weather is not putting a freeze on our maintenance and construction work this winter and it's not just the animals we're improving things for –

We've listened to our visitors' comments and made improvements to our disabled and baby changing facilities. We recognised that our disabled amenities were not up to scratch, so this winter we are contracting a building to facilitate the needs of our disabled visitors. Inside, the building will have a spacious adult changing facility, complete with variable height benches, washbasins and accessibility hoists. There will also be 3 additional baby changing areas, in a much more spacious environment.

The outdoor sea lion pool is having some essential repairs. The old render has been replaced, making a smoother, non-porous surface, which will be kinder to the sea lions. The pool is being painted a slightly darker colour to benefit the sea lions eyes, by preventing UV reflections. We're introducing a better, more environmentally friendly filtration system – reducing the dependence on chlorine. The keepers have also made plans for an expansion of the facility, so watch this space.

We've made further fun improvements to our giant fort. 'Caledonian Play' has added a junior climbing wall inside the fort and larger swings to the play area. The fort is one of the most popular features of the Children's Play Area and we hope to improve it each year.

Mondela, fondly known as Mondy by her keepers, is a 46 years old female African elephant and since the death of the Park's other African elephant, Toto, in March 2016, Mondy is the last remaining elephant in Scotland. For that reason, the Park has been searching for other similar African elephants to bring to the Park.

Blair Drummond's elephant department is a specialist facility, geared specifically to look after elderly female African elephants, deemed unsuitable to release into the wild – which is quite a tall order! Elephants are naturally social creatures; in the wild they live in hierarchal family herds and can have tolerance issues with elephants out with their immediate family. Given that the vast majority of elderly African elephants held in captivity across Europe are unrelated, Mondy's new friends will have to be a suitable match, to ensure a peaceful dynamic to a new herd.

Keepers work tirelessly to provide a safe haven where elderly female elephants can live out their days in comfort and in a peaceful

environment. The keepers have specially adapted the environment by providing enriching devices and objects to keep elephants both mentally and physically stimulated. The elephants are trained for veterinary inspection, using positive reinforcement and have no open contact with the keepers. Blair Drummond Safari Park would like to offer the care they provide to Mondy to other elephants that would benefit moving to the facility. The Park is searching across Europe-wide, in the hope that Mondy will have a companion before long, though the keepers realise the importance of ensuring a good match and peaceful dynamics within the enclosure.

Dave Warren, Education Officer

Kincardine in Menteith Primary School



Sport Scotland Gold Awards

In November 2016 Kincardine in Menteith Primary were presented with the Gold Sport Scotland Award. We were the first Primary School in Stirling Council to get the award and we were delighted that all our good work had been rewarded. We celebrated with a sporting event in the Community Hall. Everyone who had been involved was invited along and had a chance to join in with some of the different sports.

This Term

It is a busy term for us all, with P7 going on the residential trip to Dalguise, P5 – 7 skiing, football for P1 – 4, a whole school trip to Milk Barn, Falkirk and lots more! We look forward to sharing some of these with you in the next edition.

Blair Drummond Hall Diary Dates

Weekly Classes

Tuesday: Youth Club – 7 – 9pm
Wednesday: Ballroom Dancing – 7.30 – 9.30pm

Other Events

Friday 24th February: Antiques Evening, 7.30pm. Entry £5, includes Cheese & Wine. (*See advert on Page 13*)

Monday 27th February: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12- 2pm. Soup & sandwiches. Chat afternoon/ bring a childhood photo.

Monday 27th March: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12- 2pm. Soup & sandwiches. Beetle Drive.

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.

Councillors for our area

Martin Earl

Tel: 01786 4433497 / 07881 310922

earlm@stirling.gov.uk

Alycia Hayes

Tel: 01786 443497 / 07881 310924

hayesa@stirling.gov.uk

Fergus Wood

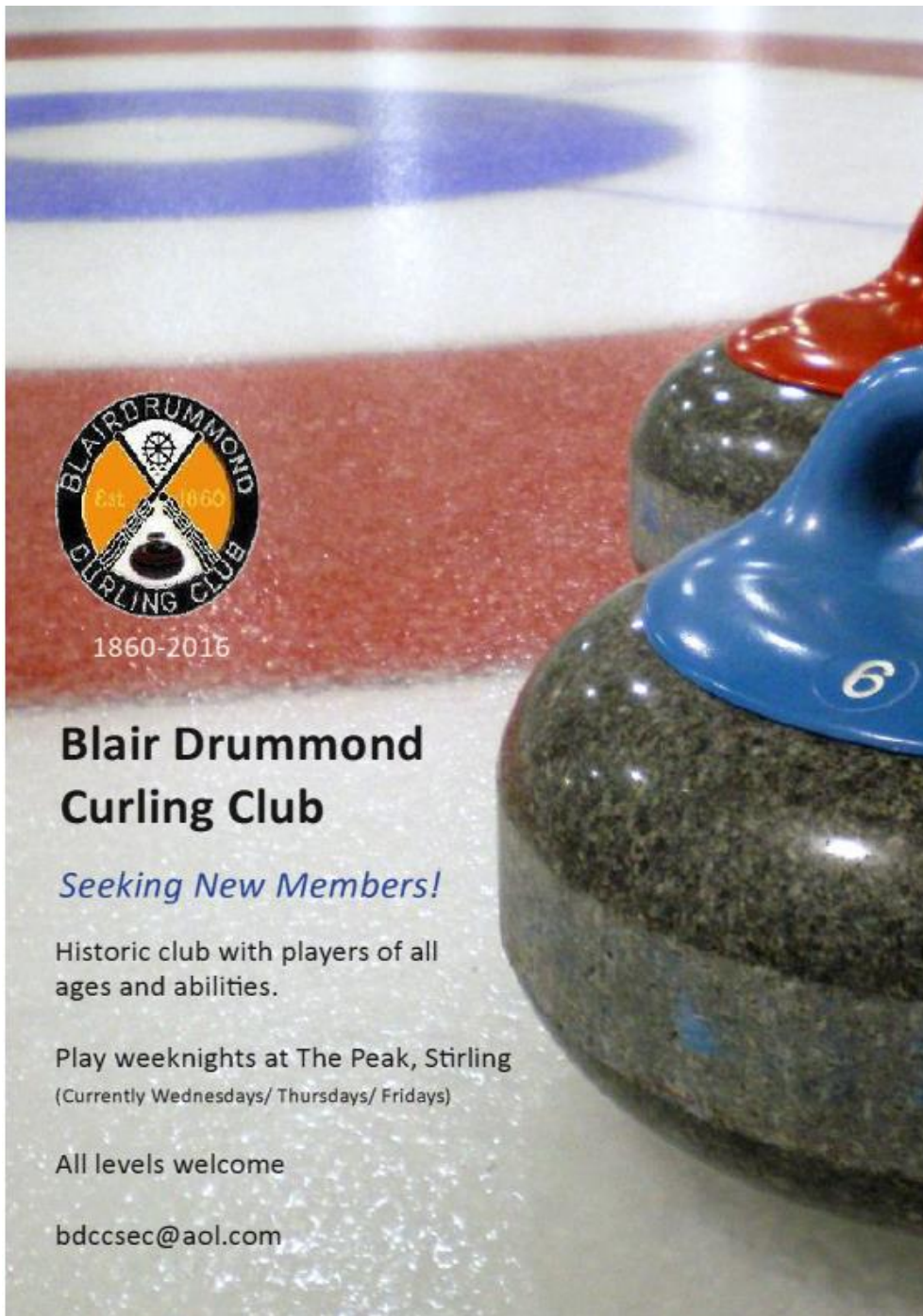
Tel: 01786 443497 / 07824 496019

woodf@stirling.gov.uk

Blair Drummond Curling Club

The season is almost halfway through and Blair Drummond has had a successful run to date. Last week the Club won the Scottish Central Province knockout competition and to date are in the running to top the Province league. Derek Sloan is representing Team GB in Kazakhstan at the 28th Winter Universiade in Almaty.

If anyone would like to try curling, see the Club advert below or contact Fred on 07500 354 004.



The advertisement is set against a background image of a curling stone with a blue handle (numbered 6) and a red handle, resting on a curling ice sheet with red and blue concentric circles. The Blair Drummond Curling Club logo is overlaid on the left side of the image. The logo is circular with a black border containing the text 'BLAIR DRUMMOND' at the top and 'CURLING CLUB' at the bottom. Inside the circle, there is a stylized curling stone and the text 'Est. 1860'. Below the logo, the years '1860-2016' are printed.

**Blair Drummond
Curling Club**

Seeking New Members!

Historic club with players of all
ages and abilities.

Play weeknights at The Peak, Stirling
(Currently Wednesdays/ Thursdays/ Fridays)

All levels welcome

bdccsec@aol.com

**Doune & Dunblane Agricultural
Society**

Presents our...

70th Show Shindig

Briarlands Farm

25th Feb 2017

7.30pm - 12.00

LICENSED BAR

Ticket: £12.00 adults £8 under 18's

includes Light Supper

For tickets: contact

07769336861

Dance to the sounds of

The Pentland Ceilidh Band

Police Scotland

Road Safety

On Friday 30th December 2016 we had a report of a vehicle having crashed into a field fence on the B822 road at Braendam Farm. Police attended but the vehicle had left the locus. There was damage to the fence straining post and Rylock fencing. The vehicle was described as a blue Ford Fiesta ST and 2 young males within, one described as wearing a grey hoodie. This vehicle remains untraced at this time.

On 12th January 2017 on the A84, a mile from the Safari Park entrance a vehicle left the road and ended up in the ditch. There was no injury and the vehicle was recovered.

Several other incidents were reported around this date due to the inclement weather. Luckily nothing serious occurred.

On 14th January a vehicle was stopped on the A84 road at Blair Drummond. The vehicle had no excise licence. This has been reported to the local Vehicle Licensing Office.

PC Deans and PC McKerracher will be involved in Road Safety duties over the coming month in your area, paying close attention to driver behaviour around Thornhill and Blair Drummond.

Theft

Overnight on 18th December 2016, at United Auctions, a break-in occurred to a tool shed. Several power tools were stolen from the shed. It is suspected that a Ford Fiesta, no further description, was used in the theft. Any information about this incident can be passed to the Community Officers, by calling 101.

Police Scotland continues to conduct a Public Consultation Survey. It will end March 2017. This is an opportunity for local people to tell us what is important to them in their community. The Survey can be accessed via www.scotland.police.uk/yourviewcounts.

PC Lorna Deans & PC Colin McKerracher, Trossachs and Teith Community Ward Officers

Doune Health Centre

Happy New Year to everyone and no doubt there has been a flurry of resolutions to eat better, exercise and to lose those extra pounds gained from over indulgence during the festive period. The motivation is usually there for the first few weeks but as time goes on – how can we motivate ourselves to keep going?

Obesity is a big problem these days with 58% of women and 65% of men were overweight or obese (2014 figures).

Why are we so worried about obesity?

Being obese is a major risk factor for heart attacks and strokes; developing diabetes; problems with muscles and joints such as chronic low back pain and osteoarthritis; some cancers (including endometrial, breast, ovarian, prostate, liver, gallbladder, kidney, and colon).

Exercise: To stay healthy, adults aged 19-64 should try to be active daily and in a week should do at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity **OR** 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity.

A good rule is that one minute of vigorous activity provides the same health benefits as two minutes of moderate activity. One way to do your recommended 150 minutes of weekly physical activity is to do 30 minutes on 5 days a week.

What counts as moderate aerobic activity? Examples of activities that require moderate effort for most people include fast walking; riding a bike on the flat; pushing a lawn mower.

Moderate activity will raise your heart rate and make you breathe faster and feel warmer. For instance, if you are walking then you should still be able to talk but not sing! If you are not breathless when walking then it's likely that you are not walking fast enough for it to count as moderate activity.

What counts as vigorous aerobic activity? Examples of activities that require vigorous effort for most people include jogging or running; fast swimming; riding a bike fast, or up a hill.

Vigorous activity makes you breathe hard and fast. If you're working at this level, you won't be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath. In general, 75 minutes of vigorous activity can give similar health benefits to 150 minutes of moderate activity.

Of course, the above advice is all fine and well in theory but in reality it can be difficult for the majority of people to try to fit regular exercise into their normal busy lives.

Ideas the majority of people should be able to incorporate into their lives easily are: Taking the stairs instead of the lift; parking the car far away from the shops and making yourself walk a bit further; getting off the bus stop one stop early and walking the rest of the way; getting up from the sofa to change the channel instead of using the remote control. These are all small changes but are realistic goals to achieve, and will have an impact over time.

We probably all know what's good and what's bad for us...burgers, pizzas, chips, chocolate, ice cream, cake...but it can be very difficult to maintain the perfect diet that we all know we are supposed to be eating.

There are a million different types of diets out there and they all probably work, as long as you stick to them forever, but some can be quite restrictive on your lifestyle.

The average man needs 2,500 calories a day, and the average woman 2,000 calories. Start by looking at the calorie content of most foods and keep a diary for a day or two, to get an idea of how many calories we are ingesting – it will give you an idea of how quickly calories get used up and how calorific some foods are.

Diet and exercise: Obviously depending on how active we are and the exercise we do will impact on our individual calorie allowance but if people want to lose weight, then the calories ingested should be less than the calories used. If you exercise more, then your metabolic rate goes up, so often your appetite can increase with exercise, as your body may not be aware you are trying to lose weight.

How many calories do you think half an hour of brisk walking burns? Answer – about 80 or 90 calories, so a 51g Mars bar (which is 229 calories) would take over an hour of brisk walking to burn off. Therefore, unless you are a professional athlete, it can be quite difficult and time consuming to lose weight by exercise alone, without making any changes to diet. Instead, we should be looking at making simple changes that are sustainable long term.

Simple changes we can try making are:

Switching to wholemeal pasta or bread instead of white as they contain more fibre and usually vitamins and minerals

Portion sizes – How often do we buy cakes or puddings that state ‘serves 6’ but end up eating the whole cake between 3 or 4 people? The portion size of rice or pasta is the size of our fist – compare that to what is usually on our plates and often the serving will probably be double or even triple the recommended portion size.

Drinks – There are a lot of sugar and calories hidden in drinks that we are probably not aware of. How many calories do you think is in a 200mls glass of orange juice? Bearing in mind it is a 200ml serving, which is probably less than the size of glass most of us use. (Answer: about 100calories). How about a Starbucks Grande Latte? 188 calories and that’s not including any cake or biscuit...It is amazing how quickly 2,000 or 2,500 calories get used up when just adding up the calorie content of drinks alone. Ideally we should all be switching to water only, but instead switching to no added sugar diluting juice or requesting skinny lattes (skimmed milk, instead of semi skimmed milk or even full fat milk as some places use), or even diet versions of fizzy drinks to begin with, is a

good start. For teas and coffees, if you use sugar try switching to sweetener with an aim to cutting out sugar altogether.

Dr J Reid, Doune Health Centre

SCOTTISH
RELATIVES
and ROOTS
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Ordinary People, Interesting Lives

Researching family history can be an exciting, revealing and challenging activity, which at once can be absorbing, addictive and even obsessive! The findings can solve mysteries, answer questions and equally reveal new ones, and often change lives and perceptions. The activity offers a sense of fulfilment, reward and satisfaction. However, it can also be a very time consuming activity, which requires huge commitment, patience and resilience, often encountering “brick walls”.

Prompted by the deaths of my parents some years ago, and never having met any of my grandparents, I felt that our immediate family were in danger of losing important information about the generations, which preceded us, with nothing to pass on to future generations. I decided to find out more about my ancestors so that I could pass on a legacy to my future generations. Little did I know that I would discover extraordinary facts and news about seemingly ordinary people!

When clearing out my parents’ house, I was fortunate to find a family bible which contained details of some my ancestors, and some WWI correspondence from the War Office which, together with an elderly aunt’s carefully documented collection of original source documents such as birth, marriage and deaths certificates, enabled me to begin the construction of a basic family tree which formed the basis for further research.

While I knew some of my mother’s side of the family, I knew much less about my father’s ancestors, and specifically his own maternal grandmother and grandfather. My father’s twin brother was Robert Scott Bourhill and my aunt explained to me that Robert was named after my great grandfather, Robert Scott, of whom I had no knowledge.

The marriage certificate of Robert Scott and his wife, my great grandmother Margaret Gillies Peattie, showed that at the time of their marriage, Margaret was a nurse in a private home in Edinburgh and Robert was a gamekeeper, who was normally resident in Margham, South Wales. This aroused my curiosity as I had always wondered why there was a gravestone for my great grandmother in Scotland, but not for her husband.

I discovered that the couple had moved to Margham after their marriage in 1893, and raised a family – my grandmother Daisy and my great uncle Robert Scott, or Bert. My great grandfather was the head gamekeeper for the Talbot Family, who owned Margham Castle Estate, Port Talbot at that time. On 8th June 1898, Robert discovered a poacher within the grounds who shot Robert fatally, once in the face and then in the shoulder. The poacher, Joseph Lewis, told his friends about the incident who informed the police and Lewis was arrested and tried for the murder of Robert Scott. Lewis was found guilty and was the last person hung publicly at Swansea Prison on 30 August 1898. The volume of newspaper articles that I was able to find about this whole incident were at once fascinating, detailed and harrowing.

The Talbots were extremely supportive and sympathetic to the bereaved family. From original correspondence dated 19th June 1898 from Cavendish Place in London sent from the Talbots – the owners of the Margham Castle Estate at that time - it seems that they gladly provided a pension for Margaret in recognition of her husband's work, and tragic death, and this enabled the family to move back to Dalkeith in Midlothian where the family settled, renting a cottage from the Buccleuch estate and enabling her to set up a small business as a shopkeeper. Daisy became a dressmaker, and then ran the shop. Tragically, Bert was killed in action in the Somme in 1916, aged 20.

However, the terrible circumstances surrounding my grandfather's death keep him "employed". Using a variety of resources, I have learned as much about his life after death as of his life itself. This reveals that Robert is the resident ghost at Margham Castle, which is reputed to be one of the most haunted castles in Wales, hosting so-called "Fright Nights"!

I visited the Castle and the area four years ago, where the Friends of Margham Castle society very kindly hosted a tour of the castle and I saw the staircase and corridors where Robert is reputed to walk and I saw his gravestone, and the estate, which he managed. Uncannily, I also met the gentleman who conducts the ghost tours and who has 'met' my great grandfather! So a "virtual" family connection was made between 1898 and 2012, not something that everyone can boast!

If you would like find out more about your own family's past, or want to satisfy any curiosity that you have about your ancestral roots, contact me today for a no obligation chat.

muriel@scottishrelativesandroots.co.uk or phone me on 01786 826745
www.scottishrelativesandroots.co.uk

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