

ISSUE 67 - SPRING 2024
FREE

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Dear friends,

From the depths of winter come the signs of spring.

Amidst the colder and windier days, come buds on the trees and snowdrops from the earth. There's a song we sing at Orwell and Portmoak that says: "In the cold and snow of winter, there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see."

The odd warm days give way to bulbs blooming before they should, but you can't hold back the natural cycle of the seasons. For it is nature at work. You can't hold back the changing seasons. Day gives way to night which gives way to day again. Week gives way to week and month to month. They are almost a 'law' to themselves.

But there is more than nature at work. If we believe that there's a divine being behind the structure of day and night and the changing seasons, Christmas becomes a reminder that God came and Easter a reminder that God loves. But for this to occur, it took an astonishing breaking of the laws behind what we think of as natural birth and death.

This month the planetarium visits Milnathort to show off amazing sights of our solar system and galaxies. One of those stars is just the right size and our planet earth is just the right distance for life to flourish. Ninety-three million miles – no more and no less! From trees to microbes, from sea creatures underwater to land animals can survive all kinds of conditions. If we were closer or further away from the sun, life could not go on.

Isn't this just breath-taking? Nature inspires us to wonder! As the children's rhyme puts it: "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are!" The world we live in is much more than a monstrous machine on which we constantly tread. Don't let yourself be trapped in some kind of cage of your own making. Take time to look upwards and outwards. Since life is fragile and every day is precious, take time to look inwards.

Your friend and locum-minister,

Rev. Dr. Robert Calvert

ROBERT CALVERT



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If you would like to contribute to Stramash, please email the Stramash team on the email below:

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Taking part in Britain in Bloom



December 2022

Kinnesswood in Bloom were invited to take part in Britain in Bloom in 2023. Due to our success in the Beautiful Scotland competition in 2022 we were put forward as one of 4 groups to represent Scotland. We were to be in the "village" category. However we were not to say a word to anyone until February 2023 when the groups throughout Britain would be formally announced. What did all our members think? We had taken part before many years ago when we were at a very early stage of development and had done quite well as beginners. Let's go for it. We would be doing the same work as we did for Beautiful Scotland anyway. Maybe not as it turned out!

January 2023

At one of our meetings a plan was formulated and we sought the support of Jenny and Elspeth from PKC and Juliette from Beautiful Scotland. Perth had taken part in Britain in Bloom a couple of years ago when Scotland scooped most of the awards. There was a lot to live up to.

February

It was official and we made contact with our fellow nominees, East Haven representing the seaside, Bonnie Blantyre Large Towns and Aberdeen in the City categories. Juliette suggested we meet up as a group.

March

We hosted the meet up event and had a fun day, showing the groups round the village and providing hospitality. We quickly learned that they were all very different groups. Bonnie Blantyre had a wonderful facebook page with lots of posts about what their bonnie bees had been up to.

Throughout February and March Norma and the crafting ladies were busy working with the school to produce art work for the festival on the theme of wild flowers. Gillian Ross also worked with the P6 pupils on the same theme for their John Muir award. The historical figures were revamped with new faces, cleaned and refurbished clothes and three additional figures added, two children and a dog.

April

In the holidays a large delivery was made of mushroom compost. Beds inside and outside the polytunnel were filled up and more compost distributed throughout the village. The team really rallied to get the job done and we were to reap the rewards later in the season.

We also built a tyre structure at the entrance to the school, recycling old tyres and painting them in vivid colours. When they were planted up it looked amazing.

Before and after the Easter holidays the regular Tuesday afternoon work parties resumed at Portmoak Primary School. Children were soon planting tatties and peas outside and loads of seeds inside.

May

In May the work started in earnest to improve the garden areas, replace tubs and continue planting. Some tubs had been there many years and were beginning to rot. They were replaced with new full size barrels and some nifty stencilling by Carol. There was a bit of extra funding from PKC for taking part in Britain in Bloom and thanks to the generosity of villagers and supporters we were able to do a lot of replacing and replanting. Janice, our treasurer had her work cut out this year. The

efforts in 2023 will last for years to come. By now work parties were not just on Saturday mornings but during the week as well. Carol and John in particular were seen on the main street on a daily basis.

We began negotiations to refurbish the bus shelter and were greatly helped by Elspeth to get funding. It did require a great deal of work to scrape old paint off the walls, apply coatings and paint everything in sight. Matt did a great job of refurbishing the metalwork and installing the oak seating when it arrived.

Two bug hotels were built and Rory installed a living roof on the one at Gamekeepers. Rory also constructed a vegetable stand which was placed in the picture garden. It proved to be popular over the summer with people both placing surplus crops in the boxes and taking what they could use.

June

During the Portmoak Festival, folk were able to see the wonderful wildflower art work done by Portmoak pupils and the crochet and knitted wildflower quilt. There was also the opportunity to see the painted wildflower boards done by P6 pupils and Gillian herself. It really was the best exhibition ever.

Meanwhile Gordon was working hard on the portfolio and doing an amazing job as usual. Another deadline was reached. He also designed some new signboards, notably the bug hotel signs and the wildflower boards which were installed in the bus shelter.

July

We were well aware by now that there were only a few weeks to go and it was all hands on deck to add the finishing touches.



We had a couple of sessions with Portmoak pupils at the school, to do a bit of work and refresh their memories. They also did a litter pick, involving parents and grandparents.

We even painted the lamp posts and some signs around the village. It was quite a job to source the right paint. It was real dedication to making the village look its best.

August

It was a relief to be visited by the judges on 2nd August. We had met them the night before and they proved to be a very entertaining pair. We were worried about sticking to a one hour tour as there was so much to show them but they indicated that the time schedule of one hour would be very relaxed.

On the day the rain mostly stayed away and we had an amazing time with Ian and Nick. We have done a tour of our lovely village so many times before that it was a pleasure taking them round. They loved everything they saw and were blown away by the school. The children were amazing and we just handed that part of the tour to them. Guided by Carol and John they also met Norma and David Buchan at the bus shelter, Morag in the main street, Mary and Jean at the Rose Garden, Pat and Linsey at the tots' garden, Jan at the school, Shelagh at Michael Bruce and Rory and Henrike at the cart. The final stop was Benarty View before we adjourned to the hall where all our KIB members and supporters were assembled. They had a chance to see pictures of developments over the years, examples of art work and Gordon's film of the village. We had hints of what they really liked about our village but then had to wait nearly three months to hear the results.

We continued to keep the village looking good and the bus shelter

refurbishment was completed including the oak boards with an inscribed Michael Bruce quote. Some of us went to the lovely garden party at Drummond Castle to celebrate 25 years of Take a Pride in Perthshire.

September

There was a further party at the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens where Beautiful Scotland had their award ceremony. We received a certificate of recognition for taking part in Britain in Bloom.

We continued to hold weekly gardening classes with the Portmoak pupils and they were very pleased to each receive a goody bag of vegetables, maybe even a few grapes. The teachers made use of the vegetables to do some soup making with their classes. Surplus produce was placed in the vegetable boxes in the village.

October

At last October came and five of us set off for London. We all made it a bit of a holiday and stayed a couple of nights. The base was ideal as it was within walking distance of everywhere we needed to be. After lunch we changed into our glad rags and arrived at the RHS headquarters where we met old friends from Scotland as well as our judges. Nick and Ian weren't giving anything away or were they? The format was to introduce each group in their category then announce the winner. First on were seaside - East Haven were joint winners of their category. We only had 4 in our group. We were delighted to be awarded GOLD and then ecstatic to be declared joint winners. We were all so pleased to get a gold, never mind the top spot in Britain. We then listened to the other categories.

Next came the special awards. We hadn't realised that we had been nominated for the one for working



with young people. There were 11 in that category and we knew little about any of them. Amazing! We won that award. We did know our judges loved the work at the school but there are many judges and many groups. The icing on the cake was John winning a Community Champion Award. It was well deserved as everyone can see how hard he works. We were sworn to secrecy until 7.30 as it was to feature in the One Show. There was hardly a mention, just a picture on a map so sorry to all those waiting in anticipation. There followed a night of celebration with the East Haven ladies. We received many messages of congratulation.

Our moment of fame came with press coverage and letters of congratulation from the Provost of Perth, the Lord Lieutenant of the county and even an announcement in the Scottish Parliament.

November

Beautiful Scotland wanted to have a local celebration. It had to be at the school and it had to be in November as the schools are very busy in December. Amazingly the school was available at the end of November. Barry and Juliette from Beautiful Scotland and Jenny and Elspeth from PKC were all available. All the schoolchildren, parents and supporters were invited. It was a very relaxed afternoon with short speeches of appreciation and the trophies being presented again. Then tea and cakes!

It has been a very busy year and we all enjoyed our Kinnesswood in Bloom experience. Thank you to all our supporters who keep us going, the villagers, our members, crafters, litter pickers, school and facebook followers.

It's time to think of next year!

NORMA SMITH



Foraging to make cordials! *part 1*

I first started making cordials by accident - I had been gifted some home grown, but rather sour grapes. I attempted to make some grape jelly, but it refused to set! I had no intention of wasting the syrup, so that is when the 'bug' started. We (granddaughter and me) had no idea what we could make until we 'googled'. To justify what we were doing we checked the health benefits of each and the following spring ventured out to forage.

Nettles are everywhere, so early June we headed out armed with leather gloves, double poly bag and scissors. After making a syrup, we add the clean nettle heads, leave for a week, but stir daily, then strain and bottle in sterilised bottles. Young nettle shoots are best, however I have made successful nettle cordial later in the year, but it is more aromatic in late spring or early summer.

Nettles are a super nutritious plant that are high in vitamins and minerals, including iron, calcium, and vitamin C, whilst also being anti-inflammatory.

Elderflowers are usually in bloom late June or early July but varies each year. Armed with a shepherd's crook to get the higher branches we cut off random flower heads, we never strip the bush, as that has impact later in the year. Elderflower is used for sinusitis, colds, flu, swine flu, bronchitis, diabetes, and constipation. Again, as with most floral cordials, it is a simple syrup, add the flower heads, and strain. Recipes vary. We tried adding ginger but decided that it was a waste of lovely elderflower and a waste of root ginger!

Rhubarb is a kind of weird one to choose. I think it started with stewed rhubarb and too much juice! As with most rhubarb dishes (apart from jam in my opinion), it is best with young sweet red stalks. The good thing about the rhubarb is that one can consume the remaining compote

after juice extraction. Rhubarb is a great source of vitamin K, which is important for blood clotting and bone health, it also has protective effects on blood vessels and blood pressure.

Nasturtium - another of why did we choose this one? Possibly because someone was constantly eating the nasturtium heads. Nasturtium is a dietary supplement that is used to treat respiratory infections, digestive problems, skin conditions, to boost the immune system and to reduce inflammation. I froze some flower heads, as the more flowers we picked the more flowers formed, I am not sure if they will work, but it costs nothing to try!

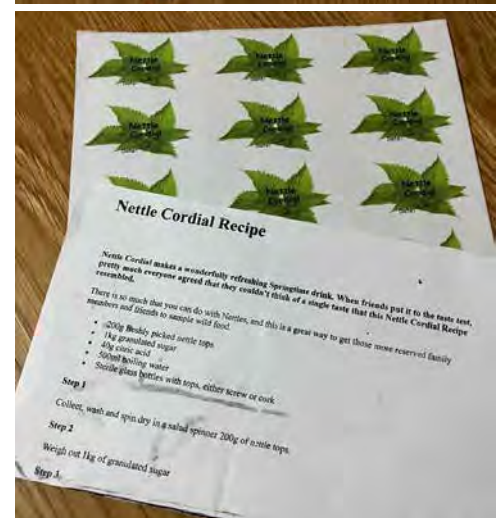
Elderberry has lots of health benefits - as immune boosting and full of antioxidants. I mentioned earlier that

when picking elderflowers, we pick high and random. It is easier getting higher flowers than berries. The berries at a lower level are easier picked, but again at random to leave enough for the birds. I add cloves, it lasts (if you hide it) till Christmas and is lovely served cold or warm.

The pleasure of finding a recipe (to prove that it's do-able), the foraging (especially if its granny and girls) - we are so fortunate to live in such a lovely part of Scotland with so much on our doorstep - the making and the tasting, it's like wine, each year is different. I am not sure which is number one favourite, but I think the florals are top of the list. I really hope that you get the inspiration to investigate and try foraging and concocting cordials. It would be lovely if you could share with others your recipes of what you achieve. Enjoy.

More to follow ...

MARGARET SPENCE



My Glenfarg

When my wife and I moved to Glenfarg 23 years ago it was a new start for us as I had retired from one job and was starting another. We quickly got involved in the community which was mainly centred around the Glenfarg Hotel, so it came as a bit of a blow when it closed down, almost 8 years ago, as we thought it would take the heart out of the village.



But here we are 8 years later and the community is thriving. We have a very active set of volunteers that seem able to turn their hand to whatever is required to make the village a better place to live. For example our weekly Coffee Lounge on a Thursday morning, held in the Village Hall, keeps growing and now attracts customers from far afield. the cakes are that good! When our bus service was cut, we started up Glenfarg Community Transport and within a year it now runs an hourly service from Kinross, through the village to Perth.

Keeping the village tidy is a very important issue for residents, and given the strain on local authority budgets there is always an opportunity for the volunteers to roll up their sleeves and clean

up. It could be Glenfarg in Bloom looking after the Green area or litter picking squad out on a Saturday morning. And of course we have the GITS (Glenfarg Improvement Team), a group of like-minded older gentlemen who get together to carry out community repairs, bulb planting, etc, we even clean the bus shelters, but we make it into a social event.

You are most welcome to visit and we'd love to see you on a Thursday at the Coffee Lounge, or take a trip on the No55 Community Bus, or take a walk from the village and visit Arngask Home Farm. So, despite losing facilities and services, Glenfarg residents have taken things into their own hands to ensure we have a great place to live and where the community spirit is alive and well.

DAVID AIRD



OASIS LADIES GROUP

Our first meeting of Oasis, this year, took place on 26th January in Portmoak Church, New Room. We are always pleased to meet up again after Christmas and New Year have past, when the days are dull and evenings seem dark and long.

It was an informal meeting with lots to talk about after a long break. There was the usual coffee, cake and chat then the fun and games we planned began. It was a morning of constant laughter and we had to pass

round the tissues as tears of laughter ran down our faces.

Our programme until June is varied and we try to alternate the months with speakers and some form of craft work.

We invite you to join us on the last Friday of each month. We are a friendly bunch and our meetings are very relaxed and welcoming.

The meetings are from 10.15am to 12pm. The upcoming programme is as follows:

Friday 23 February
Friday 29 March
Friday 26 April
Friday 31 May
Friday 28 June

Household Hints
Egg Painting
Speaker: Wilma Carragher
Art with Lynn
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We look forward to seeing you, everyone is most welcome.

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Letter from Grandma

*(Sent to me by my friends
Dick and Sheila in Hershey,
Pennsylvania: Duncan Stenhouse.)*

HONK  **JESUS**
If you

The other day I went to a Christian Bookshop and saw a "Honk if you love Jesus" sticker, and I put it on my car. I'm so glad I did so - what an uplifting experience followed.

I was stopped at a red light at a busy crossing, lost in thought about the Lord and how good he is, and I didn't notice that the lights had changed. It was a good thing that someone else loves Jesus, because if he hadn't honked I'd never have noticed. I've found that lots of people really love Jesus.

While I was sitting there, a man behind me started honking like crazy, and then he leaned out of his window and yelled "For the love of God, GO, Go!" What an enthusiastic cheerleader he was for Jesus. Everyone started honking! I just leaned out of my window and started waving and smiling at all these lovely people who loved Jesus. I even honked a few times myself to share in the love!

There must have been a man from a seaside town there because I heard him yelling something about a sunny beach. I saw another man waving in

a funny way with only two fingers stuck in the air. When I asked my teenage grandson who was sitting in the back seat, what that meant. He said it was probably a Hawaiian good luck sign or something. Well I have never met anyone from Hawaii, so I gave him the good luck sign back. My grandson burst out laughing, even he was enjoying the experience.

A couple of people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and started to walk towards me. I bet they wanted to pray with me, or ask which church I attended.

But this was when I noticed that the lights had changed and, so not wishing to hold anyone up, I gave a cheery smile and waved goodbye to all my new-found brothers and sisters. In my mirror I noticed that I was the only car that got through the lights before they changed again.

I felt very sad that I had to leave them all behind after all the love we had shared, so I slowed down, leaned out of the window and gave them the Hawaiian good luck sign and drove off into the sunset.

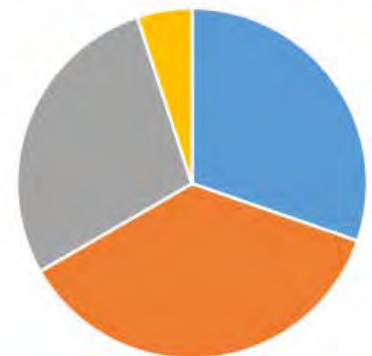
Orwell and Portmoak Church Finances

Orwell and Portmoak Church are fortunate that we are supported by donors of both time and talent, the Kirk Session thank you!

We regularly have specific collections to support Poppy Scotland, Overseas Mission along with other charities on a rotating basis such as Christian Aid, Trade-craft, Broke not Broken, KYTHE and our sister church in Mombwe, to name but a few. All of these collections are passed in full to the recipient.

Every £10 of 'regular' donations we receive are spent with consideration as shown below.

LINDA STEWART



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Tomato & Chilli sauces. The closure of Traidcraft has been extremely challenging for Meru Herbs, so if you could consider buying a jar of sauce or trying one of their jams, you would be making a difference. There are also new Lemongrass and Camomile teas. The products are available in the Church Office on South Street or at the service in Orwell Church on the first Sunday of the month.

Karena Jarvie



Update from Portmoak Toddlers

We held our Christmas fundraiser at Portmoak Hall on 3rd December 2023. This was extremely well attended and an opportunity for all our families to come together to join in some Christmas fun. We had home baking, Christmas crafts and activities. It was also a chance for the mums, dads, grannies, grandads and any other extended family who don't normally come to our sessions during the week to come and experience the Portmoak Toddlers fun. The majority of the funds raised were donated to Portmoak Hall.

Portmoak Toddlers meets twice a week: Tuesdays and Fridays 9.45-11.30am at the hall. These sessions are often parents and babies/toddlers first opportunity to mix and socialise in their community. The friendships and support that are shared here are highly valued and are an integral part of our community, holding a special place in our lives. Therefore we are motivated to continue to support the hall in any way we can, as losing this space would be devastating.



As a group we have contributed to developing the outdoor space and now have a safe and exciting play area at the back of the hall. All of the children have loved this space, however the fence and gates were in great need of being replaced as were becoming a hazard and safety concern. Following a plea on social media to see if anyone could come and help repair the damaged part of the fence we were delighted that Ross from Construction Management Solutions Fife offered to come and replace all of the fence and gates! We were all blown away with this kind donation and his generosity. We now have a safe outdoor space for our toddlers to enjoy.

If anyone fancies coming along to Portmoak Toddlers please come and join us on Tuesdays and Fridays. It is suitable from newborn to pre-school aged children. We are a volunteer run group, give us a follow on Facebook.

BARBARA ROBERTSON



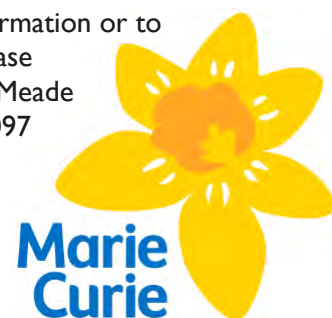
Marie Curie

The Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal 2024 is now in full swing! You're sure to spot the boxes of bright yellow daffodils, and our NEW LOGO in shops throughout area. Please donate and wear a daffodil proudly to let others know you are supporting the Marie Curie nurses that provide nursing care in our homes and hospices, free of charge, for people with ANY terminal illness.

A member of our fundraising group will also be at the Better Place to Live Fair March 23. Please stop by to learn more about the additional support services Marie Curie can now offer our patients and family members in the last months of life.

We'll also be keen to meet any gardeners that would be willing to participate in the OPEN GARDENS DAY in Kinross and Milnathort on Saturday June 29th, 12noon - 4pm, either by opening their garden to the public for an afternoon or volunteering to help with this popular fundraising event.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Marg Meade on 07907192097



Portmoak Festival 2023 Looking forward to 2024

The purpose of the Portmoak Festival both last year and this, was to provide opportunities for people to come together and reacquaint themselves at a time of year when the parish always looks beautiful. It was great that the fortnight started with the Portmoak Community Gala with fun for all the family on the Well Green – a fortnight seemed less rushed than the week we have traditionally held, and holding events a bit before the end of term seemed a sensible idea. Various groups were asked if they wanted to propose and organise an event for the programme. We decided to modernise and to offer payment by card, bookings by Eventbrite and social media communication. This has reduced admin at our end, but has not been without a few challenges - feedback and help to promote the programme next year would be welcomed. See Portmoak Festival facebook page for some pictures and details next year.

The mainstays of the programme were as usual the Pudding Club and the Afternoon Teas. What a lot of work goes into these and both events run like a slick machine! The hall was decorated with bunting and an exhibition of artwork done by Portmoak pupils. The Primary 6 class had been studying wildflowers as part of their John Muir award and the other classes were very happy to make wildflower pictures using different media. We had P1/2 children cutting, tearing paper, painting and sticking to make their wildflower meadows – these were

so beautiful – from a distance they looked like sophisticated fabric prints. Wildflowers were also displayed using felting, watercolour, zentangle and weaving. It made a magnificent display and was voted the best ever. Thank you to teachers and creatives who made time to work with the children, and to bring them along to see the exhibition. Also on display was a fabulous quilt made by ladies of the Kinross Handcraft Circle.

We were delighted that the Community Woodland Group organised a series of outdoor workshops for “Women who Whittle”. Those who attended had great fun in the Orchard both Mondays. The Woodland Group also supported Jazz in the Orchard on Sunday 11th but that was the day the heavens opened, leaving very wet grass and the threat of midges so it adjourned to the hall.

A cookery demonstration by Masterchef participant, Sarah Rankin, was a new venture and proved a highlight of the first week. It was a sell out and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended, with a complimentary glass and a few canapes provided by the Festival Committee. Sarah was a really entertaining speaker and cook, told us about other aspects of her cooking career, her forthcoming book, and promised that the recipes would appear in the Newsletter soon.

Portmoak Babies and Toddlers had a health and wellbeing theme, family yoga, a sports day as well as Dynamic Dance. Ladies Badminton held a “try

it” session and found at least one new member. Loch Leven Park Run continued each Saturday at the larder as a handy opportunity to work off all those puddings and scones.

A new event we had been considering for a year or two was a Community Climate Café. Evidence suggests that talking to “people like us” makes us more likely to make a change we may have been thinking about. We were delighted that Louise Batchelor agreed to MC in her usual informed and professional way, and that local net zero architect, Joanna Lockhart, agreed to reflect on discussions and give some pointers from her professional perspective. The focus was on energy saving, and several folk volunteered to share their experience, both good and bad, or air-source heat-pumps, EVs, solar panels and biomass boiler. One point made was that there is not enough electricity in the national grid if we go all electric, so reducing demand is the key, whether by insulation or other means. None of us knew quite how it would go but we certainly each learnt things and made contact with neighbours we may wish to consult further in future.

The final event, along with the draw of the very well supported raffle, was a jazz night on the 17th with our local jazz musician Dave Batchelor and some excellent musical colleagues.

Many thanks to all who contributed in any way – you know who you all are. Local events need a whole load of different talents, and many hands make light work. From planning,

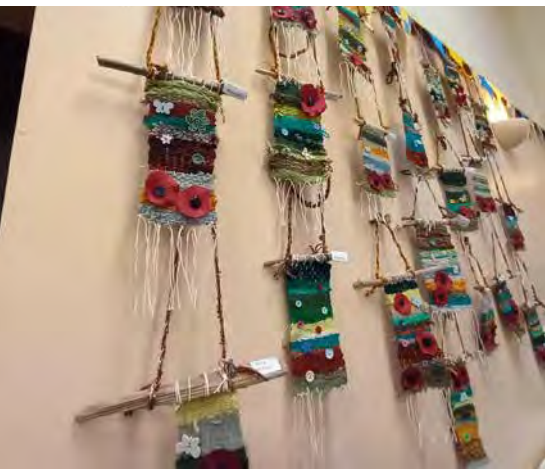




to admin, to money, to gathering raffle prizes, framing and hanging exhibits, making puddings, engaging extra servers, setting up PA systems, moving tables, cleaning the hall, printing tickets, selling tickets, coming along and spending a bit of money . . . please volunteer to help this year – all ideas for events with a difference welcome – several plans are already afoot – watch this space!

We are starting to get going for 2024 with the first two weeks of June lined up. There have been a number of suggestions for events, but we do need some fresh blood to organise these, or existing local groups to take one on. **Please get in touch with Norma Smith at tomandnorma.smith@gmail.com or Alison Robertson at alineil@btinternet.com if you can help.** We are a very welcoming group, and can guarantee lots of fun along the way. Hope you will join us.

ALISON ROBERTSON



Loch Leven Half Marathon

The Loch Leven Half Marathon is organised by Kinross Road Runners whose aim is to ensure that it continues to be one of the best half marathons in Scotland. The route is gently undulating round the scenic shores of Loch Leven. The event is open to runners aged 17 or over on the day. The race is run under UK Athletics Rules and is a Scottish Athletics permit event. This year, 2024, it is also the East District Half Marathon Championships.

The race takes place on Sunday 12th of May and will start at 9am. The start is on Clashburn Road in Kinross. We are also extremely

fortunate to have local Olympian Eilidh Doyle setting our runners off.

In 2023, for the safety of our runners, volunteers and spectators we took the decision to apply for a Temporary Traffic restriction order, which we did receive. This proved to be very successful for everyone involved. The 2024 event will be run in the same format as last year. The roads used will be fully closed for varying lengths of time. Please see the map for further details.

Kinross Road Runners would like to thank, in advance, all residents, and hope many of you will be out to support the runners as they pass.

ANN MALCOLM
KRR President

KINROSS ROAD RUNNERS LOCH LEVEN HALF MARATHON SUNDAY 12 MAY 2024

ROAD CLOSURES

B996 [A-B] FROM CLASHBURN CLOSE TO B9097 JUNCTION 08:45—09:45
 B9097 [B-C] FROM B996 JUNCTION TO KINGLASSIE ROAD 08:45—10:30
 B920 [C-D] FROM KINGLASSIE ROAD TO LESLIE ROAD 08:45—11:00
 A911 [D-E] FROM LESLIE ROAD TO BALGEDIE TOLL 08:45—11:30
 A911 [E-F] FROM BALGEDIE TOLL TO OLD RAILWAY LINE 08:45—12:00

RESIDENT ACCESS ONLY
 BURLEIGH ROAD, MILNATHORT 08:45—12:00
 AUCHMUIR BRIDGE TO LESLIE ROAD SCOTLANDWELL 08:45—11:30

Other closures and access points:

- A** Parking/Runners on road
- A-B (B996)** Clashburn Close—B9097 junction Closed 08:45—09:45
- B** B996 junction—Kinglassie road Closed 08:45—10:30
- B-C (B9097)** B996 junction—Kinglassie road Closed 08:45—10:30
- C-D (B920)** Kinglassie road - Leslie road Closed 08:45—11:00
- C** B920 Ballyngry—Auchmuir Bridge Traffic light controlled 08:45—11:00
- D-E (A911)** Leslie rd junction - Balgedie Toll Closed 08:45—11:30
- D** Resident Access ONLY FROM AUCHMUIR BRIDGE
- E-F (A911)** Balgedie Toll—Old Railway line Closed 08:45—12:00
- E** Resident Access ONLY FROM AUCHMUIR BRIDGE
- F** Resident Access ONLY

How is your heart?

This morning, I spent a couple of hours at a local hospital having my annual check-up.

This is something most people do in Japan. Companies organise checks for their full-time employees. For others, once you hit the magic age of 40, you can arrange to have your check at a hospital nearby.

You can't eat anything for at least 10 hours before the check-up, so most people go first thing in the morning. You register at the reception desk and are given multiple forms to fill in, asking about your general health, sleep, whether (and if so, how often) you snack between meals, drink alcohol, and exercise etc.

Then you wait to be called to the various stations for different tests. A nurse will measure your blood pressure, height and weight, and calculate your BMI. (Later they will also measure your waist and hips as well just to be sure you're in good shape!) You will also have a urine and a blood test before seeing the doctor who will check your eyes, ears, chest, breathing and abdomen. Depending on your age, you can also opt for various cancer screening tests. A couple of weeks later, you go back to collect the results and check with the doctor if all is well.

I think there are two main ideas behind the annual check-up. The first is to encourage you to live a healthy lifestyle. Given that Japan's life expectancy is one of the highest in the world, this seems to be working. The second is that, although you may look and feel healthy, it is possible

that something inside may not be. Finding this out sooner rather than later can make it easier to be treated.

One of the things they test is your heart. In Japanese there are two words for heart: 心臓 (shinzō) and 心 (kokoro). Your 'shinzō' is the physical organ which beats in your chest. Your 'kokoro' is more the centre of your feelings and thoughts. Whilst the doctor tested my 'shinzō', he was not able to test my 'kokoro'.

In Psalm 139 in the Bible, King David asks God to search him and know his heart ('kokoro'). He wants God to do a thorough inspection of his heart and thoughts to see if there is any offensive way in him.

Why is this necessary? Just like the medical check-up, it is possible to look healthy on the outside, but for something to be wrong on the inside.

As we go about our daily lives, it can be tempting to spend more time on our outward appearance, either literally in front of a mirror, or by thinking of the version of ourselves that we present to the world. But if we do not pay attention to our hearts, they can become increasingly cluttered with thoughts and attitudes which are not helpful. And just like the medical check-up, the sooner we find something that is wrong, the easier it can be to treat it.

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24

LORNA FERGUSON



Church Bulletin Howlers Spot the mistakes

Bertha Belch, a missionary home from Africa, will speak tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

Ushers will eat latecomers.

At a women's meeting, one of the women told others to boycott the local laundrette after she read the notice above the machines: "WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT, PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES."

Tuesday at 4pm there will be an ice-cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Thursday at 5pm there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become Little Mothers, please see the minister in his private study.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

Potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.

A song fest was held at the Methodist church on Wednesday.

The Senior Choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join them.

The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.



Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Next Sunday, a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and get a piece of paper.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Wednesday, the Ladies Liturgy Society will meet. Mrs Jones will sing "Put Me In My Little Bed" accompanied by the pastor.

Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7.00-8:30pm. Please use the back door.

The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth Into Joy."

The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev and Mrs Julius Belzer.

This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptised at both ends.

Gordon Menzies - of Gaberlunzie fame

Two questions which I am most frequently asked are, 1) Are you native to Milnathort? and 2) What made you become a professional entertainer? The short answers are 1) Perhaps, and 2) By accident. In conversation with the Rev. Duncan Stenhouse, I came up with more informative answers which now follow.

My father, both grandfathers and an uncle were all tenant farmers on the Atholl Estates near Pitlochry. I had a Gaelic speaking granny whose maiden name was Campbell and a poetry writing granny who had been a Macdonald. My mother sang Gaelic songs to me and taught me Scots songs at an early age, while her father taught me something of Scottish history including the saga of the Glencoe incident, and the 1689 Battle of Killiecrankie, a stone's throw from where I first saw light of day. My uncle was a Sgiathanach, so I really didn't have a chance. The spark of music was encouraged.

Dad died when I was very young and in the bad winter of 1947 my mother moved the family to Milnathort. I was 6 years old, and now, 77 years later, I am probably as near Native, as I am ever likely to be. My education was provided at Milnathort Primary School and thereafter, Perth Academy. At Perth, my English teacher Frankie Russell, and my Music teacher J. Carruthers Fraser fostered my love of music, Scottish history and the English language. I started writing songs about this time, most of which were absolute rubbish and have thankfully vanished into oblivion. Along with some friends in the local Rover Scouts, we formed a Skiffle Group and held dances to raise funds

for the organisation. Our musical influences then were Lonnie Donegan, Elvis Presley, Cliff Richard, Eddie Cochran et al. We listened to Radio Luxembourg for the Sunday night Top Twenty and the Scottish Dance Music on a Saturday night. The Rovers to whom I refer are Sandy Smith, Sandy MacCalman, Lindsay Sands, Eric Low, Brian Dewar and David Berry.

In later years I joined the City of Glasgow Police Force and spent a total of 13 years first in uniform and later in the CID I bought an acoustic guitar and taught myself to play. I later bought a banjo and an electric/acoustic mandoline and did something similar. At some point during those years, I met Robin Watson who was a cop in Maryhill, he was also interested in music. We joined together to play at police functions and later gravitated to folk clubs and concerts as the Gaberlunzie Folk Duo. There was opposition to our extra-curricular activities and eventually we were accused of taking an active part in politics by singing our songs, some of which cherished partisan content. The Police Conditions of Service at that time barred any officer from being politically involved, so Robin and I parted company with the police. For a total of 50 years, as Gaberlunzie, we toured, Britain, Ireland, Europe, Canada, America and the Middle East. We issued about 30 albums of our songs, made numerous TV appearances, made many friends and met many interesting people along the way.

I now live in Drunzie, Glenfarg with my wife Evelyn who has served the NHS as a GP and a paediatrician in Perth and Fife. Our three children, Sarah, Cree and Rachael have flown the coop, but happily, return regularly.

GORDON MENZIES



Have Bible Will Travel

Rev Peter Meager has written a book of short Bible studies, which started as reflections for Cupar Old Parish Church during lock down. Peter was a Parish Minister in Fife, before becoming the Clerk to St Andrews Presbytery and a parttime NHS Chaplain in an acute psychiatry setting. The book is raising funds for the Dystonia Society and Cupar Old Parish Church and is available from bookshops and online.

Peter says, "I offer these reflections in the hope that some may raise a smile and that others might support, challenge or comfort you. Above all, my prayer is that we might all find renewed joy and hope as we walk the road of christian faith together."

KARENA JARVIE



**RAGS MAKE PAPER
PAPER MAKES MONEY
MONEY MAKES BANKS
BANKS MAKE LOANS
LOANS MAKE BEGGARS
BEGGARS MAKE RAGS**

Anon.
18th Century
Wookey Hole
Mill, Somerset

Kindness from a Community

It is amazing how the farming community pulls together when it comes to the realities of adverse situations whether it is weather, health and/or accidental circumstances.

West Fife & Kinross branch of the National Farmers Union Scotland (WF & K NFUS) held a dinner and charity auction early December 2023. 100 farmers, friends and family turned up in the Green Hotel where a very good meal was consumed followed by the auction of 45 items. The generosity of local businesses who donated the fantastic contributions was mind blowing, as was the bidding for each lot.

Auctioneer for the evening was the renowned David Brown who wields the gavel at breeding, store and pedigree cattle, as well as at farm dispersal sales on behalf of United Auctions.

There was an excellent variation of donations to purchase; Christmas trees, boiler suits, net wrap, buckets of minerals, grass seed, a signed Scotland rugby shirt, bottles of whisky from Inchdairnie Distillery, vouchers for Baynes bakery, bottles of single malt whisky, hampers, a tonne of seed oats and barley, bottles of wine, vouchers for car MOT, flight experience at Balado Airfield, jackets, bib & brace water proofs, vouchers for a stay at a shepherd hut and also the Hideaway Experience in Perthshire, an arrangement of flowers, just a selection of items that were auctioned. The auctioneer had work hard to keep up with the bids that were flying in from the

assembled as well as written bids from people who could not attend on the evening.

But the evening would not have been so successful but for the hard work of two members of the WF & K NFUS, Robert (Rab) Bell and Angela Mill. They came up with the auction idea to raise money for a worthy cause that has or could affect any of us at any time, the Stroke Units at Perth Royal Infirmary (PRI) and Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy. Some of us have had the experience of the work and kindness these units have given whether it is as a patient, a relative or friend of a patient. By the end of the night, between purchases and donations on the night, the total raised was just over £10,500. The following days after the auction, many other donations sent to the branch raised the total to £11,000.

Recently the WF & K NFUS branch delivered two cheques of £5500 to each stroke unit. I was privileged to be asked, along with our daughters Rebecca & Fiona, to attend at PRI Stroke Unit to witness the hand over of the cheque. Being in the company of these special nurses, physiotherapists and therapists again was heartening; in my eyes they will remain friends for life.

Psalm 112:5 **"Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice".**

Proverbs 11:25 **"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed".**

I believe these quotes are extremely apt to the people, businesses and venue that made the charity event a great success.

MARK THOMSON





Left: Erasmus Bridge; Above: Rotterdam; Below: Zadkine sculpture

On Rotterdam

Having lived for almost twenty years in Rotterdam with my family, I've been asked to share something about living in Europe's largest port. My wife Lesley-Ann was registrar of the Erasmus School of Management while I was minister of the of the Scots Kirk from 1995 to 2014. During that time, our four children grew up in the Netherlands and learned to speak Dutch. Coming with my family from Glasgow, we felt at home in this industrial and working city. It was said that “in Rotterdam when a man buys a shirt, the sleeves have already been rolled up.”

It's also been said that “God created the world but the Dutch created Holland.” That's because Holland has an urban area between Amsterdam and Rotterdam that is land reclaimed from the sea. The next time you fly through Schipol, one of the world's busiest airports, remember that the Netherlands has always had to battle against the sea. As a result, they have the best water engineers in the world as they had to create an intricate system of waterways, canals and water pumps.

The Scots had their own church in Rotterdam since 1643 but the last one was destroyed during the bombing of the city in 1940. The second world war had an awful effect on the city. One thousand people together with homes, businesses and four churches were lost. In 1952 a sculpture by Ossip Zadkine on “The

Destroyed City” reveals a man with hands stretched out behind him and with a great hole where his heart should be. Its sharp violent contours depict the despair and agony which is of many other cities today. A new ‘Scots Kirk’ was built in 1952 across the road from the second largest eye-hospital in Europe. The kirk re-invented itself as an ‘international church’ and we catered for English-speaking war widows and ex-pats as well international students and refugees from all over the world.

However, the bombardment of the city-centre created an interesting problem for its city planners. They decided to fill in the canals with the rubble of the bombardment and to build roads where there had been houses and houses where there had been roads. Unlike Amsterdam with its tall Dutch houses and linked canal system, the port city could not provide fine homes for the rich who would spend their income locally. In the last twenty-five years new high residential and office blocks on both sides of the river has led Rotterdam to become “Manhattan on the Maas.” The port city became like New York rather than The Hague or Amsterdam and created penthouse apartments to attract ‘big-spenders’ to live there.

With its distinctive profile, Rotterdam hosts the nation's Architectural Museum. For seven years we lived on an island connected by two bridges in front of the iconic Erasmus bridge built in 1996. Nick-names abound

– the bridge is called “The Swan” while a metro-station “The Kettle”, a nearby apartment block “The Pencil” and a library “The Drainpipe” next to a collection of ‘cuboid’ houses that are standing on their points!

As most port cities attract many foreigners, Rotterdam never became the country's capital. It is said that more than ‘half of the babies born in the city have at least one parent who wasn't born in the Netherlands’. Post-war efforts to rebuild Europe's cities led to guest-workers from Turkey and Morocco in the 1960s. Their families have now settled here and mosques have been built. But migration also led many from Christian cultures in Africa, Asia and Latin America to work here. Over the last twenty years I've been training young men and women as pastors, youth workers or missionaries.

ROBERT CALVERT



Portmoak Primary School News

Glenshee is Go!

There was much excitement in the school this term, as we got the news that there was enough snow for our day trip to Glenshee to go ahead!

We have had two blocks of children learning to ski this year at Tillycoultry, which is a larger number than we have had before. The culmination of these lessons is a planned snowy ski day at Glenshee. Last year we were defeated by the low snow cover but this year the snow came just in time! 41 children from P4-7 travelled up on to Glenshee and had a fun day of lessons. Thank you to the staff and parents who gave up their time on what was a long but very rewarding day!



Bird Box Bonanza

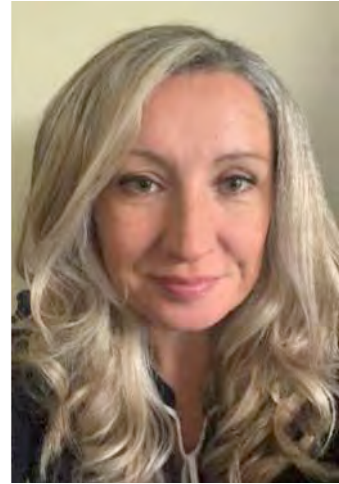
On Monday 12th February the whole school went to Kilmagad Wood for a day building bird boxes and learning all about the birds that you find in the local woodland.

Thank you to the Portmoak Community Woodland Group, the Men's Shed, and the Woodland Trust for what was certainly a bluebird day!



A Fond Farewell from the 'heedie'

It is with a very heavy heart that I share the news that I am leaving Portmoak Primary School at the Easter holidays.



I am sure you will appreciate how hard this is going to be for me personally, as Portmoak is like my third child and I love our special wee community, but this is the right thing for my family at this time. I am moving to Burntisland Primary, where I will be able to walk to work and will have the same holidays as my two boys.

The recruitment process for a new permanent headteacher for the school has now begun. I will always hold a special place in my heart for the Portmoak community and the last 13+ years as headteacher here has been the highlight of my career and my time spent here has brought me much joy. I am sure that the next headteacher at Portmoak Primary School will enjoy as much support from the local community as I have, and look forward to seeing the school going on from strength to strength.

LOUISE GORDON
Headteacher



James Logie Robertson

James was born on 18th September 1846 in Milnathort, the second son in a family of seven children. Inheriting a tradition of beauty and piety from his mother, and intense love of hills and the creatures that inhabited them from his father.

He grew up a quiet studious boy, looking with an imagination on the countryside surrounding him. At first his ideas were Biblical; the Lomond dome was “the mountain of the lord “ and Loch Leven was another “Sea of Galilee”. (On a visit to the Holy Land I too thought as the bus came down to the Sea of Galilee that it was very like Loch Leven with the rich agriculture and villages dotted round it.) Historical associations came later: Wallace, Queen Mary, the Culdees then Catholic priests on St Serf’s Island, the Erskines at Portmoak and Michael Bruce at Kinnesswood. A happy childhood preserved for him a devotion to his birthplace, which found repeated expression in history.

He attended Orwell Parish School, where he became a pupil teacher in Orwell Parish School at the age of thirteen. He was fortunate to win the regard of Alexander Millar the headmaster, a man of culture and character, who became a lifelong friend.

Then he had to move to Edinburgh to prepare for his profession. Strenuous years at training college followed, and a trial of teaching at Haddington, before returning to congenial studies and companionship at Edinburgh University, where he achieved an MA. Meanwhile he continued to teach boys in Heriot’s Hospital and then at George Watson’s School, with a brief holiday at Nest Academy, Jedburgh, until 1876 when he taught higher English classes the at Ladies’ College on Queen Street.

In 1881 he married a former dux of the Ladies’ College (now Mary Erskine School), and worked in Queen Street for thirty-seven years. His leisure time was filled with rambling and writing. His first book of poems was published in 1878 and included “Lament For The Language” and “Horatian Ode” in Scots.

He took a nom-de-plume of Hugh Haliburton, supposedly a shepherd in the Ochils, and wrote for the Scotsman in the 1880s. Poems called Hughies were published weekly, were very popular and each new one was eagerly awaited. He was on holiday at Castle Campbell when he invented the Hughies in 1881.

Some small quotes from some poems:

“Hughie refuses to Emigrate”

Matthie, nae mair! Ye’se gang your lane!
Tak’ my best wishes wi’ye,
An’ may guid fortune owre the main
An’ snugly settled see ye!

He goes on, but the 2 verses later says;

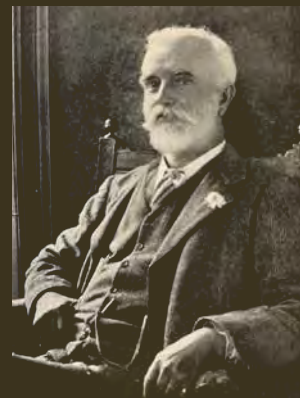
What hills are like the Ochil hills?
There’s nane sae green, tho’ grander;
What rills are like the Ochil rills?
Nane, nane on earth that wander!
Ere Winter’s tack be near thro’;
There Spring return amon’ the sleet,
There Spring an’ Simmer fain wad meet
To tarry a’ the year thro’ !

And a verse from “**A Spring Evening In Milnathort**” (1860)

Now cottar folk bestir themselves,
And to the kailairds mak’ repair,
Whaur Davy till the darkenin’ delves,
And smoulderin’ runts perfume the air.

Despite believing that the Scots language, manners and customs were in decline, James Logie Robertson along with Robert Louis Stevenson can be credited with paving the way for a revival of vernacular verse tradition. Prizes are still awarded in his name at the University of Edinburgh and the Mary Erskine School.

DOROTHY THOMSON



Thought you knew the Bible? Here’s some kids to put you in your place!

These are genuine, untouched answers from young children in an American junior school.

Lot’s wife was a pillar of salt during the day but a ball of fire during the night

The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple

The greatest miracle in the Bible is when Joshua told his son to stand still and he did

Solomon one of David’s sons had 300 wives and 700 porcupines

When Mary heard she was the mother of Jesus she sang the Magna Carta

David was a Hebrew king who was skilled at playing the liar He fought the Finkelsteins, a race of people who lived in biblical times

Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption

The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 Decibels

The Epistels were the wives of the Apostles

One of the Opossums was St Matthew who was also a taximan

Christians have only one spouse, this is called monotony

CHANGED DAYS!

As the years roll past, we often have conversations about “how things used to be”. Very often we look back wearing our rose-tinted spectacles. Recently I was doing much-needed housekeeping when I came across contracts signed by J.T. Butler. These contracts, handed down to me by my mother, are typical contracts signed by professional footballers in the early 20th Century.

“J.T.” as he was affectionately known to his family, was my great-uncle who played professional football for two short years, first for Bristol City, and latterly for Third Lanark. He signed for Bristol City in May 1912 for the princely sum of £3.00 per week, then he was transferred to Third Lanark in 2014 from whom he received £3 pounds two shillings and sixpence per week. He moved

clubs for half a crown a week! He played for Third Lanark for only one year before he was called up for service in 1915 to serve in Flanders fields. Sadly, he was killed in action and was awarded the Military Medal, posthumously, for bravery.

In J.T.’s day there were no multi-millionaire hedonistic footballers: no fast cars, no jet-set lifestyles, no mansions in leafy Cheshire, no night clubbing, no £300,000 per week. And there was strict discipline. I quote from the contract document J.T signed when he became a Third Lanark FC player in 2014.

“The said second party (J.T.) hereby expressly agrees with the Third Lanark Athletic Club, Ltd., that he will play to the best of his ability, and in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the Rules of the

Scottish Football Association in force for the time being, and will devote the necessary time to Training as laid down by the Directors of Third Lanark Athletic Club, Ltd . . . and further, if at any time the second party should absent himself from any Match, or misconduct himself in any way whereby it may affect his playing ability, he shall render himself liable to be fined, suspended, or dismissed at the discretion of the Directors of the said Third Lanark Athletic Club, Ltd.” Also, during the “close season” when there were no matches, wages were reduced (by half a crown a week in J.T.’s case) and players were reminded of their obligation not to behave in ways that would bring disrepute upon the football club. Indeed, we live in different times, sometimes it feels like we live on a different planet.

DUNCAN STENHOUSE

DIARY DATES

Orwell and Portmoak Church services

1st Sunday of every month- 10.30am, Orwell Church - all-age joint service

Other Sundays - 10am, Portmoak Church
- 11.30am, Orwell Church

(Church services also available online through the church website, which is www.orwellportmoakchurch.org.uk)

Bereavement service - Friday March 22nd 3pm, Orwell Church.

Messy Church

Monthly, Saturday 4-6pm, Orwell Church
March 30th, April 27th, May 25th, June 22nd.

Tea and a blether

Monthly, Friday 2-4pm, Orwell Church
March 15th, April 19th, May 17th, June 21st.

Oasis ladies group

Monthly, Friday 10.15am-12noon, Portmoak Church New Room
March 29th, April 26th, May 31st, June 28th.

Climate cafe

Monthly, Tuesday 7pm, Loch Leven Campus library
April 2nd, May 7th, June 4th.

Other

Repair cafe - Saturday April 20th, 11am-3pm, Kinross Church Centre
Portmoak Festival - June 3rd-15th
Marie Curie Open Gardens Day - Saturday June 29th 12noon-4pm
Kinross Family Week - July 29th-August 2nd



Prayer Corner

What Love Is This

What love is this, which knows no end,
And can it really be
A love embracing all mankind,
Including you and me?

What love is this, which knows no end,
And can it really be
A love forgiving all who've sinned,
Including you and me?

What love is this, which knows no end,
And can it really be
A love once crucified for all,
Including you and me?

Yes; this is God's unceasing love,
As seen in Christ, his son,
Who lived and died for all of us
But rose to make us one!

RUARY MCLEOD

Your Local Plumber



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