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CHATTERBOX

No 218 FEBRUARY 2012

www.lochwinnoch.info

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ASIST

Anti-Social
Investigation Team

Office 8:45am – 4:45pm
Tel: 0141 840 2163

Community newsletter produced by Lochwinnoch Community Council

What's On & Dates for your Diaries

Village events, clubs, classes, etc are in the centre pages

Thanks to Seamus and his beard!

On Hogmanay, at the Three Churches Inn, (Garthland) Seamus Harris once again offered to shave his famous beard in support of the charity SUDEP (Sudden unexpected death in Epilepsy).

The fantastic sum of £265.83 was raised and added to the just giving page www.justgiving.com/alan-donaldson. A brave decision in this cold weather, Seamus! Thanks to you and everyone else who contributed for their support. I'm sure a great night was had by all.

Christine Donaldson

TCT News

The Brown Bull 'January Sales' Auction for Teenage Cancer Trust was held on Saturday 14th January, and given the time of year and the tough financial climate, we had a terrific response. We raised over £4,300 on the night! At the time of writing, raffle tickets are still on sale until the draw, which is due to be made on Sunday January 29th, so we hope the total will be even higher.

Many thanks to Laura and Fergus for organising the event, and to everyone who donated items or services, and to everyone who came along to bid and buy raffle tickets.

Also, I confirm that I have booked the 'Midsummer Cruise' for the summer of 2012 - it's not a 'Booze Cruise' remember - for the evening of Friday 22 June. This year's theme is 'The Love Boat'. I have booked the fancy big 'Clipper' vessel again, and although the charter cost is much higher than last year, I have managed to keep the ticket price at

the same level of £15. Tickets will be available very soon. If you want to guarantee your place on board, please let me know ASAP.

John Delaney

Business Owners

The village website www.lochwinnoch.info offers local owners the opportunity to list their business details on the website free of charge.

While you might think this will only be of interest to businesses serving the immediate community you would be wrong. The website is indexed on Google and has Facebook presence, so listed businesses have web visibility in addition to a local profile.

However, this visibility acts to the disadvantage of any business that doesn't keep its profile up-to-date. In these economically difficult times any business needs all the positive market presence it can get.

Please register and update your website listing or contact barbara@lochwinnoch.info.

Also, remember if your community group or business is planning an event that you think might be of interest to Chatterbox

readers then submit it to us at chatterbox@lochwinnoch.info. Relevant events are listed free of charge.

Please also check that your entry is included in the website events calendar.

It's about connecting
people with information
And connecting
people with people

www.lochwinnoch.info

Lochwinnoch Open Race 9 June 2012

If you are making plans to keep fit in the new year then please put the date of the Lochwinnoch Open Race on 9 June 2012 in your diary.

The 10k (ish) course takes you around Glenlora, returning along the cycle path to finish at the park, is fairly challenging - but not impossible!!

If you are not planning to run then perhaps consider stewarding and cheering on the runners.

Further details about the race will be issued in the very near future.

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Eadha Enterprises Update

We are in the process of recruiting a project assistant through the Community Job Scotland scheme which aims to provide training to young unemployed people.

This will be a 6 month post financed by the government, although it is hoped that longer term opportunities will arise for the new recruit.

In addition to assisting us with our aspen tree project, another activity they will undertake will be to assist Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park's staff in woodland management work in Parkhill Wood and to shadow the estate team and rangers to gain valuable training.

In addition, we hope that this work will form the basis of a wood fuel enterprise, with logs retrieved from the woodland for processing.

We hope to sell these logs on locally and also to provide free wood fuel to local residents facing hardship.

We are still in negotiations with Renfrewshire Council about our two main projects in the village including the use of part of the vacant site at Lochhead Avenue for a project base and tree nursery and also the establishment of an arboretum of aspen trees in the village park.

We hope to have reached a conclusion on these matters within the next few weeks.

Contact:

Peter Livingstone

eadhaenterprises@hotmail.co.uk

01505 844827



Do you have a garden to share or do you need one?

In order to encourage and facilitate more garden space for growing our own vegetables, LEAP is asking Lochwinnoch residents to tell us if they have a garden that they either don't want to cultivate any more or are unable to.

If we then find people in the village who would like to grow their own but don't have a suitable garden, we can bring the two parties together.

So if you are in either category and

would like to join the **LEAP garden-sharing scheme**, please contact LEAP via

robwelsh@lochwinnoch.info or phone 01505 842530 or leave your name at the office, 22 Church St.

Our ambition is to reduce Lochwinnoch's carbon footprint and be more self sufficient as a positive action in dealing with the twin threats of climate change & massively increasing oil prices.

It will help us all eat more locally and more healthily.



Christmas Lights

LMEG would like to THANK all the villagers, businesses, organisations and the churches involved in the Christmas Lights this year. Nearly £500 was raised from donations on the night of the switch-on parade and over the festive period. Special thanks go to Lochwinnoch Community Council, Ivan and Jo Minucci and La Dolce Vita, for their contributions and the local businesses that made donations. The assistance of Strathclyde Police and Renfrewshire Council on the night, made the event run very smoothly and enjoyed, once again, by many in the village.

Lochwinnoch Millennium Events Group

Twelve Days of Christmas (in Lochwinnoch)

After extensive lobbying and to resolve any disputes, John Delaney has finally released the definitive version of his 'Twelve Days of Christmas in Lochwinnoch' as performed to much acclaim at the Choral Society's Christmas Concert.

On the Twelfth day of Christmas in Lochwinnoch come and see;
Canon Sean in the chapel,
A Library that's open,
A Bank that's usually shut,
Cucina Minucci,
Cristine's Parish Church,
Stars on Old Simon,
Sandy in the Corner,
LIVE CHO-IRS SING!
Ford's Calder Church,
Three Churches Inn,
Laura in the Bull,
and Zul Bhatia in-the RSPB

c John Delaney



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If you planning foreign travel on business or holiday and require information on the vaccinations required for visiting other countries, help is at hand. Please request a questionnaire from the surgery reception and a Practice Nurse will advise.

Alternatively, contact the Travel Clinic at Glasgow Airport on 0141 848 4800.

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Lochwinnoch Arts Festival

14–25 March

www.lochwinnochartsfestival.co.uk

An early announcement some of the festival events.

Friday 16th the 'Capitol Big Band' playing favourites from Duke Ellington, Glen Miller, Frank Sinatra and many more from 8pm in the McKillop.



Monday 19th An evening with the Lochwinnoch Writers and special guest Liz Lochhead in the McKillop



Liz Lochhead

Wednesday 21st By special request an evening with Cameron Murdoch and The Phoenix Choir soloists in Parish Church

Thursday and Friday 22/23rd Calder Drama present a farce 'Death by Fatal Murder'

Clamjamfrie

Popular local Ceilidh Band, "Clamjamfrie" have released debut CD, "Clammin". The five piece band, formed by musicians from the villages of Kilbarchan and Lochwinnoch, are well known for their enthusiastic, lively blend of foot stomping tunes and songs, primarily West Coast Ceilidh music.

The official CD launch event is at the Castle Semple Visitor Centre on the 10th of March. Doors open at 7pm with free admission. There will be a collection in aid of St Vincent's Hospice. The band will play a few tunes from their CD and may even get some dancing going!! Contact the visitor centre for further information. Look out for the band as they play in other local venues to promote their new CD.

Clamjamfrie are: Mark on fiddle, Karen on accordion, Allan on mandolin, Jane on congas and other percussion and Joe on guitar and vocals.

The band say "We've played ceilidhs, pubs and festivals throughout Scotland, spending the night in beds and floors in cottages, castles, hotels, b&bs, boats and camping in fields, but it's great to play for a home audience."

This CD blends the tunes and songs, traditional and new, which have made their name throughout Scotland. It is available online, from the independent record store Love Music, Dundas Street, Glasgow or other outlets.

For more information check the website, www.clamjamfrie.com and Facebook.



Saturday 24th 10.30am in McKillop Dr Rowena Murray interviews Dr Ron Ferguson minister of St Magnus Cathedral for 11 years. An award-winning columnist and book reviewer with the Glasgow Herald, shortlisted for the Scottish Writer of the Year award for his biography of George MacLeod, founder of the Iona Community. His other books include cult football book, Black Diamonds and the Blue Brazil.



Mike Whellans

Sunday 25th in the afternoon 'A Mystery Play'

Many other events crafts and art over the 12 days - watch out for further announcements!!

Auld Simon Clock Keepers

See November 2007 edition page 13 in the online Chatterbox Archive for the original article
www.lochwinnoch.info/chatterbox/archive



In Chatterbox November 2007 (available online in the [Chatterbox Archive](#)) Adrian Tharme wrote about Auld Simon and the local clock-keepers. Well worth a read.

A series of local residents have taken on the role over the years to watch over Auld Simon and to keep it ticking. Dan Morrison took on the role 6 years or so ago when a possible hiatus in the long tradition threatened. People may remember Councillor Arthur asking for clock-keeper volunteers last Spring? I am very glad to say that two local volunteers stepped forward to fill the role—Alex Ward and Steven Hood. Together they climb up the wooden ‘staircase’ to the bell tower on a regular basis where they wind and tweak, and as Adrian said, “maintain the link with the past”.

I was lucky enough to be invited along on one of these trips to take some photos and to speak to Alex after a few months in the role. Auld Simon is indeed a special place. It takes a few minutes to adjust to the light but the heartbeat of the clock can be felt as soon as you enter. The first thing you see is an unused 24hr clock face. Perhaps someone knows what the plan was for this? The staircase/ladders take you up to the second level where the mechanism crouches behind the clock face. Winding it by hand, one pendulum at a time, it is impossible not to think about the many hands which have kept the clock ticking and the bell chiming over the years. The initials of many of the people scratched into the woodwork. This task must be repeated 2 or 3 times a week.

I'm sure a modern electrical mechanism would render this task redundant, but I for one am very glad that volunteers take on this role. It not only gives people the chance to step into history. The bell rings out across the village as if to remind us that it might be an old building but it is still watching over the village and is a part of our modern lives today.

Barbara



Old Simon

On the brow of Johnshill "Auld Simon" stands, like a sentinel on duty, his bright face looking over the village, what tales he could tell if only he could speak! Visitors stop to gaze at his crow-stepped gable, topped by a bell turret with a unique weather vane, which has a plough turning with the wind, and directing arms pointed with a rose, a thistle and a shamrock.

Originally the plough was surrounded by a sheaf of whet and a little bird, but these have long since disappeared, perhaps blown down by some severe storm.

This is all that remains of the church built there in 1729.

There was a church on this spot before 1692, which was built in the form of a cross, the aisles being known as the barr aisle and the simple aisle.

According to Cranfurd in his "Cairn of Lochwinnoch" this church was

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badly in need of repair, and a new church was built on the same spot.

Perhaps there was even an earlier church in the neighbourhood, for it was around this area that the Kirkton of Lochwinnoch was built, the rows of houses coming close to the church gates.

The new church was built when Mr Pinkerton was minister of the parish.

There were troubled times, and a number of dissenters left the kirk and worshipped at Bruintschiels, now known as Burntshields.

This new church had a clock and a bell of which the villagers were very proud.

The clock had a 24 hour face, but weavers complained so much about it, that this had to be removed and the old one put back.

That 24 hour face is still to be seen in the loft of the tower.

The old weavers evidently took turns of winding the clock, keeping it oiled and in good working order.

When the old church was again in need of repair, the heritors who were responsible for it, wished to demolish it completely, but the

weavers and villagers of the Auld Kirkton subscribed voluntarily to keep the clock and bell in good trim for their own entertainment and amusement.

When the present Parish Church was opened, the old church was demolished leaving only the tower which was used as a watchtower.

There were the days when the tombs had to be guarded against "the depredations of the resurrectionists".

It was suggested that "Auld Simon" was the name of one of the old weavers who had looked after the clock most regularly and so it became known as "Auld Simon's Clock", and through time "Auld Simon".

The present wall around the graveyard was built to keep people from desecrating and ruining the tombstones when the stallholders of the various "fairs" overflowed into the churchyard, there not being enough room in the narrow streets.

The churchyard has not been used as a burying ground since the new cemetery was opened at Calder Glen in 1895.

Occasionally open air services were held there in the summer months, but these stopped during the years of the second world war.

"Auld Simon" is now the property of Renfrewshire 4th District Council.

Source—thanks to Margaret at the Library for passing this to Chatterbox

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A Hedge Fund for Lochwinnoch

Are you being serious? A hedge fund for Lochwinnoch after all the events of the last few years?

Yes! I am, but then there are hedge funds and funds for hedges and it is the latter that have rather forcibly come to the fore. Forcibly this time in terms of the Beaufort Scale of winds and the damage they have wrought to some of our fences. It is at this point that there is a link between the two kinds of funds because in both cases one can find that we have all been misled. I also hope to show that even when things go very badly wrong opportunities will arise for new ventures. One man's misfortune is another man's opportunity.

Over the last twenty years or so around new properties almost invariably a wooden fence has been erected. The form of these fences is almost identical across this and other villages and towns. A line of posts along the boundary all a uniform height of 1.8 metres joined by three rails top, middle and bottom with vertical boards nailed on at about 50 millimetre spacing. All the wood has been pressure impregnated skin deep with a preservative and the impression given that the fence is there for ever and the one off cost is in the mortgage.

There after people paint them, add more preservative, fix plants to them and accept them as part of the property.

What the builder's agents never tell: is that almost immediately these posts will start to rot away where they come out of the ground and that

any time after fifteen years the likelihood of finding a sound post all the way from its top to its bottom in the concrete around the base is about nil.

So just like bad financial deals all the posts have doubtful histories. Some way down the life of each post it will need to be held up, dug up, disposed of at a bad time and its total financial loss taken.

In times gone by property boundaries would have been marked by a stone dyke or a hawthorn hedge.

Getting stone nowadays is too expensive for all but the wealthy. But consider the hedge. A wide variety of shrubs for hedges is available in bare root form at most nurseries.

Over the years I have bought many kinds in many price ranges and I would commend them to you as fence replacements.

As with most things you can pay as much as you like but by shopping around you can get the most amazing selections at almost pocket money prices.

You may have to wait a few years to see how lucky you have been, but bought as hedgerow plants you may find you have gorgeous lilacs, wild roses, wayfarer trees, red and yellow dogwoods, hollies, hawthorns and all sorts of flowering shrubs.

These hedges will bend to the wind; they never rot where they come out of the ground. You can agree with your neighbours how high and how wide the finished hedge shall be and from then on let nature take its course. The birds and the bees will accept your open invitation so be

sure to include berry bearing plants for one and flowered ones for the other. Having a nest of blackbirds in a pyracantha bush is one of life's delights

I have not forgotten the opportunities that might arise. Once upon a time it was possible to purchase a concrete post that when concreted in place and stood above the ground about half a metre. This post had a ledge to stand the wood post on and a couple of bolt holes to fix it. Neither the concrete nor the wood suffered from the damp.

Maybe an entrepreneur would like to make a start and offer those concrete posts again or maybe some sort of reinforced plastic equivalent.

Another possibility would be to bore long sloping holes into the existing posts, place some glass fibre rope lengths into each hole and pour in some properly gauged resin. In this way your post would be strengthened at the weakest places.

The potential market is roughly one treatment every two paces for many kilometres within my sight. The start-up cost is low for both methods and the know-how readily available.

Meanwhile the rest of us can invest in a Fund of Lochwinnoch Hedges. For those of you willing to plan ahead you can have all the cuttings you want off my established bushes and in the spring I expect to have hundreds of hawthorn saplings. Look for more around any hawthorn bush.

Alan Lovegreen

Lochwinnoch

Lochwinnoch's Poets' Corner

The 18th century hamlet at Newton of Beltrees, just beyond Lochwinnoch Roadhead, is a poet's corner. (Ed's note: Belltrees with two 'l's is the modern spelling).

The pastoral paradise comprises an old schoolhouse, rubble-built dwellings with slated roofs, moss-mantled walls, leafy hedgerows and flower-festooned gardens.

The sylvan settlement, canopied by towering trees, straddles the medieval stage-coach road linking Paisley and Ayrshire.

The highway was trekked frequently 200 years ago by Paisley poet Robert Tannahill (1774-1810) when he visited his mother's relatives at Boghall Farm, between Lochwinnoch and Beith. Tannahill's parents were married in Lochwinnoch.

Newton of Beltrees, sometimes known as Glenhead, also has connections with Robert Burns (1759-1796), Scotland's national bard.

Its countryside was the meadowland matrix of the lyrical style which beautified some of the ploughman poet's most poignant poems.

The literary link was first forged during the mid-17th century when Robert Sempill (1599-1670), of Beltrees Castle, penned his celebrated elegy depicting 'The Life and Death of Habbie Simpson - the Famous Piper of Kilbarchan.'

Habbie was a 16th century character renowned for playing his skirling bagpipes at weddings, baptisms, horse fairs, market days and dances in the countryside between Lochwinnoch and Kilbarchan.

After his death, Habbie was immortalised in verse and rhyme by Robert Sempill whose erudite father, Sir James Sempill (1566-1625), transcribed King James VI's Basilicon Doran manuscript and was appointed Sheriff of Renfrewshire in 1602.

Sir James was the son of John Sempill who married Mary Livingston, one of Mary Queen of Scots' Four Maries, whom he met during a visit to the royal court at Holyrood Palace.

Robert Sempill's poetic pattern, featuring recurrent groups of between four and 12 lines, became



Beltrees Schoolhouse

known as 'standard Habbie stanza' or 'standard Habbie metre.' Its influence on Burns is recognisable in popular poems like Highland Mary, The Jolly Beggars and Man was Made to Mourn.

Today the Beltrees Sempills and their ancient castle no longer grace the countryside around Lochwinnoch. The family fortune was lost and the last-known heir, Hamilton Collins Sempill, emigrated to Australia, where he acquired a farm named Belltrees, spelled with two 'l's instead of one as in his family's original Renfrewshire residence.

But the family name remains eternally enshrined in the name of Beltrees village - and in the Habbie bardic stanza silvering the poetic pearls of Robert Burns which delight his admirers across the world.

Among other attractions at Newton of Beltrees is the former Glenhead Schoolhouse. This was constructed during the early 19th century because farming families living on the south side of Castle Semple Loch wanted an educational establishment of their own. This was because the causeway leading past Aird and Barr Meadows to Lochwinnoch School was frequently flooded, impassable and dangerous. The families built the new school at their own expense with £5 being deducted from the salary of the schoolmaster at Lochwinnoch to pay the teacher at Glenhead.

Historical documents reveal that in October, 1919, a Mrs Kerr, who had taught at Glenhead for the previous nine years, was presented with a gold

watch by past and present pupils and teachers. Glenhead School was closed in 1924 with the condition that the children would be provided with transport to classes in Lochwinnoch.

Another interesting feature of Newton of Beltrees is the private burial ground behind Low Beltrees Farm. This walled enclosure contains memorials to the Orr family whose relatives became the wealthy Cochrane-Patricks who subsequently acquired the castle and lands of Hunterston on the Ayrshire coast. Other burials include members of local farming families like the Greenlees of Beltrees, Ewings of Walls Farm and Donaldsons of Boydstone.

At this time of the year my favourite attraction at Beltrees is the dazzling display of snowdrops whose milky-white blossoms gild the roadside and gardens of farmhouses and cottages.

These Fair Maids of February, as snowdrops are sometimes known, are radiant reminders of the countryside community who lived, worked and died at Beltrees.

Their memory will never wither but flourishes forever in that lovely landscape which they knew, loved and called their home.

Derek Parker

Derek Parker worked as a countryside ranger at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park from 1985 to 1999



Lochwinnoch Community Library

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- 613.25 Jennifer Irwin—Diet for food lovers
- 641.588 Lorna Brash—Slow cooker magic
- 641.594 Jamie Oliver—Jamie's Great Britain, over 130 reasons to love our food.
- 641.815—The Great British bake off
- 649.122 Jo Frost—Confident baby care
- 745.5—Crafting with kids
- 745.594 Irina Miech—Beautiful wire jewellery for beads
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- 746.432 Zoe Mellor—Knitted toys
- 910.453 Titanic—The unfolding story
- 914.11 Mairi Hedderwick—Shetland rambles
- B/McC Kate McCann—Madeleine

WHICH is now **which?** available for reference at Lochwinnoch Library. Access to WHICH reports are available online from library computers only. If you require this service, a member of staff will log onto the site for you. A monthly magazine is also available for reference.



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From the Parish Church.

*O, my love is like a red, red rose,
that's newly sprung in June.*

*O, my love is like a melody,
that's sweetly play'd in tune.*

Robert Burns

It is not just because Valentine's Day is almost upon us that I quote this supremely beautiful poem from Robert Burns, but also because it is quoted in an academic book I am reading, entitled, Reflective Practice. I think most people would agree that My Love Is Like A Red, Red, Rose is perhaps the most beautiful love poem ever written. As we approach Valentine's Day, we are very aware of those who will be on their own on that day.

As some of you know, in October I began course in which I am researching the role of children in life of the Church in general and their participation in worship in particular. The course involves reflective practice as on-going self-assessment and self-awareness. While I have not always kept a journal, at the end of each day, I do look back over the events of the day and in prayer give thanks to God for what has been good, pray for help for what is causing me problems and then pray for the people I have met.

The course demands deeper reflection: we are to keep a journal where we record not just incidents, but how we react to various events and how we feel in various encounters (*don't worry names are changed to protect the innocent and the file is secured with a password*). I found this hard to begin with because in writing what I felt, I had to own up to

my own emotions and sometimes it is much easier to ignore our emotions, especially our negative or 'bad' emotions. Which begs the question, is a feeling 'bad' just because it makes us feel bad? A guilty conscience may not make us feel good, yet if we reflect upon it and why we are feeling bad, we might just find the courage to say, "Sorry," make amends and restore a relationship that was in danger of breaking – an emotion which, initially, makes us feel bad can lead us to the right action.

That is certainly something I have learned through keeping the journal. Back in November's edition of the Chatterbox, I wrote about how we may deal with change. Writing in a journal is a very good way to deal with any kind of change – whether we know what the change entails or not; whether chosen by me or imposed from out with the family; whether welcome or not. I have also found the writing to be a healing process – even if I believe someone else has hurt me, writing about it (always changing names) and then trying to write the encounter from the other person's point of view can help me to see things that I had not noticed before, hear tones of voices that might have let me know the other person was seeking help rather than trying to start an argument. As Robert Burns may say, writing can be the gift that allows us, at least in a limited way, "To see ourselves as others see us!"[1]

As a minister, this kind of writing helps me empathise more deeply with the pain of those who have encountered loss; yes their experience remains unique, but by writing from another's perspective, I am more able to see with their eyes, feel with their heart.

You are now doubt aware to the

Native American proverb which advises us not to criticise another until we have walked a mile in their moccasins. The best example of this "putting ourselves in other people's shoes" is seen in the birth, life and death of Jesus Christ. God decided not to remain detached from humanity, but to come to earth as a baby, grow through childhood and adolescence and adulthood, not for God's own sake, but so that God would not just be able to empathise with humanity but share the same experiences as humanity. In the life of Jesus, we find a God who loves us enough not just to imagine what it is like to stand in our shoes, we have a God who has actually worn our shoes – everything we experience, God has already lived through in the person of Jesus Christ. I find that both profoundly humbling and immensely comforting.

Perhaps this Valentine's day, we instead of just concentrating on romantic love, we could think of the love that reaches out to all people, the love which puts us in other people's shoes and helps us realise that we can support one another in our times of need, whether we go to the trouble of writing about it or not!

May God continue to bless us all with the gift of friendship and the grace to see ourselves as others see us.

Yours,

Christine

[1] To A Louse (On Seeing One On A Lady's Bonnet, At Church) 1786



Feeling the cold? Come along to a Draught Buster Workshop

Kilbarchan Old Library Centre – Sat 4th Feb 1.30 til 3.30 pm

Lochwinnoch McKillop Small Hall – Mon 6th Feb 6.30 til 8.30pm

Howwood Primary School – Thur 16th Feb 6.30 til 8.30pm

Kilbarchan Old Library Centre – Thur 23rd Feb 6.30 til 8.30pm

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What's On

Regular clubs, classes and groups

- **First Friday of Month**—Semple Tones host an open mike session at Lochwinnoch Golf Club. Come along, don't be shy.
- **Healing and Creativity Workshops & Classes**—For details or to book a place, please Tel Becky: 0141 8816700 or Libby on: 015105 842604.
- **Lochwinnoch Community Walks**—Mondays (ex. Public Holidays), meet at 10.30am at The McKillop Institute.
- **Lochwinnoch Playgroup**—For under 5's, every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9.30-11.30am at the McKillop .
- **Lochwinnoch Toddlers**—Mondays and Wednesdays from 9.30 - 11.30am, McKillop.
- **Lochwinnoch Gymnastics Club**—For primary school-age children every Monday, 5-8pm at the McKillop. Phone Coby on: 0772 9 051 615.

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- **Lochwinnoch Writers Group**—Monday from 2-4:15pm in the Library. Contact 873581
 - **Knit @ The 19th at the Golf Club**—Monday 10am-12 noon (or longer), all levels and learners welcome.
 - **Advice Works**—At the Library by appointment only. Contact 382328
 - **Mother & Baby Yoga**—Classes start back on the 1st November Every Tuesday 10 to 11am at the McKillop £18 for 5 wks advance booking or pay £4.50 pw (Suitable for babies 6wks to 8 months)
 - **Morag's Keep Fit**—Mondays and Thursdays from 7pm, in the McKillop Institute.
 - **Lochwinnoch Choral Society**—Rehearsals on Monday evenings, Parish Church/ Hall. Juniors 7:15-8pm, and Seniors 8pm-9.15pm.
 - **Lochwinnoch Art Group**—Meet fortnightly on Monday evenings, 7.30pm, McKillop Institute.
 - **Keep Fit - Improving With Age classes**—every Tues from 10-11am at the McKillop.
 - **Drop-in T Bar**—Lochwinnoch Elderly Forum. Every Tuesday from 10am-1pm, McKillop Inst. Reopens 10th January. For details tel Rita 842054
 - **Linda Margaret School of Dancing**—Tuesdays from 4pm-8.45pm, McKillop Institute. For details, Tel: 0141 581 9104.
 - **TaeKwon-Do**—Fitness and Self-defence classes for youths and adults. Tuesdays from 5-6pm, McKillop Institute and Thursdays from 7pm-8pm at Lochwinnoch Primary School. For details Tel: 01259 210716.
 - **Scottish Country Dance Club**—Every Tuesday, from 7.30 -9.30pm, McKillop Inst.
 - **Jogging Buddies**—Tuesday evenings. Meet at Lochbarr Football Club at 6.30pm. For details, Tel: 0141 887 1357 or 07947 763704.
 - **Girls Brigade - 1st**
- Lochwinnoch Company, Wednesday evenings from 6pm-9.15pm at the Parish Church Hall for various age groups.
- **Boys Brigade**—Anchor Boys and Junior Sections meet on Tuesday nights, Parish Church Hall.
 - **Yoga Classes**—Wednesday evenings, McKillop Inst. only 1 class 7-8:30pm. call 842877 to book.
 - **Happy Harminis**—Fun for pre-school children on Thursdays 10am-11am, McKillop Inst. Tel: Frankie : 01505 612248.
 - **Slinky Strollers**—Thursday mornings
 - **ROAR Lunch Club**—every Thursday from 11.45am PROMPT at the McKillop Institute. **Please Note - ONLY ONE SITTING.**
 - **TaeKwon-Do Little Tiger Cubs**—Classes for 3-5 year olds, on Thursdays from 4.15pm-5pm at McKillop Tel: 01259 210716
 - **Calder Drama Club**—Thursdays, from 8pm-10pm McKillop Institute.
 - **Scottish Slimmers**—Thursdays, 7/7.30pm, McKillop Inst.
 - **Lochwinnoch Pre-School Gymnastics**—(for children from 18 months to 5 yrs). Fridays, from 10.15am - 1.45pm at the McKillop. Further details from Coby on Tel: 0772 9051615.
 - **Liathach Dog Training**—(pre-booking necessary). Anne Moss, Tel: 01505 842367, e-mail: dogtraining@f2s.com
 - Monday Kilbarchan 10am Int/Adv class 11am —Juvenile class
 - Tuesday Kilbarchan 5.30 & 6.30pm - Puppy Course
 - Wednesday Kilbarchan 6.30pm - Puppy Course 7.30pm - Juvenile class 8.30pm—Int /Adv class
 - Thursday Beith 8.00pm - Dog Club (Int/Adv)
 - **Calder UF Church**—Food for Thought. Last Monday of the month 7.30pm in church hall
- Some activities may cease during holidays, please check**

Upcoming Events

- **Wed 1 Feb—RSPB World Wetland Day Guided Walk** 12-2pm, £4 RSPB Members £1 . Gentle walk along Reserve trails guided by a member of the RSPB team.
- **Fri 3 Feb—Murder Mystery Evening—** Parish Church social evening of murder and mayhem. More info later.
- **Sat 4 Feb—RSPB Young Volunteers Group**, 12-18yrs old, 11-4pm booking essential
- **Saturday 4th Feb—Bowling Club RACE NIGHT** 7.30pm for 8pm all welcome
- **Sun 5 Feb—Frosted Sculpture Walk - Part 2** Castle Semple Visitor Centre, 1.30-3.30pm Hang up some of the sculptures you made last weekend around the country park and take some home as well. More info and bookings tel: 01505 842 882 Ex 20.
- **Mon 6 Feb—LEAP Draught Buster Workshop**, McKillop Small Hall, 6.30-8.30pm
- **Wed 8 Feb—Lochwinnoch International Aid** is having its AGM in Lochwinnoch Library, 7.00 -8.00 pm. Anyone interested is invited.
- **Sat 11 Feb—The Miami Showband**, a big band sound! Come along and dance the night away! Tickets £10 Pre-dance dinner available from early until 8pm 2 courses including a glass of wine £11.95 Lochwinnoch Golf Club Bookings essential. Tel 842 153
- **Sun 12 Feb—Orienteering** Meet Muirshiel Visitor Centre Courses start 10.30 to 12.00 Tel: 01505 842 803 for info.
- **Tues 14 Feb—Valentine Tea Dance**, 2-4pm, tickets £5 includes fancy wee cakes & sandwiches and a glass of wine; music by 'Karpaul'. Club House Restaurant Lochwinnoch Golf Club. Bookings essential. Tel: 842 153
- **Fri 17 Feb—'Valentines Dinner'** 3 course set menu available £17.95 including glass of Prosecco and chocolates for the lady! Club House Restaurant Lochwinnoch, Golf Club. Bookings essential Tel: 842 153
- **Fri 17 Feb—Star Gazing Evening** Muirshiel Visitor Centre 7-9pm Tel: 01505 842 803 to book.
- **Sat Feb 18—RSPB Build a Bird a Home** 11-3pm Build and decorate nest boxes as part of National Nest Box Week £6 or £2 (RSPB members) includes a nest box to take home.
- **Saturday 18th Feb—TRIBUTE NIGHT**, 7.30pm for 8pm at the Bowling Club. The Rat Pack & Michael Buble. all welcome. Tickets £8 available from Margaret 843013 & Mary 842023
- **Sat 25 Feb—Mini Food Fayre and Pancake Festival** 10-3pm outside McKillop Hall
- **Sat 25 Feb—RSPB Membership Taster Day** Introductory talk, guided walk, Q&A session, tea/coffee and a chance to find out about RPB campaigns. FREE
- **Sat 25 Feb—Traditional Burns Supper** 3 course dinner. Speakers; 'The Garthland Cronies. Lochwinnoch Golf Club. Booking essential Tel: 842 153
- **Sun 26 Feb—Beith Arts Sunday Concert. David Vernon and Dick Lee** play accordion and clarinet, with a programme of "Music from All Over". 2.30pm Beith Community Centre, Kings Road, Beith, Prices are : Adults £8, Seniors £6, Students and Children £1 - pay at the door. Interval tea and biscuits.
- **Tues 28 Feb – Tues 13 March Fairtrade Fortnight** activities in the village and at Castle Semple Visitor Centre
- **Wed 29 Feb—Tartan Walk** meet Castle Semple Visitor Centre 11 am for a circular 3 mile walk . Wear some tartan and enjoy Scottish tunes as we wander around the village. Walk will be on paths, pavements and tracks and is suitable for all levels. More info: 01505 842 882 Ext 20
- **Sat 3 Mar—Weaving Musical Threads**, Castle Semple Visitor Centre, storytelling, poetry and song.
- **Sun 4 Mar—Hen Harrier talk**, Muirshiel Visitor Centre, 2-3pm Info and booking Tel: 01505 842 803
- **Sat 10 Mar—Clamjamfrie's CD launch** event at Castle Semple Visitor Centre. Doors open at 7pm with free admission. There will be a collection in aid of St Vincents Hospice.
- **Wed 14—Sun 25 March Lochwinnoch Arts Festival.** Exhibition in Lochwinnoch Library.
- **Fri 16 March—Arts Festival Event: 'Capitol Big Band'** playing favourites from Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra and many more.
- **Sat 17 Mar—Craft Fair** in conjunction with Lochwinnoch Arts Festival, Castle Semple Visitor Centre 11-3 pm. For info tel: 01505 842 882 Ext 20
- **Sat 17 Mar—Ladies night** with singer/songwriter Little Fire to raise funds for Scottish Hemi Support Group, Watermill Hotel, Paisley 7.30pm. Tickets are £ 2 0 . 0 0 f r o m scottishhemisupportgroup@hotmail.co.uk or phone 07972307680.
- **Mon 19 Mar—Arts Festival Event: Lochwinnoch Writers** will read their work followed by Liz Lochhead who in January 2011 was named as the second Scots Makar, or national poet.
- **Wed 21 Mar—Arts Festival Event:** By special request an evening with **Cameron Murdoch and The Phoenix Choir soloists** in Parish Church
- **Thurs and Friday 22/23—Arts Festival Event—Calder Drama** present a farce 'Death by Fatal Murder'
- **Sat 24 Mar—Arts Festival Event: Dr Rowena Murray interviews** her friend from Orkney **Dr Ron Ferguson** former minister of St Magnus Cathedral and award-winning columnist and book reviewer with the Glasgow Herald. 10.30 am in McKillop Hall.
- **Sat 24 Mar—Arts Festival Event: Folk Night** in the McKillop Hall with **Claire Robertson, Pauline Vallance and Mike Whellans**
- **Sun 25 Mar—Arts Festival Event:** in the afternoon 'A



Wednesday 1 February
Wednesdays with Wildlife -
World Wetland Day Guided
Walk

12noon – 2pm

Join the reserve team to explore the wonderful wetland found at Lochwinnoch and find out more about its birds, wildlife and history.

Walk description: Gentle walk along reserve trails led by the RSPB team. Will also include a look at the Barr Loch, the path to which is uneven and likely to be narrow and muddy in places.

Key species we will look for: whooper swans, wigeon, teal, pochard, tufted ducks.

Suitable for: Beginners to experts in bird watching. General interest in wildlife. Families.

Recommendations: Stout footwear, waterproofs and warm clothing recommended.

Cost: £4 or £1 for RSPB members

Saturday 4 February

11am – 4pm

Young Volunteers Group

Join us for the monthly Young Volunteers club, with activities including bird surveying, outdoor work, finding out more about RSPB campaigns and much more.

Booking essential and places are limited, so please enquire beforehand. Young persons aged between 12 and 18 can participate. Participants will be registered as RSPB volunteers.

Saturday 18 February

11am - 3pm

Build a bird a home!

Want to give a home to a bird this spring? Join us to help build and decorate nest boxes as part of **National Nest Box Week.**

Cost: £6 or £2 for RSPB members (includes a nest box to take home).

Saturday 25 February

11am – 2pm

Membership Taster Day

Want to find out more about the RSPB, our campaign work, and how we help birds of all kinds from back garden species to birds on the other side of the world? Thinking of becoming a member but not sure what it involves?

Come along to our FREE membership taster day and find out all about the RSPB, about Lochwinnoch and join us for a guided walk of the reserve.

Includes: Introductory talk, guided walk, Q&A session, tea/coffee and a chance to find out more about RSPB campaigns and how you can get involved.



Saint Valentine

The origin of St. Valentine, and how many St. Valentines there were, remains a mystery.

One opinion is that he was a Roman martyred for refusing to give up his Christian faith.

Other historians hold that St. Valentine (Valentinus in Latin) was a temple priest. Whoever he was, Valentine really existed; archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to Saint Valentine.

The first picture of Saint Valentine appeared in an illustrated book printed in 1493. Alongside a woodcut portrait of him, text states that Valentinus was a Roman priest martyred during the reign of Claudius the Goth.

He was caught marrying Christian couples and aiding any Christians who were being persecuted in Rome under Emperor Claudius. The Emperor didn't want any couples to marry as the men were then reluctant to

soldier in foreign wars.

Valentinus was arrested, imprisoned and condemned to death. He was beaten with clubs and stoned; when that didn't do it, he was beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate (circa 269).

One legend says, while awaiting his execution, Valentinus restored the sight of his jailer's blind daughter. Another legend says, on the eve of his death, he penned a farewell note to the jailer's daughter, signing it, "From your Valentine."

St. Valentine is the Patron Saint of engaged couples, bee keepers, epileptics, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travellers and young people. His heart is believed to rest in Glasgow in the church of Blessed Duns Scotus.

Lochwinnoch Fairtrade Group

At its recent meeting, the Lochwinnoch Fairtrade Steering Group welcomed Mary Alice Mansell as its new chair. Stepping down was Bob Turner, chair since the group's inception 4 years ago. He is moving to pastures new and the group wish him and Maureen all the very best with their highland life.

Look out for the Fairtrade group's pancake-making stall at the next monthly food fair on 25th February. This will be followed by a number of activities to mark Fairtrade Fortnight (27 February - 11 March). This year the theme is 'Take a Step'. It can be a simple step like swapping your tea to Fairtrade, or a bigger step, like asking everyone in your office to do it too. Every step counts for



millions of farmers, workers and their communities in developing countries who urgently need a better deal from trade.

If you would like to be involved in the Fairtrade group please contact us at: Fairtrade@lochwinnoch.info

Lesley Scott



Library Action Group Update

The Library Action Group has not disappeared but been active behind the scenes. Some positive news is that, in correspondence with the Macdowall family, a couple of interesting facts have emerged.

Fergus Macdowall, clan chief and direct descendent of the Macdowall who donated the "wee school", now the library building, has written that he sees no reason to regard the original trust deed as broken as he sees a library as continuing the education of the villagers of Lochwinnoch.

In response to the claim from Renfrewshire Council's lawyer that a library is not compatible with the trust's establishing the building as a school, he replies "this development still includes the schooling function and it is not at variance with the original intent, because every institution of learning starts with a library of books".

In fact, Fergus Macdowall looks very positively on libraries as places of learning both from his position as retired research professor and as the husband of the late Traszha Macdowall, former Chief Librarian.

Professor Macdowall also responds to Renfrewshire Council that the Macdowall building is essential as a focal point in Lochwinnoch and that it could still have a role as a

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local museum even though the Council moved the main collection to "far away Paisley".

He suggests that it could be a visitor attraction.

Historical Society

Historical Society meets on Thursday 16th February at 7.30pm, in the Parish Church guild room.

Speaker is David Carson and the topic is "Clydebank Blitz"

LAF 2012 ART EXHIBITION

The Arts Festival Exhibition will open on the evening of Wednesday 14th March in Lochwinnoch Library Room and run until Saturday 24th March. The exhibition will be open during Library hours. Entries for this exhibition are open to residents of Lochwinnoch and the surrounding areas.

Details and entry forms are now available and may be collected from Calder Gallery & Framing, 8 High Street, Lochwinnoch. Open Tuesday to Friday 10.30am-5.00pm and Saturday 10.30am-4.30pm

Love is All Around

As we said last month the Lochwinnoch Mystery Play is back! "Love Is All Around" will take place in the village during the afternoon of Sunday 25th March. There are many parts to be filled – most of them small

parts and lots of behind the scenes help is required. If you would like to help please contact Christine Murdoch on 843484 or by email: rev.christine@btinternet.com. If you would like to take part in anyway, come along to our first rehearsal in the Church on Tuesday 7th February at 8.15pm.

Please do come along and share in Lochwinnoch's own play.

These are sentences exactly as typed by medical secretaries in NHS Greater Glasgow

1. The patient has no previous history of suicide.
2. Patient has left her white blood cells at another hospital.
3. Patient's medical history has been remarkably insignificant with only a 40 pound weight gain in the past three days.
4. She has no rigors or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.
5. Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
6. On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.
7. The patient is tearful and crying constantly. She also appears to be depressed.
8. The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.
9. Discharge status:- Alive, but without my permission.

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Watch Out!

Look out for The Stirrup Cup which features on the "Antiques Road Trip" Series 4 on BBC 2 at 5.30pm from the 13th February for 6 weeks.

Next month Greta will give us the inside story of her TV experience.

Volunteering in Palestine 2011



Stephanie Speirs, from Lochwinnoch, worked in Palestine for several weeks in 2011, Lochwinnoch International Aid made a donation to be spent on materials for her projects. This is her report.

Again this summer, I volunteered with Unipal (A Universities' Trust for Educational Exchange with Palestinians). Unipal is a very small, well-respected charity in the West Bank and Lebanon, run entirely by volunteers so all donations are much appreciated. We worked with UNRWA (United Nations Relief Works Agency) and this year's

donations purchased percussion instruments for both the UNRWA Boys and Girls schools in Jalazone and the Jalazone Children's Centre; not items the UNRWA budget covers. We were assured the instruments would be put to good use.

This year I was Co-ordinator for Jalazone Camp (outside of Ramallah), travelling to Palestine one week before the volunteers, arranging accommodation, setting up the eleven projects and finalising things with the UN after communicating beforehand to set up the projects. As Co-ordinator I had five volunteers to help, advise, watch out for etc. Again this year we taught English in the schools to 80-90 children learning through interactive fun. We also had a Sports Day, a school trip and a Graduation to which parents, camp leaders and 3 UNRWA officials came.

Our other projects this year included:

- Jalazone Cultural Centre where English was taught at beginner and advanced level, *Sharak Youth Forum where our volunteers taught 'debate and discussion skills' to young people,
- Kofer Na'maa Village Project – one volunteer working in the children's centre and another helping to set up a community garden;
- Al-Kamandaji was a creative arts and music NGO project where one volunteer taught clarinet;
- Civic Forum Institute (CFI) where a volunteer helped in filling out funding applications and researching further

projects in the West Bank.

On this visit I was surprised how many people remembered me by name and was very humbled by the amazing welcome we received. I often found myself becoming very emotional speaking to friends from last year and hearing about their families. For some, sons had been released from Israeli prisons (one family happy to have their sixteen year old son back after two years in jail in North Israel with no family visits allowed. His crime? 'Conspiring against the state of Israel'; his actions? Putting graffiti on a wall in Jalazone camp days after his friend had been shot outside his school by an Israeli soldier protecting the illegal settlement across from Jalazone). Others had developed poor health but were unable to get the necessary documentation to visit a hospital in Jerusalem. Others had had babies, changed jobs, lost jobs, were getting married or had opened shops.

Going to Palestine you can't help but be completely affected by the situation. Every night we would talk about our experiences, who we had met and spoken to, and their stories. You are completely consumed by it and often it is hard initially to talk about the things you have seen and heard. Going through check points, making a 30 minute journey last over two hours; having to keep identification on you at all times just in case a soldier asks you, even in the camp; fearing at the airport to say where you have been in case you, or anyone you have met in Palestine, gets into trouble; visiting Hebron, seeing and feeling the tension from the settlements in the heart of the Old City. The settlements in the West Bank in general (illegal under

Editorial and Copy for Chatterbox

Let us have your stories, notices, news, information, events and items of interest – either hand-deliver them to the Chatterbox drop-box in the Library or preferably e-mail them to us at: chatterbox@lochwinnoch.info

Electronic submission with full colour pictures are preferred.

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international law) are growing at such a rate it is incredibly worrying; the sheer size and scale of the Apartheid Wall is frightening.

Unipal allows you to experience life under occupation in a refugee camp so you can draw your own conclusions and form opinions based purely on your own experiences. I truly believe in the role of Unipal to highlight to as many people as possible the plight of the Palestinian people so that change does come.

Thanks LIA for the kind donation to Unipal again this year. I feel very fortunate to come from a village that has a social conscience and is prepared to act pragmatically supporting the voluntary activities of its villagers.

Best Wishes,

Stephanie

Lochwinnoch Gala Day

The Gala Day Committee are taking a year out this year. This of course means that our next Gala day will be in 2013.

There were a few deciding factors which brought us to this decision and as always we were short of people on our committee, which presently stands at between 4 & 6. This small number is not enough to allow us to have sub-committees which are essential in reducing the workload of each individual. Small sub-committees would take care of different Gala Day sections (e.g. Publicity, Bottle Stall, etc.) lessening the burden on us.

We hope by having a rest this year it may give others time to think and hopefully perhaps come on board.

We do not have the use of the Annexe anymore which in turn means no tearoom and toilets. We hope that perhaps next year, if we have the additional help required to assist with the extra workload involved, we will be able to provide these facilities.

The Parade is organised by two of our committee and this in itself is a huge undertaking. All members of our committee work full time, some also having family commitments. We would like to say that P6 pupils need not be disappointed as the plan is to elect 2013's Gala Queen and

attendants from the then P7 and thereafter.

Lochwinnoch Gala Day is a self funding organisation and has no affiliation with any other organisation in the village. For the past seven years that Gala Day has been running, we have worked very hard raising the funds required independently. We have been fortunate enough also to have been able to make donations to the following organisations:

'Heart Start' at the RAH, Lochwinnoch Primary School, Calder UF Church, Lochwinnoch Parish Church, Our Lady of Fatima Church, Girls Brigade, Boys Brigade, Erskine Hospital, Salvation Army Soup kitchen and Lochwinnoch Christmas Lights.

We look forward to 2013 and hope that some of you who have read this will come on board and help to lessen our load making it a manageable event. A public meeting will be organised later in the year hopefully to bring everyone together.

Meantime we hope the weather is kind to us and that everyone has a lovely summer.

Elderly Forum

At the Forum meeting on Thursday 23rd February we will have two representatives from a firm of solicitors. They will explain how to go about making a will and also give advice on the procedure of power of attorney. They have already visited other forums in Renfrewshire and are not coming to try to sell us anything.

On a lighter note the Golf Club is holding A Valentine's Day Tea Dance on the afternoon of Tuesday 14th February 2pm - 4pm. Tickets £5. This includes fancy wee cakes, sandwiches and a glass of wine. The music is provided by Karpaul who played at our St Andrew's Day lunch.

Gordon Nicholl

Valentine Traditions



In Wales wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on February 14th. Hearts, keys and keyholes were favourite decorations on the spoons. The decoration meant, "You unlock my heart!"

In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would wear these names on their sleeves for a week. To wear your heart on your sleeve now means that it is easy for other people to know how you are feeling.

In some countries, a young woman may receive a gift of clothing from a young man. If she keeps the gift, it means she will marry him. In other countries it is a ring and as those famous serial brides, the Gabor sisters, used to say "If you don't marry him you have to return the ring, but you can keep the diamond!"

Some people used to believe that if a woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor. If she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a millionaire.

A love seat is a wide chair. It was first made to seat one woman and her wide dress. Later, the love seat or courting seat had two sections, often in an S-shape. In this way, a couple could sit together -- but not too closely!

Think of five or six names of boys or girls you might marry, As you twist the stem of an apple, recite the names until the stem comes off. You will marry the person whose name you were saying when the stem fell off.

Pick a dandelion that has gone to seed. Take a deep breath and blow the seeds into the wind. Count the seeds that remain on the stem. That is the number of children you will have.

If you cut an apple in half and count how many seeds are inside, you will also know how many children you will have.

February Chatsearch

Birds

BLACKBIRD	BUZZARD	CRANE
CROW	DOVE	DUCK
EAGLE	FALCON	GINCH
GOOSE	HARRIER	HAWK
HERON	LARK	MAGPIE
NIGHTINGALE	NUTHATCH	OWL
PHEASANT	PIGEON	QUAIL
RAVEN	ROBIN	SANDPIPER
SPARROW	SWALLOW	SWAN
THRUSH	WARBLER	WOODPECKER

- Lochwinnoch McKillop Small Hall on Monday 6th February from 6.30 til 8.30 pm
- Howwood Primary School on Thursday 16th February from 6.30 til 8.30 pm
- And in Kilbarchan at the Old Library Centre on Thursday 23rd February from 6.30 til 8.30pm

N	A	L	W	V	E	A	B	E	E	Z	N	A	H
N	E	S	C	H	N	A	P	H	N	L	A	A	A
N	N	V	E	S	O	O	G	U	P	H	W	R	R
H	L	I	A	U	Q	O	T	L	E	C	S	E	R
U	D	P	G	R	E	H	R	R	E	N	P	L	I
I	E	U	E	H	A	V	O	E	I	I	A	B	E
W	O	R	C	T	T	N	O	D	P	F	R	R	R
B	L	A	C	K	B	I	R	D	G	F	R	A	C
N	P	H	E	A	S	A	N	T	A	L	O	W	P
H	D	I	L	A	Z	A	N	G	M	K	W	A	H
R	E	S	G	Z	S	I	L	F	A	L	C	O	N
S	G	W	U	E	B	S	W	A	L	L	O	W	H
Z	O	B	W	O	O	D	P	E	C	K	E	R	O
O	R	K	R	A	L	N	R	D	N	L	E	S	S

Mini Food Fayres

The Lochwinnoch Food Group in conjunction with LEAP hope you'll be able to come along and support local producers at the regular monthly food mini marts outside the McKillop. The next dates, all 10 am till 3pm, will be Saturday's 25th February, 24th March and 28th April with a larger Spring Food Festival on 26th May.

Stalls will include butcher, burgers, deli, pop up café, gluten free bakery, jams 'n' pickles, sweets, veg cuisine, fish and, in February, pancakes. The more folk come and shop, the wider the range will grow. Let us know if you would like to help in any way and if you have ideas and suggestions to make the event better for everyone. If you'd like a stall selling foodstuffs, please get in touch. Any musicians who would like to come and play a wee slot, we'd love to hear from you.

Fuel Efficient Driving Lessons

Lochwinnoch has so far hosted 2 Eco Driving Lesson days with some great feedback from those who have taken up the offer of lessons. Each 50 minute lesson costs £12 (subsidised from the normal charge of £40). Please get in touch and book a slot if this interests you.

If you'd like to find out more about anything to do with the project, take a look at our webpages at www.lochwinnoch.info/leap or email leap@lochwinnoch.info, phone 842 530 or drop in to The Hub, 22 Church Street to find out more.

The LEAP Team

Free Home Insulation

Renfrewshire Council have recently launched a FREE Home Insulation scheme. Installing Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation in an average size house can reduce heating bills by up to £280 a year and could cost around £400 to install. Through this offer the Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation is installed FREE of charge, which can save you money on the costs of heating your home and will reduce your carbon emissions. The offer is open to:

- Home owners or private tenants living in Renfrewshire
- Homes with unfilled cavity walls
- Homes with less than 150mm of loft insulation

To find out if you are eligible call 0800 512 012 (quoting: RenfrewshireUHS_2011)

Funding is limited and will be

allocated on a first come first served basis across Renfrewshire.

Draught Buster Workshops

Draughty house ? Feeling the cold ? Why not book in for one of LEAP's Draught Buster workshops. Come along for free advice and hands on practice at draught stripping, silconing and much more. Our qualified and experienced staff will be on hand with good practical solutions for any insulation and heating issues you might have. Sessions are informal and friendly, if you bring the measurements for a draughty wooden door or window we will give you the materials and skills away to do it yourself and tea and biscuits! The next workshops will take place in :

- Kilbarchan at the Old Library Centre on Saturday 4th February from 1.30 til 3.30 pm (this event will also include a Thermal Image Display)



Regional Park Roundup



Castle Semple Scotland's First RYA Sailability Centre for Excellence



Castle Semple has received National Recognition for becoming Scotland's first Royal Yacht Association (RYA) 'Sailability' Centre of Excellence in Scotland. This means the Centre is fully equipped with having the specialised sailing equipment, experienced staff (over 25 years combined) and facilities to easily accommodate people with disabilities.



Exciting Partnerships with the Gryffe Rotary Club, as well as the support of our local Sailing, Rowing and Windsurfing Clubs, have enabled us to expand our current range of facilities available disabled

sailors.

The Gryffe Rotary Club has most generously donated a hoist, which be installed at the Loch in the coming weeks and will do doubt be well used for many years to come.

The Official Launch & Celebration for Sailability status will be on Sunday 18th March. For more details see our website www.clydemuirshiel.co.uk.

Song of the Paddle at Castle Semple!

Song of the Paddle's Christmas Paddle was run over the weekend of the 17th and 18th of December we had over 25 members come to Castle Semple to learn new skills, have fun and Barbeque! We had to break through the ice to get on the loch; however we had an excellent two days. During this time we organised Polling skills, River skills, journeying, flat water work and even some sailing. Thanks to all the

participants or coming and thanks again to the staff who gave up their time to come in and helped make the weekend a success.

Weaving Musical Threads!

This unique event will be happening at Castle Semple Centre on Saturday 3rd March. One of many venues throughout Renfrewshire, performers will exhibit through storytelling, poetry and song. More info – www.weavingmusicalthreads.co.uk.

Local Band Release CD!

Popular local Ceilidh Band, Clamjamfrie have released their long awaited debut CD, 'Clammin'. The official CD launch event is at Castle Semple Visitor Centre on the 10th of March. Doors open at 7pm with free admission. There will be a collection in aid of St Vincent's Hospice. The band will play a few tunes from their CD and may even get some dancing going! Our Visitor Centre Assistant Jane is one of the 5 in the band so here will be a familiar face there for the regulars!

Calling Local Businesses

The Regional Park is looking to put together an information park for visitors to the area and would like to give them ample choice and information as to what is available. This would cover all aspects of tourism such as accommodation, catering, things to do and see. If you would like to be included please email us your information to info@clydemuirshiel.co.uk or drop a few leaflets in to your local centre.



"Art in the Park"

An exhibition and sale of paintings by Lochwinnoch Art Group

Fri 20th Jan—Tues 7th Feb

Castle Semple Centre 10.00 to 15.30hrs daily



Only some of the group members were present for this photograph



Lochwinnoch Art Group

In February, (weather permitting), we shall be meeting in the Space Room of the McKillop Institute on Monday the 13th and 27th from 7.30 - 9.30pm. If you enjoy drawing or painting why not come along and give it a try? We always welcome newcomers.

Presently there is an exhibition of our work in Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park's Castle Semple Visitor Centre entitled "Art in the Park".

This is an excellent venue where you can include a cup of tea or coffee in your visit. It is interesting to see the wide variety of subject and style. Most of the paintings are for sale but there is no entry fee. The exhibition will end on Tuesday the 7th February.

Just before Christmas we were approached by a representative of a 2012 Renfrewshire Council venture, namely "Weaving Musical Threads", who offered us the opportunity to hold a Lochwinnoch Art Group exhibition in the Paisley Arts Centre. We've said, "YES!", and so our work will hang there from Tuesday, 28th February until Monday, 12th March.

Again this a venue where you can relax with a friend over a cup of tea or coffee.

We're quietly thrilled to have been invited.

Sandra Fowles, LAG

Beith Arts Sunday Concerts

Our February concert has an instrumental duo with a difference - David Vernon and Dick Lee play accordion and clarinet, and are presenting us with a programme of "Music from All Over". This sounds like a lively and varied



David Vernon and Dick Lee



*Lochwinnoch residents -
Can I help? If so, please don't
hesitate to get in touch.*

Douglas Alexander, Lochwinnoch's MP

Write to: 2014 Mile End Mill, 12 Seedhill Road, Paisley, PA1 1JS
Tel: 0141 561 0333. E-mail: dalexandermp@talk21.com
or come to one of my advice surgeries.

afternoon, and we fully expect our regular audience to enjoy having their Sunday cheered up by some well-known melodies and catchy rhythms.

The date to remember is 26th February, and the time is 2.30 p.m. All our concerts are held in Beith Community Centre, Kings Road, Beith, and all comers are very welcome.

Prices are: Adults £8, Seniors £6, Students and Children £1 - pay at the door.

We provide a cup of tea and a biscuit at the interval to make the welcome even warmer!



SWRI

The February meeting of Lochwinnoch Rural is on 15th February in the McKillop at 7.30

Our speaker will be Anne McCord talking and demonstrating on the subject of "Fine Silver Jewellery".

The competitions are:

- 3 Filled Viennese Fingers
- Your Favourite Trinket Box

We look forward to seeing you all there and hope that we can also welcome new members and visitors.

What's On Renfrewshire Arts & Museums

February

- **3 Feb – 8 April** INSPIRED Paisley Museum
- **3 Feb – 8 April** Wonderland Paisley Museum
- **Thurs 9 Feb** Valentine's Day Baby Disco Paisley Town Hall
- **Sat 11 Feb** Rat Pack (7.30pm, 2 hrs + int) Paisley Town Hall
- **Sat 11 Feb** Robin and the Big Freeze (2pm, 65 mins) Paisley Arts Centre
- **Fri 17 Feb** Film: Play Misty for Me (7.30pm, 102 mins) Paisley Arts Centre
- **Sat 18 Feb** Film: Les Girls (4pm, 114 mins) Paisley Arts Centre
- **Sun 19 Feb** The Paisley and Renfrewshire Wedding Show Paisley Town Hall
- **Wed 22 Feb** Double Nugget (7.30pm, 2hr 10 mins + int) Paisley Arts Centre
- **Tues 28 Feb** The Attic (11.30am and 2pm, 40 mins) Paisley Town Hall
- **24 Feb – 15 April** Legends of the Golden Age Paisley Museum
- **Sat 25 Feb** Kris Drever (7.30pm, 1hr 30 mins + int) Paisley Arts Centre

After the Storm

It was a morning for the walk
through Muirshiel Woods
clear with a winter shining on the
sharp hill edge
sun-bright
after all the incessant dark cloud-grey
of New Year storm.
Damp pine perfume had infused itself
in air
Insinuating freshness on our breathing
like a stimulant.
Our footsteps quickened.
Inside the wood the evergreen pine
branches
drew curtains on the light.
Shadow enfolded us..
Something was wrong.
We hesitated, for the way was barred
but squeezed on through.
This path was ours.

Now we knew the Storm Witch
had danced her crazy dance among the
trees
and they had danced along with her
swaying and flaying their branches in
a tempestuous fandango
and they had played their wild storm
music to crescendo
in the frenzy of the dance.
Too many had let go their hold upon
the earth
and lay uprooted on the ground.
Only the carved wood owls had
watched them in the night
for their eyes never close;
only the owls had listened
when the falling trees
gave groan.

In the distance we could hear a
chainsaw
playing its own tune.
We shivered
left the wood to whisper of its secrets
came back out in to the sun.

Betty McKellar
January 2012



Lochwinnoch International Aid

Lochwinnoch International Aid (LIA)
is having its AGM on the 8th Feb in
Lochwinnoch Library, 7.00 -8.00 pm.
Anyone interested in our group is
invited.

Last year we helped a variety of
projects, including Arusha and Amani
children's centres in Africa, hurricane
damage in St Lucia (Fairtrade banana
growers), an 'ecoloo' for a village in
Zimbabwe, emergency aid in the Horn
of Africa and Mary's Meals feeding
programme.

We also gave money to Stephanie
Speirs, a local person, who was
working in Palestine. You can read an
account of her work is elsewhere in
Chatterbox.

We had fewer fundraising events last
year and we need more subscribers to
our monthly standing orders scheme
so we can carry on giving help in the
name of Lochwinnoch. Just a few
pounds a month means that
subscribers can help regularly over
the year with a range of good causes.

Dave Mellor LIA



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(10 mins from Glasgow Airport on A737)**

Silly Poem

A Secret

It's ok to tell a secret
to dolphin or a seal,
but a pig cannot be trusted,
for a pig will always squeal!

CHATTERBOX

Chatterbox is produced and
distributed on behalf of Lochwinnoch
Community Council, with support and
financial assistance from local
sponsors and advertisers.

Lochwinnoch Community
Council welcomes all items for
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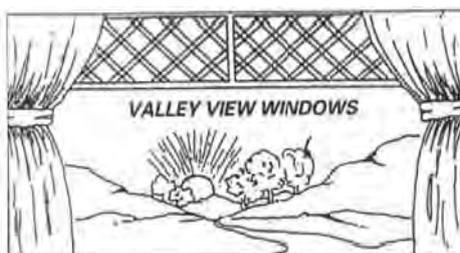
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