

The Grapevine

May 2018

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



Clinton running past the 1st water station manned by the Primary School volunteers

Running the Stirling Scottish Marathon

My journey to running this year's Stirling Marathon actually began from running in the event last year. I was hindered in training with injury after injury! Despite only doing a 7-mile treadmill run and a couple of 5km duathlons, I managed to finish with a time of 5hrs 21mins. Having always said I would only ever run one Marathon, this got me thinking about what time I could do, if I trained properly!!

So, I signed up for this year's Marathon. We have now moved into the area, from Maidenhead (just outside London), which we were in the process of doing when I ran last year's event.

Having run last year in memory of John Inglis and Cancer Research, I gave myself some pressure during training, through injuries and the fear of letting people down who had taken the effort to sponsor me. So I decided to run this year just for myself. Then in September my son Luke

started school at Kincardine in Menteith Primary School and I joined the Parents Council. I then realised how difficult it is for smaller community schools to raise money, so I thought it was a fantastic opportunity to raise money for the school, if I ran for them. I set a target of raising £500 and wanted to get my time down below 5 hours!!

With the training proving very difficult, due to the amount of snow and poor weather we experienced, plus a flu bug that I couldn't seem to shift, I had only done a few treadmill runs. Then, on the 22nd March, I got my first 10 miles training run done, this was way behind any running programme that I had in mind. The donations were starting to come in and I was getting regular runs in. On Easter Sunday I got a fantastic 16miles run completed, which helped with the mind-set for the Marathon. The support that I received, from the school and the local community, has

been amazing.



The school invited me in to do the daily mile run with all the kids, where we had them all sign my running shirt, it was great fun! The school and Parent Council volunteered to do the first water station at the Safari Park junction, this was manned by parents, students (past, present and future) and family members. It was amazing! The cheers of support that you get during the Marathon really do spur you on. So, **thank you** to everyone who came out to the roadside to cheer all the runners on.

With a finishing time of **4hrs 47mins** and a total of **£1,173.75** raised, for an amazing little school, I would just like to say a **MASSIVE** Thank You to everyone who sponsored me.

As I mentioned earlier, I always said I would only do one Marathon. However, I feel I could go under 4hrs 30mins!!! So, I have already entered for next year!

Thank you again.

Clinton Main

Births



Kelly and George Hepburne-Scott tell us:

Robin James was delivered in the car park of the maternity unit at Forth Valley Hospital at 18.17 on January 20th 2018 after a memorable drive! He weighed in at 8lbs 1 oz. His big sister Martha (just 2years) is very pleased with the new arrival and we are very much enjoying life at the Old Manse.

Can you take your next edition of The Grapevine by Email?

The paper copies of The Grapevine are delivered by a small group of volunteers. We understand that not everyone has access to a computer so we are very happy to hand deliver a paper copy to them. However if you could receive your copy by email please help us by sending us your contact details and a note of your address (so we know where to stop delivering a paper copy to). Thank you.

grasslands@hotmail.co.uk or christinemcbauer@gmail.com



It'll be exactly seven years in June, since Fiona and I arrived and began living and working amongst you here in

Blair Drummond, and we have thoroughly enjoyed these years, but now is the time for us to move on in life. Retirement beckons! During these years we have had the privilege of walking with you on some pretty hard journeys, and celebrating great family & community events. You also allowed us to get involved in the life of this place and people — your Primary School, your Hall, your annual Bar-B-Q and of course the farming that shapes this land and people. As we have done so, we've formed lasting and valued friendships (and not just with kirk-folk), and for all of this we will be forever grateful, both to you and to God.

The next stage of your local church's life is uncertain at present, as the national church wrestles with the difficulty of where to place a decreasing number of available ministers; so I'm glad to tell you that Rev Lynne Mack will continue to care for folk and take a lead in shaping the kirk's future here. Your current church building is great for weddings and funerals and also expensive to maintain, but Christian faith and its benefits don't need large impressive buildings. A warm sitting-room or Briarlands café have both been used in the past and God was in both!

Change is inevitable, beneficial and necessary; and in the same way that we have learned to do things differently on the farm, we need to do the same in our Christian living. This is not a new, unknown experience - and if the next phase seems unclear, then each of us needs to help in shaping that future in order to ensure that those things we value — such as Christian care and compassion, worship opportunities and community cohesion continue, albeit in a slightly different form, or space.

Its time to step-up, not step away.

Ministers come and go, but God is always present and available for consultation!

Fiona and I thank you for being that welcoming, caring community that will always hold a special place in our hearts, and I'm pretty sure you'll be welcoming us back quite often.

Yours in Christ,

Your friends

Rev Andy & Fiona

Andy's last Sunday worship with the three Church of Scotland congregations will be on Sunday 24th June 2018, at the slightly later time

of 10.00am in Kincardine in Menteith Church where we'll be joined by folk from Gargunnock and Doune. It'll be followed by 'Brunch' in the Blair Drummond Community Hall.

Faith in Farming – The future looks good

This year's Faith in Farming event at Briarlands arranged through the Kirk, saw more than 120 folk enjoying three great speakers telling of how they are doing a traditional job in a new way. Rebecca McEwan of Arnprior Farm was





first up, explaining how as well as still tending sheep, the farm launched "Arnprior Pumpkins" several years ago and now grows 6000 pumpkins over the summer to sell to enthusiastic Halloween revellers who pick their own. "Lambing-live" has also enabled families to visit

the farm during the Spring to discover where their food comes from, and their latest venture will be Glamping-pods complete with swimming pool.

Meanwhile from Ayrshire, Rev Chris Blackshaw explained why the Church of Scotland appointed a minister to the farming community and how that works as he supports farming families and those involved in the industry through home visits and organising support through Ayr Mart. As well as being a minister, Chris and his wife run a small farm in Cumbria. (Recently Chris was interviewed



on BBC Radio Scotland's *Out of Doors*, and presenters suggested that having a chaplain in every Mart would be a great idea. We agree!) Meanwhile Bob Gray of South Glassingall Farm, toured the world with the Nuffield Trust and revealed how farmers across the globe from Indonesia to Israel, were using technology and science to supply increasing food demand.

Members of the RHET choir sang songs old and new, and the gathering also participated in the evenings activities, both in worship and 'The Great Farm Implement Photo-quiz'. This was the fourth Faith in Farming event to celebrate our agricultural life, and we hope it won't be the last. Huge thanks go to Briarlands for their hospitality, and all who participated.

Stephen Kerr MP: Energy Tariff Cap

Capping the price on energy bills

In Westminster I am a member of the cross party Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee. Consumers' energy bills are one of the most important issues we are dealing with, which is why this new legislation, that will introduce an energy cap for domestic energy supplies, is so important. The Committee reported last month that it was overwhelmingly in support of this policy. The Bill will require the regulator (OfGEM) to introduce price cap for all customers, which would run until 2020, with provision to be extended if needed. There are already caps in place for those customers on pre-payment meters and for certain vulnerable groups. This would now introduce a cap on the price any customer would pay if they were on a variable or default tariff.

There will be opportunities for Green Energy tariffs to be exempted from the cap, to ensure they can be made available. Although switching suppliers is encouraged, a recent report stated that only 18% of customers do so on a regular basis and that many customers remain with the 'Big 6' energy companies, despite there now being over sixty suppliers operating. This is an important opportunity to stop many customers from paying a lot more than they need to and ensure we have a consumer led marketplace.

I will continue to support this legislation as it progresses through Parliament.

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No job too small
Contact: Clinton Main
Tel: 01786 842927
Mob: 07909967819

Email: Clinton.main@btinternet.com

Kincardine in Menteith Parish Church

At the end of June we say farewell to our Minister, Rev Andy Campbell. He has ministered to this parish, along with Gargunnock and Kilmadock Doune, for the past 7 years.

Andy has been very much involved in all that has been happening in rural life, such as helping with harvest and lambing. He organised four Faith in Farming events, all of which were very well attended, and could always be found providing commentary at Gargunnock and Doune & Dunblane Shows. He has supported the local Youth Club, Curling Club, Blethers Lunch Club, the Community Hall, Primary School, High School, and Camphill Blair Drummond but most importantly Kincardine in Menteith Parish Church.



Andy at the Royal Highland Show

In his 40 plus years in ministry there have been many highlights, with two happening whilst Andy has been ministering in this area. The first being when Stirling area hosted the Royal Highland Show in 2014-2015 with Andy being Chaplain to the Show and conducting the first ever christening at the Show. The other was being invited to stay at Balmoral Castle with the Queen and other members of the royal family.

Over the years Andy has been very well supported in his work by his wife Fiona. They will be very much missed in the parish/community and as they head up to Oban, we all wish them a long and happy retirement.

Janette Gilliland, Session Clerk

Memorial Bonspiel for Graeme

Blair Drummond Curling Club held a Bonspiel in memory of Graeme Giles. The Bonspiel was contested by all the Clubs Graeme was involved in - Blair Drummond, Stirling, Borestone and Airthrey Curling Clubs.

Coaching was another of Graeme's interests, assisting in sessions for Stirling Young Curlers, who were also represented at the Bonspiel, and were last year's winners of the Graeme Giles Trophy. This was donated by Graeme's wife Clare, and is competed for annually.



This year it was won by the home Club, Blair Drummond Curling Club, who successfully fended off the opposition. The best shot of the night was won by Sandy Holl, Skip of the Blair Drummond Club, who is also an active member of Stirling Young Curlers.

Blair Drummond is an active, friendly Club and would welcome anyone interested in coming along and taking up the sport.

Please contact myself, Anne Christie on 07977441108, or Secretary Steve Walker on 07971616135, if you would like further information about having a go at curling, or joining Blair Drummond Curling Club.

Anne Christie, Chair, Blair Drummond Curling Club

Glass & clothing recycling

If using the recycling bins at the hall and you find they are full, please take your glass/clothes away with you to recycle elsewhere. *Thank you*.

Blair Drummond Blethers

Our meetings in the Blair Drummond hall on the last Monday of the month continue all year, so new folks over 50 years are always welcome to join us. Come along at midday and enjoy soup and sandwiches.



Fiona introducing Dr Murray Cook

In April we enjoyed an interesting talk by Dr Murray Cook, Stirling Council Archaeologist. He spoke about the Blair Drummond Torcs, the numerous local Brochs in the context of the area's history, and the arrival of the Romans to this part of Scotland.



The Blair Drummond Torcs

It was such a popular topic that we hope to welcome him again in the autumn, for a session for the wider Blair Drummond community. Blair Drummond Blethers is 5 years old in May! So we will be celebrating on the 28th, come and join us for a special session and delicious cake! You'll get a warm welcome

Alison Coates

Blair Drummond Hall Diary Dates

Weekly Classes

Wednesday: Ballroom Dancing – 7pm – 9.30pm

Events

Monday 28th May: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12-2pm.

5th Birthday Party

Saturday 2nd June: Annual Family BBQ in Blair Drummond Safari

Park from 6.30pm. (See advert on Page 17)

Monday 25th June: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12-2pm.

Chat afternoon.

Monday 30th July: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12-2pm.

Games afternoon.

Monday 30th August: Blair Drummond Blethers. 12-2pm.

Chat afternoon.

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 or info@blairdrummondhall.co.uk

Councillors for our area

Martin Earl

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earlm@stirling.gov.uk

Jeremy McDonald

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Evelyn Tweed

Tel: 01786 233121 tweede@stirling.gov.uk

Blair Drummond Smiddy

We must start this article with our exciting news! Blair Drummond Smiddy was the Regional Winner in the Farm Shop and Deli Awards! We are all delighted and so pleased that we are obviously doing something right.

The award winning Smiddy Butchery has been presented with more prizes by Scottish Craft Butchers!

- GOLD for Smoked Dry Cured Bacon
- GOLD for Unsmoked Dry Cured Bacon
- 6 GOLD for Smiddy Steak Burger
- SILVER for Dry Cured Beef Bacon
- SILVER for Italian Burger
- SILVER for Steak, Cheese & Jalapeno Burger

All produce made in store by our skilled staff.

Other news is that the road to the Smiddy has been tarmacked, as I am sure many of you will have noticed. A much smoother drive now!

Our butchers have been winning lots of prizes again. Stewart, the Butchery Manager, was in Ireland recently, for the World Butchery Competition, representing the UK; and while the UK didn't win, it was commended. At the Craft Butchers Competition in Perth in April, the boys won 3 gold medals and 3 silver medals (see above for details!) The boys managed to do all of this as well as feeding all their regular customers. The Cafe has been very busy recently with school holiday folks as well as lots of tourists. It is looking like it will be a busy summer! The counter has been heightened and turned and this has helped create a more professional space from which to work. The Menu will be changing soon, so all our regulars can look forward to that.

The Shop and Deli are constant in their delivery of new products for all our customers. We like to keep people interested!

Linda

Doune Health Centre

Prostate Cancer - The PSA Test

What is it?

Prostate-specific antigen or PSA. This test measures the level of this protein in a man's blood. For this test a blood sample is taken and sent to a laboratory for analysis.

What's so interesting about it?

PSA testing is in the news/media again and is receiving a lot of coverage. We have seen an increase in patients asking for this test recently. Currently there is no national screening programme for prostate cancer in the UK, as screening remains controversial.

Elevated PSA blood results are common and can often lead to investigations that are invasive with potential complications. A high level does not automatically mean cancer. It can be due to other conditions, such as a simple urine infection.

Should I have it checked?

It is important to think about whether the blood test is right for you. We recommend that you talk to your GP/Practice nurse for further advice before opting to have the test. Reasons which may cause a false elevation of the test include: -

- Recent sexual activity (in the last 48 hours)
- o Vigorous exercise, including cycling and horseriding
- Urine infections
- Catheter insertion or bladder surgery

If you are a male over 50 years, suffer from urinary symptoms/family history of prostate cancer, then we recommend that you talk to us and it might be useful to look at the Website: Prostate Cancer UK, for up to date information.

Pneumococcal vaccine

We now have this vaccine back in stock. It is available for anyone 65 years and over, as a one-off injection, at any time of the year. It is also offered to patients in 'at risk groups'.

Pneumococcal infections are caused by bacteria that can lead to pneumonia, septicaemia and meningitis.

Linda Keay, Practice Nurse.



Red Kite Community Nursery in Doune will be offering fully funded sessions of 6 hours per day (9am – 3pm), Monday to Friday, term time from August 2018. Any child living in the McLaren catchment is welcome to apply for a place from their 3rd birthday until they go to school.

For further information please telephone 01786 841752 or email enquiries@redkitecommunitynursery.org.uk

Local Bird Watching

Every once in a while life takes an unexpected, sometimes dramatic, turn and you find yourself wondering "How did THAT happen to me?"

I became a resident of Chalmerston Road because of one of these out-ofthe-blue events. When I first looked at the house I now call home my immediate thought was "This will do me for 6 months till I get on my feet"...18 years later I am still here.

As I settled into my new house all those years ago, one of the first things I installed in the garden was a bird table. I have always been a bit of a birder, although I would never go so far as calling myself a twitcher; I don't even *own* an anorak. But being interested in birds has been part of my DNA since I was a little boy and I soon discovered to my joy that the environment around here is unbelievably rich in bird-life.

The first visitors to my table were the usual suspects – sparrows. But on closer examination they proved to be mostly tree sparrows – a rarer and more refined version of that gallus little rogue, the house sparrow. It wasn't long before the local robins, chaffinches and all the colourful and acrobatic members of the tit family showed up too.

I had sited the table right outside my kitchen window and it provided a great diversion for my two kids as they ate their meals, as well as making it easy to see who was coming to feed.

Adding a whiff of the exotic to the normal garden residents were dozens of yellowhammers that visited through the winter months, looking for all

the world like little flocks of canaries. Siskins would occasionally come and hang upside-down on the peanut feeder, and from time to time those delicate jewels, our native goldfinches, would chitter and gossip at each other over sunflower seeds.

The daily addition of a few live mealworms soon tamed the dominant robin who was determined to defend his ownership of the table against all comers, to the death as it turned out. He finally met his match in a male sparrowhawk (called a musket in falconry) that learned to use the wall of the house as a blind and come screaming round the corner at full speed to grab whatever was at the table.

More than once I looked away from nothing but small birds only to look back the next second and see him staring back at me with murder in his eyes and a bundle of feathers in his claws, before vanishing in a blur of grey and silver and alarm calls. I started to wonder if I was feeding the little birds or really just feeding the sparrowhawk.

Hawks need food to get them through the lean times too, of course, and as a keeper of birds of prey I know that they only catch the old, the young, the sick or the stupid. My tame robin was probably the latter and he soon vanished in a puff of feathers. I have been careful not to tame them too much since then – let the spar work for it I say.

It wasn't long before I started to log the visitors to the bird table and to the garden as a whole – which eventually got extended to birds I saw in the general area, as well as the seasons that they tended to visit us.

The fieldfares and redwings arrive mid October and feast on my fallen apples all winter. On 1st January 2016 I saw a willow warbler in my apple tree – astonishingly early for such a migrant and it must have had a hard time finding insects among the bare branches. Chaffinches start to sing around Valentines Day, which is apposite. This year the skylarks have been singing since late February; unusual given the hard and lengthy winter we have had.

Curlews arrive almost on the dot on March 10th. The swallows bring the summer by mid April with the swifts screeching overhead by mid May, heralding the main influx of the willow warblers, chiff-chaffs, blackcaps and others of that melodious clan.

I have now logged 92 different species of birds in the area around Chalmerston Road. Some notable ones were a nuthatch that visited my peanut feeder in 2010 and a European white stork which I spotted feeding by the River Forth, the red legs and black and white plumage distinguishing it immediately from the grey herons which raid my goldfish pond. A redstart once hunted insects from my apple tree and an osprey

regularly flies over with a fish in its claws in the summer evenings. After a storm a few years back I spent an afternoon rescuing wind-blown guilliemots from the fields before the buzzards and crows got to them. They formed a nice little flotilla going down the Forth together and I hope they made it back to Bass Rock from where they had probably been blown by the fierce easterly the night before.

I used to see lots of common partridges but sadly these are not at all common now, and every winter we had visits from hen harriers, the little males in their blue-grey suits and the females with their long legs would chase blackbirds and fieldfares in our hedges. But it has been many years since I have seen them and a bird more persecuted by gamekeepers it is hard to find.

You may be surprised also at the number of merlin and peregrine falcons that are in the area. A few years ago when there was heavy snow and the fields were covered for weeks, you could spot them easily in the middle resting up. This is common behaviour for these raptors believe it or not; they are not natural perchers in trees, but they usually go unnoticed on the ground because they are so well camouflaged against a ploughed field.

As I write this, the peanut feeder is being hammered by a great spotted woodpecker; 18 years and no regrets – you might say that a bird-table turned my house into a home.

Chic McSherry

BLAIR DRUMMOND ESTATE

Hardwood Logs
Hardwood Logs
E95/ half load
Hardwood Limbs
Softwood Logs
Softwood Logs
Softwood Limbs
E100/load
£140/ load
Softwood Limbs
£80/load

Small bags £6 for hardwood Small bags £5 for softwood

Contact: Michael McKinstry

Tel: 01786 841728 Mob: 07955 124057

Royal Highland Educational Trust (RHET)

RHET Forth Valley is pleased to announce that the **RHET Run** is back, on **Saturday 16th June 2018.**



2017 RHET Run

This is a **5k Family Run**, from Briarlands Farm, round the Safari Park and back. The route is flat, traffic free and with the chance of seeing some of the Safari Park residents! All money raised will go to RHET, whose aim is to 'take the classroom to the countryside' and educate children as to where their food comes from; with free farm visits and classroom talks.

Katie Brisbane, Project Co-ordinator, RHET Forth Valley.

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Sue and Bonny

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07738236673

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Blair Drummond Community Hall Association

Annual Family BBQ

On Saturday 2nd June from 6.30pm

In Blair Drummond Safari Park

Tickets £5 (under 5s free)

BYOB & Snacks

Ticket by admission only

Contact Christine on 01786 841191, Catherine 01786 860246, Louise 01786 841352 or any committee member



GARTMORE VILLAGE PLANT SALE

Proceeds to Strathcarron Hospice

Saturday 12th May

10.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

The Village Hall
Main Street
GARTMORE
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Admission £4.00 (Children free)

includes Tea /Coffee and delicious Home Baking

Please support Strathcarron Hospice



ring, working and growing together

SPONSORED BIKE SAFARI

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COME AND JOIN THE FUN ON SATURDAY 9 JUNE 2018

Registration from 6pm for a 7pm start

Camphill Blair Drummond invites you to the 7th annual sponsored bike safari around Blair Drummond Safari & Adventure Park to help raise funds for our Appeal.

Choose from 3 bike challenges - Ostrich, Zebra & Cheeky Monkey or our Tortoise walking challenge.

Please contact Andrea Khan on 01786 841573 or e-mail appealteam@camphillblairdrummond.org.uk

KKKKKKKKKKKK

Camphill Blair Drummond is a unique community that provides a wonderful safe home and meaningful work opportunities for adults with learning disabilities.

www.camphillblairdrummond.org.uk

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

¼ page £10½ page £15Full page £20

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

christinemcbauer@gmail.com

or

grasslands@hotmail.co.uk

Items for Edition 29 should be submitted by **31th July 2018**, sent by email, in **Word or Open Office**, 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 our ever-developing mailing list.

Thank you

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

Reflecting the change in legislation, the Blair Drummond Community Hall Committee Grapevine newsletter editorial team wish to highlight the following to its readers –

The information we hold, regarding email addresses, is held in a secure setting and not shared with other organisations, companies or individuals. The information is used to send out copies of the Grapevine to our readers electronically.

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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. All contributions should permit publication in both print and digital format.

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

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