The Bugle

Magazine for Gargunnock and the surrounding area

Issue 78
June 2024
www.gargunnock.org

Walk of Hope 2024

On 17th April 2024, 3 Dads Walking commenced their latest 500 mile walk in aid of the **PAPYRUS, Prevention of Young Suicide** Charity for which they have already raised well over £1m. Andy, Tim & Mike have each tragically lost a daughter to suicide.

On the previous evening, having stayed overnight here at the Beild farm with John and Joan More, a short presentation was held in the Gargunnock Inn where they received a cheque for £800 for the charity. No less than £440 of that was raised in Gargunnock Inn via a quiz and raffle under the capable hands of Quiz master George Goodall who decided to add to that total the money generated from similar events at the Fintry Inn and the Lion & Unicorn, Thornhill.

The 3 Dads expressed their grateful thanks and commented on how generous they had found everyone here to be.

Their fund-raising walks have enabled the charity to accelerate its growth plans. In 2023, **PAPYRUS** extended the opening hours of its suicide prevention helpline **HOPELINEUK** from 9am-midnight up to a 24/7 service. More offices have also been opened throughout the country. From an original 5 it now has 18, with more in the pipeline, extending its reach and influence.

Having been asked many times 'When are you walking down the east side of the country?' the 3 Dads decided they could do that by designing their next walk to highlight some of the newly opened (and soon to open) offices in areas they had not been to before. Their route this time took them from the Stirling office across to Edinburgh then south to Newcastle and Leeds before turning east for Hull, to cross the Humber Bridge and make their way south to the finish in Norwich on 11th May.

Papyrus can be contacted at 0800 068 4141 or pat@papyrus-uk.org or text 88247

Left to right in photo – Matthew Bedwell (Gargunnock Inn), Andy Airey, Tim Owen, Fiona Stevenson (Lion & Unicorn), Mike Palmer and Quiz master George Goodall

Editorial

Welcome to the second Bugle of 2024, in this edition there is a lot about the Gala Day which is one of the most memorable events in Gargunnock, and everyone is surely excited for it.

Thank you to everyone who sent articles and ads for this edition, although there is no police report it still has lots of news from Gargunnock to keep everyone updated.

All contributions can be sent to gargunnockbugle@gmail.com, please send feedback for this Bugle edition. The deadline for the next issue is 1st September 2024.

Louise Crawford, May 2024

As we look forward to Gala Day on 15th June, Maitland Clark has shared an article from The Gargunnock Quarterly October 1984 summarising that years successful Gala Day - the second one ever organised.

Gargunnock Gala Day - Saturday 23rd June 1984

The Gala committee ably led by Bob Marshall provided yet another exciting day for the children of the village and district by organising the traditional Fancy Dress Parade, Sports and feast of sweets, lemonade, ice cream and prizes for all participants.

For the second year running a Gala Queen was chosen and feted before being crowned to preside over the afternoon's festivities. This year's queen was Wendy Hutchinson and her Lady-in waiting was Lynn Bennett. Mrs Mc Callum of Stark Street performed the ceremonials and also judged the fancy dress competitions.

Side-shows run by the members of the Cricket Club added to the entertainment during the afternoon but pride of place in the music stakes went to the efforts of David Methven and his fellow pipers and drummers of the Central Region Youth Pipe Band.

The usual five-a-side netball and football rounded off a splendid afternoon before first the youth in the early evening and then the adults enjoyed Gordon McQueen's Disco run by the Football Club in the Church Hall.

Such events as these require financial support and the villagers supported the Gala very generously with the teas under Mrs Orr's direction raising around £70, the raffle firing on all cylinders powered by Marshall 'gas' raising a staggering £184 and the sideshows bringing in about £35.

For the record and due most thanks for convening various events were the following:- Bob Marshall (Financial Wizard), John Henderson (Jack of all Trades), Maureen Ferguson (Behind the Scenes Organizer) Brenda Orr (Tearoom Spick and Span Supremo), Moira Mc Phate (Queen Maker and Decorator), Jimmy Hill (Skilled Tenter), Rab. Petrie (Cash & Carry Refreshment Purveyor) and last but by no means least Margaret Marshall (Bob Organizer and Prize Provider),

Bite and Blether

On May 1st we had another busy Bite and Blether with many of our regulars enjoying coffees, lunches and cakes. We even welcomed visitors from Holland who were staying at Gargunnock House. Thank you to the lady they met in the village who told them they HAD to come!!

The next Bite and Blether is on Wednesday 5th June. This will be the last one before we take a break till Wednesday 4th September. Thank you to everyone who supported us during the year, and of course our wonderful bakers, without whom we couldn't exist. We hope you all have a lovely summer with plenty of sunshine!

The B & B team.

Gargunnock Gala 2024

G IN THE PARK

15th June 2024 | 2:30pm

Music Theme | Costume procession
Prize Giving | BBQ & Bar
Afternoon Tea
Live Bands | Stalls and much more

ACTIVITY CLUBS

BEFORE AFTER MIND THE GAP

At Gargunnock Primary School
Mon–Thurs 8am – 9am
Mon– Thurs 3.15pm – 5.15pm

£3.50 per child Before and £7 After School
Sibling discounts available

'Funded by the Renantis Kingsburn Community Fund administered by the Gargunnock Community Trust'

GVC

Renantis

For bookings and information email:
gargunnockvillagechildcare@gmail.com

COME JOIN US

GVC

GARGUNNOCK TODDLERS

At Gargunnock Community Centre
Tuesdays 10am – 11:30am
Fridays 9:30am – 11:30am

THINGS TO NOTE:

- For children age 0-5 years old
- Snacks and a hot drink provided
- £2.50 per child and £1 for each extra sibling

The group is a great opportunity for kids to play and parents to meet and chat - everyone is very welcome!

For more information please contact:

HCM22MOORE@GMAIL.COM

Renantis

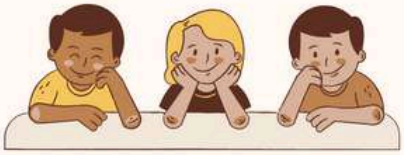
'Funded by the Renantis Kingsburn Community Fund administered by the Gargunnock Community Trust'

GVC

COME JOIN THE

GARGUNNOCK PLAYGROUP

At Gargunnock Community Centre
Term time Mondays and Thursdays 9.30am–12pm



THINGS TO NOTE:

- For children aged 2 years and above - You can drop and go!
- Snacks provided
- £12.50 per session, £7.50 for siblings

For further information please contact:

GARGUNNOCKPLAYGROUP@GMAIL.COM

Renantis

'Funded by the Renantis Kingsburn Community Fund administered by the Gargunnock Community Trust'

Gargunnock Quarterly Magazine, Winter Edition 1987. 37 years ago. Me in my early 40s sampling one of the new-fangled All Terrain Bikes down at Glentress near Peebles.

I have often been a born-again cyclist. Every 10 to 15 years I "discover" cycling again for a few years then it tails off a bit as other things take up my attention. But always I return to it as a pleasant form of exercise.

There are plenty of quieter roads in this area to enjoy, the only trouble is you must use the busier roads to get to them. The A811 Dumbarton Road or the A84 Callander Road to name but two are not for the faint-hearted although I have almost never had any problems with them. Choose your time and they're OK really. Pretty much all motorists obey the distance from cyclists rules now, apart from foreigners on the A84 driving left-hand-drive vehicles, which is understandable when you think about it.

My latest foray back into cycling came with lock-down when we were all out walking round Leckie till that became a bit repetitive so the old bike was retrieved from the garage for the first time in years. The roads were quiet to begin with and the cycling was pleasant, but one thing soon became apparent. The hills had become a lot steeper than I remembered them!

The one that always defeated me was on the Glinns road up past Auld Hall Farm, it gets steeper and steeper as you climb towards Ballochleam. Nothing to do with advancing years of course but, never one to ignore new technology, I borrowed a friends e-bike to try out around the village hills and that convinced me it was the solution.

On the e-bike the Manse Brae was climbed no bother, followed by Quarry Road up to the old sawmill site. On the flat a stiff headwind likewise gave no problems. So, what is an e-bike? Well, it is a bike with a battery and an electric motor which gives you various levels of assistance provided you are pushing the pedals. Stop pushing them and the motor stops assisting you. Or if you reach a speed more than 15.50 mph the motor will cut out. Simple. There's no throttle, it's all down to you pushing the pedals so you still get exercise.

2024 Me again, now well into my latest cycling resurrection as an octogenarian cyclist on my beloved e-bike which I reckon has taken 60 years off my cycling age.

The result is that suddenly you're performing like you did 60 years ago when you were younger and fitter. What's not to like?

Well the not so likeable bit is the effect on your wallet of buying one so you need to know how much to spend or not to spend to give you what you want. One of the first questions asked about these bikes is how far will it go on a charge? That depends on a lot of variable factors; your weight, type of road, wind speed & direction, speed of travel, gradient of road, gear and size of battery. The battery is expensive.

However I can tell you that over 81 circular, mixed rides from the village over the last 2 years my average power consumption has been 8-10 WattHours per mile travelled. Divide that into the rated WattHr figure for the battery of the bike you're considering to give you an approximate projected mileage.

OK you'll consume double that rate or more on very steep sections if you push things a bit but on a circular run you'll always have the benefit of the corresponding downhill run on the way back.

Strong wheels and fat tyres will allow you to explore the line of the unsurfaced old Kings Highway from here westwards through Leckie & Boquhan estates to Kippen then the Jennywoodston road from there to the road leading down to the A811 at Arnprior and thence to Port of Menteith and return via Thornhill.

The Glinns road up through Burnton, past Ballochleam to Lernock Toll and beyond to Balfron is there just waiting to be explored in spite of its many gradients.

Hours and hours of endless enjoyment for the born-again cyclist like me….or you perhaps if you care to give it a try? See you.

John McLaren

Trust News May 2024

EGM: At the recent Extraordinary General Meeting the members and trustees in attendance (thanks to those who came along), after a presentation and discussion about the pros and cons, approved the resolution to convert the trust from a limited company to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. (SCIO). Following that a further decision was made to adopt the draft constitution, with amendments proposed at the meeting, which had been prepared by Stirling Voluntary Enterprise. We are now going through the formal application process with OSCR, the Scottish charity regulator. This change will improve the efficiency of running the trust which will be welcomed by the volunteers, who give up so much of their own time for the community. We will be getting in touch with all existing members (that's everyone in the village who have previously completed a membership form) to update their membership details at some point in the future.

Community Centre: The trust has agreed several improvements to the Community Centre which it owns and manages on behalf of the village. In early July the entrance to the car park will be upgraded to get rid of the potholes! Work has already taken place to increase the worktop space in the kitchen by replacing the old fridge freezer with a new fridge and countertop. (Thanks to Roddy Chambers for the generous gift of his expertise and time.) Also, a new hot water boiler will soon be installed. We are also investigating the installation of a new container at the rear to the Centre to accommodate the range of bikes which have been purchased. The bikes will soon be available to the community, (watch this space!). We are also considering the installation of a large TV monitor in the Garden Room so that groups can give presentations etc. Many of these improvements are in response to the feedback from the growing number of customers.

Telephone box: Having recently taken over responsibility from the Community Council for the 'defibrillator' telephone box next to the shop, the trust plans to undertake repairs (Again thanks to Roddy Chambers) and repaint it. This will be done once the shop project has been completed. We are also considering installing another defibrillator at the east end of the village.

Opportunity: We are looking to adopt a new Director to bring us up to a full complement of 12 trustees so if you are interested in offering your skills, time and expertise to help the local community please email gargunnocktrust@gmail.com.

Hamish's Kindling

Thanks to the village buying kindling from Hamish Muirhead we were able to give £780 to Erskine.

We would like to thank villagers who have given old fences, decking, skirting boards etc which were turned into kindling in Gladys Rough's garage.

If anyone in the village or surrounding areas would like kindling, you can call at 1 Stark Street.

If the white van is outside Hamish is at home.

ALEXANDER STEWART MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Mid Scotland and Fife Region

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Gargunnock SWI

Gargunnock Rural is coming to the end of the 2023-2024 programme. It has been a very successful and enjoyable year for our members.

In March Scott Methvan the Queen's Piper gave an enlightening and very entertaining talk about his life playing the bagpipes, the army life he experienced and his time as the Queen's Piper. He was born in Gargunnock and obviously had great affection for the village. His career in the army both being a soldier and a musician took him all over the world including Afghanistan. His time spent as the Queen's Piper opened a whole new world to him giving him not only an in depth understanding of the Royal family but also the opportunity to meet numerous dignitaries and famous people. The evening ended with Scott playing the bagpipes.

As Easter approached our ladies decorated the village with colourful decorations at the square and outside the church as well as their own gardens and window boxes.

At the start of April we entered four teams in the SC&WP Federation quiz at Thornhill run by Ruskie . Although we didn't win it was a fun quiz followed by refreshments and a lovely spread of cakes.

At our April meeting we had a games night with numerous games such as dominos, Jenga and darts. Our members enjoyed competing against each other and there was plenty of time for socialising. Janette Wilson was awarded the Mary Hill Quaich for winning the Scottish Verse competition held in earlier in the year.

At the Federation Spring Meeting held at Bridge of Allan Gargunnock nearly swept the board with the competitions. The Morton Pairs trophy - which pairs had to make three fabric flowers and bake two lemon tarts. First were Cathy Rowley and Jane Currie, second were Janet Iffla and Stacey McFarlane with Helen Hyland and Jane Currie Highly Commended. The New Forge Trophy, which was to crocheted baby hat, was won by Janet Iffla with Mary Findlay coming third. Congratulations go to all of these competitors it was an excellent result.

Our fund raiser this year was the Gargunnock pub quiz where we raised funds which will help us in the future pay for speakers /demonstrations and other activities. Thank you to everyone who generously supported us. A big thank you also for all the staff at Gargunnock Inn it was a fun way to raise money.

Our AGM has just been held and this year we had a BBQ and mocktails and cocktails. It proved to be a very popular evening with the committee in full swing serving refreshment and food. A big thanks to the BBQ chefs Grace , Marion and Raymond Mountford stepping in to help . Jane Currie was the winner of the most points competition congratulations goes to her. This was the final meeting of the 2023-2024 season.

Saturday 25th May we have members taking part in the crafts at the Drymen Show.

Sunday 26th May we have 24 members going to the Burrell Collection on a minibus . It should be a very interesting visit. We would all like to thank the Wind Farm for the help with paying for the minibus.

After our summer break our meetings resume on Tuesday 17th September at 7.30. We meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 in the Gargunnock Community Centre. If you are interested in joining or would like more information please contact me on **07815 522 247** or email **bmountford31@gmail.com**. You do not need to live in Gargunnock to be a member, we have quite a few members from Stirling area. So why not come along as a visitor in September there are always plenty of refreshments and a spread of cakes plus an abundance of friendliness.

Beverley Mountford – President Gargunnock SWI

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- Go to **www.stirlingcommunitylottery.scot** to sign up.
- Choose a good cause which matters to **you**, while also getting the chance to win some great **prizes**, including a top prize of **£25,000.**
- Follow Stirling Community Lottery on **x** and **fb** for the latest updates.
- Buy tickets **quickly** and **easily** by scanning the QR code.

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Players must be 18 or over and physically located in the Great Britain.
Always play responsibly, if you need to talk to someone about your gambling please contact Gamble Aware
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GARGUNNOCK
COMMUNITY SHOP

Funded by
UK Government

EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS
UPDATE!

Project Development Officer Appointed

A lot has happened since our last update in January 2024. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Danielle McRorie-Smith, funded by the SLF award. Danielle will support the work of the Management Committee, with her early priorities being:

Community Share Prospectus and Offer:
Creating a community share prospectus and share offer, allowing villagers to become part of the Gargunnock Community Benefit Society (GCBS). More details will follow soon.

Tenant Search and Selection:
Developing a tenant brochure, advertising for a tenant, creating a tenant contract, and ultimately recommending a shortlist of potential tenants to the Management Committee. We will then select and appoint a tenant.

Liquor Licence:
Applying for a liquor licence on behalf of the shop committee. This is a very complex process, but we are fortunate to have Danielle's expertise in this area.

Please note there should be no parking in front of the shop for the duration of all works which are expected to continue until September

Please feel free to contact any of us and attend Gargunnock Community Council meetings for updates

BUILDING WORKS TIMELINE:

POWERED BY LEVELLING UP

Building projects subject to change

EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS UPDATE!

GARGUNNOCK COMMUNITY SHOP

Recent Progress on the Shop:

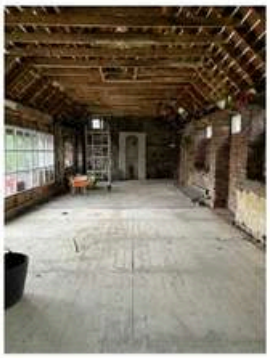
Clearing Overgrowth:
The green overgrowth around and at the back of the shop has been removed.

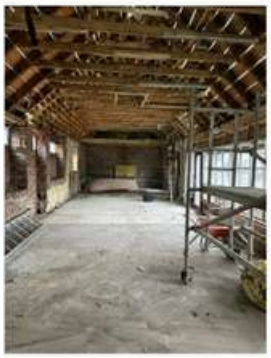
Planning Permission:
Planning permission is now in place.

Appointment of Main Building Contractor:
As many of you may have noticed, the main contractor will be MacGregor Building Services Ltd, based in Callander. We are very pleased to have an experienced local company to fulfil the works required to complete the shop.

Appointment of Ledi Renewables:
Ledi Renewables has been appointed as our eco heat and energy engineers. They will install an air source heat pump, battery, and solar panels to ensure the shop's carbon footprint is as low as possible and that it remains sustainable for the future.

Historical Discovery:
During some of the initial surveys, we discovered a stained glass shop window in the eastern gable. This lovely historical feature will be preserved for posterity.





Contact Details:

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Julie Cole	juliecole67@gmail.com	Vice-Chair
Hannah Vallance	vallance616@hotmail.com	Treasurer
David Millar	dwjmillar@gmail.com	Secretary
Mike Buckley	mb_j@btinternet.com	Member
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Grant Henderson	hends3671@gmail.com	Member
Allan MacMillan	allanmac10@googlemail.com	Member
Jill Patrick	jillpatrick3@gmail.com	Member
Danielle M-Smith	danielle@dmsconsulting.uk	Project Development Officer

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Launch of the Community Shares Prospectus:

SUNDAY JUNE 30TH 2024
13:00 - 16:00
DROP IN AT THE GARGUNNOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE

THURSDAY 4TH JULY 2024
19:30 - 20:30
ONLINE (LINK ON FACEBOOK)

IF EITHER DATE ISNT SUITABLE - A RECORDING WILL BE ACCESSIBLE ONLINE.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to make progress!

Windfarm Fund

Since our last update, we are delighted to share that there have been another five successful grants awarded by the Windfarm Panel, across a number of different community groups and individuals. The awards granted in March were-

- £250 was awarded to support Zane Galbraith with an overseas trip competing with Stirling Youth Tenpin Bowling Club
- £333 was awarded to the SWI for bus costs for their trip to Burrell Collection
- £2,309.50 was awarded to Flower Show Committee for new staging
- £250 was awarded for crafting supplies for Chat/Craft/Create class
- £1,179.38 was awarded towards 2024 Village Gala
- £216 was awarded for a sign above Kirk Welcome Team Noticeboard.

The panel was pleased to see such a range of applications, and would like to encourage continued applications from across the community.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the application process or would like to discuss the potential for funding, please do reach out to **Ashley Fleming** or **Jackie Campbell** or email **windfarmpanel@gargunnock.org**

The Windfarm Panel is made up of community based volunteers including representatives from the Community Trust and the Community Council. The Panel is responsible for making awards within the Gargunnock Community Council area from Renantis (previously FALCK) Renewables fund.

In 2023 we allocated £28,804.02 to village groups/individuals are received £31,197.71 from Foundation Scotland.

Future deadline date for applications are:

- Monday 5th August
- Monday 18th November

Application forms can be downloaded from village website - **https://www.gargunnock.org/wind-farm-applications**

If anyone would like to submit an application for something that is time critical please email us at **windfarmpanel@gargunnock.org**

"Easy Fundraising" for Gargunnock Primary School

How does Henry Hall's song about teddy bears go? "If you go down to the School today, you're sure of a big surprise..." and we hope you can see the fruits of the School's Parent Council.

Its been a challenging environment to raise funds for Gargunnock Primary School. One source of funding that the Parent Council relies on is called "Easy Fundraising". "Easy Fundraising" is a charity shopping site. It is an easy and free way to raise much needed funds for all sorts of charities and causes across the UK, but obviously we would like you and your friends and family to support "Gargunnock Primary School" (hint, hint).

Easy Fundraising partners with over 7,500 brands who will donate a stated percentage of what you spend to a cause of your choice. I thought about giving a few examples but I didn't want to inadvertently advertise (pun intended). But it includes the main online retailers and some supermarkets.

All you need to do is go to the Easy Fundraising website, search for a brand and then make a purchase from that brand. The Brand will then pay that percentage commission to Easy Fundraising who then pass the commission onto us. It doesn't cost you any extra.

Easy Fundraising also offer an App and a web browser extension to make life even easier. To register please download the app or visit the following website and then search for "Gargunnock Primary School": **https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/** If you have any questions or need some help getting started then please do feel free to contact me via any parent at the school.

We would really appreciate if many more people in the village would consider using this service. Small amounts raised by large numbers of people just doing their regular shopping really do start to add up. This year it has provided about £100 to use for the school, but last year it helped raise £400.

Many thanks, Aston Goundry at the Old Church Hall - Parent Council Treasurer - treasurer.gargps.parentcouncil@gmail.com

"Lets work hand in hand to help the pupils grow."

Gargunnock Curling Club enjoyed another great season of curling at The Peak on Sunday evenings throughout the winter.

This year's big winners were jointly Pat Brown, Gordon Marshall and Fraser Mclean who were part of the winning teams in both Bugle and Drum competitions. As yet, no-one other than Bobby McAllister has managed to win three internal competitions in the same season. Winning teams are as follows:

The Bugle:
Bobby McAllister
Fraser Mclean
Gordon Marshall
Pat Brown

Doubles
Nathan Anderton
Gavin Fleming

The Drum
Fraser Mclean
Matt Stevenson
Gordon Marshall
Pat Brown

Gargunnock had another successful year competing in the Forth & Endrick Province competitions which take place on Thursday evenings throughout the season. Highlights were a 3rd place finish in both the Paterson A-League and the Forest Hill B-League. Gargunnock entered Stirling Ladies competition the 'Anna Smith Trophy' for the first time and finished in a very creditable 2nd place. Congratulations to Anna Brand, Pauline Evans, Donna Fleming and Jackie Stevenson.

At the start of the season the club held a further successful 'come-and-try' event with British Curling professional coaches. Following this expert tuition two new members went on to join the club.
The club will be running more coaching sessions in September 2024 for new members so keep an eye out for those dates being published on our Facebook page.

This year's Christmas Bonspiel was extended to 6 teams and was followed by festive drinks and a buffet at the Inn. Lots of fun was had by everyone on and off the ice.
In February, villagers and members got together again at the Gargunnock Inn for the fourth annual quiz night. A superb night was had by all raising over £300 for club funds which will pay for the 'come-and-try' ice and coaches next season.

The season completed in late March with the annual club Dinner, AGM and Prizegiving. Outgoing Chairperson Gavin Fleming gave a round-up of the season's events and presented the prizes.
Gavin, having led the club since its re-establishment in 2018, handed over the role of Chair to Martin Johnstone to take the club forward.
Office bearers Pauline Evans (Club Secretary) and Graham Dingley (Treasurer) were reinstated, while Gregor Baillie stepped up to the role of Match Secretary. Other elected committee members were Donna Fleming, Nathan Anderton, Gordon Marshall and Fran Mott. Gavin Fleming and Jackie Stevenson stepped down from the committee, the club thanking them for their work over recent years. Most importantly, it was noted that the club's archive of paperwork dating back over 200 years had now all been scanned by John McLaren in order to help preserve these records for future generations. Thanks to John.

For more information or to join us please contact Pauline, **gargunnockcurlingclub@gmail.com**. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Scotland's Gardens Scheme 2024

9th June	Thorntree by Arnprior, FK8 3EY	2pm-5pm	Plant Stall and teas available.
23rd June	Tiny Farm, St Modan's High School, FK7 7WS	11am-5pm	Plant Stall and teas available.
14th July	Oakmore, Blairhoyle, Port of Menteith, FK8 3LF	11am-5pm	Tea & Plant Stall. Admission £5.
21st July	18, Buchany, Doune, FK16 6HG	1pm-5pm	Admission £5.
28th July	Mollan House, Thornhill, FK8 3QJ	11am-5pm	Admission £5, children free.
4th August	Braehead Community Garden, FK7 7GU	11am-4pm	Admission £5.
24th August	Bannockburn House Gardens, FK7 8EY	11am-4pm	Admission £7. House tour extra, to be booked in advance at Bannockburn House website.

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More info : www.printmakersofscotland.com

NOT ALL RHODODENDRONS ARE PURPLE!

If any local folk have walked along the driveway past Gargunnock House recently they will have passed the masses of rhododendrons and azaleas planted there. The flowering this year is the best ever! Lots of rain last year to form the buds and little or no frost this Spring. Many of the older rhodies were planted by the last laird Miss Viola Stirling in the nineteen fifties and sixties. They were added to more recently by Willie Campbell a gardener there for nearly 20 years. In retirement, he is still planting Rhodies in the East Glen conservation area. There are a few purple ones around but many other colours to delight the eye. The species - purple Rhododendron ponticum - is the one that gets the bad press and can be seen in many areas of Scotland where it has naturalised. Gargunnock estate was able to get grants to remove it from much of the lower woodland in early 2000s and so far it has not reappeared much. The gardens are open by arrangement for Scotland's Gardens Scheme.

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Gargunnock Walking Group – May 2024

The Gargunnock Walking Group continues to meet regularly twice a month, with some repeats of old favourite walks and some new walks. Most recently we walked in Carron Valley on a walk led by Roddy in an area which he knows well. The walk included a visit to the ruins of the home of Sir John de Graham, a supported of William Wallace who was killed at the Battle of Falkirk. As well as the historical context we had fine views over the Carron Valley and the reservoir.

We also recently had a very interesting walk to Old Kilmadock Cemetery near to Deanston. On the way to the Cemetery, we encountered on of the members of "ROOK" or Repairers of Old Kilmadock. Kenny Lauder offered to give us a tour of the cemetery, which with his substantial local knowledge proved to be extremely interesting. This was particularly topical because of the recent excavation of an ancient Pictich Stone with very unusual Ogham script found in the cemetery.

At the time of writing the next walk on 30th May will be a return visit to North Third Reservoir which also has fine views on a clear day. As usual we expect to find a congenial hostelry for lunch after the walk.

The dates and possible walks in June, July and August will be:

- Tuesday 11th June – Glen Shirup
- Thursday 27th June – Moncrieff Hill near Bridge of Earn
- Tuesday 9th July – Dunmore Loop
- Thursday 25th July – Walk in Devilla Forest
- Tuesday 13th August – Bracklinn Falls Loop
- Thursday 29th August – Kinnoul Hill, Perth

Members enjoying a joke in Carron Valley Forest

As usual these walks will depend up on the weather on the day. We want to maintain the tradition of walking on fine clear days when we expect to have stunning views of the surrounding countryside. And we are always on the look-out for new and interesting walks within easy access of Gargunnock

We normally gather at 9:30am in the pub car park prior to starting our walk, and we try to minimise the number of cars by sharing.

If you are interested in participating in our walks, call me on 01786 860608 or drop me an email to **edmond.mansion@btinternet.com** and I will put you on the circulation list for meets and send a copy of the Guidance Notes. Please note that one of the few rules that we have is no dogs. The primary reason for this is that we occasionally walk though areas where livestock graze and I would not wish to be associated with anyone's dog however well-disciplined whilst in the vicinity of cattle. We also expect participants to be responsible for their own wellbeing and capable of going the distance of the walk.

Edmond Mansion

THE WELCOME TEAM OF GARGUNNOCK KIRK would like to invite you to the following Talks in the Kirk. All four talks are entry by donation to the speaker's chosen charity and include refreshments at the end. Each talk starts at 2pm and lasts about 45 minutes with time for questions at the end. We are also offering a free guided tour of the old kirkyard, for anyone who is interested in our local history and weather permitting.

The first of this year's Talks in the Kirk is on **Sunday 8th September**, the speaker is Leighton Rolley of REV Ocean and his talk is entitled **Adventures at Sea and Exploration**. His chosen charity is TBA.

The second talk is on **22nd September and is part of Stirling's Doors Open Days**. The speaker is Colin Sinclair, the man Radio 5 Live described as the "Wikipedia of Post Boxes" and his talk in entitled **Post Boxes – Innocent Hobby or Dangerous Obsession?** His chosen charity is Alzheimer's Scotland. The guided walks of the old kirkyard are after the talk and **the Kirk will be open until 5pm.**

The third talk is on **6th October**, the speaker is Maren Dollman from Animals Asia and her talk is about Re**scuing Moon Bears and other animals**. Her chosen charity is Animals Asia.

The fourth talk is on **20th October**, the speaker is Alan Simpson, the Lord Lieutenant of Stirling & Falkirk who is talking about **The Curious Life of a Lord Lieutenant**. His chosen charity is Start Up Stirling.

And last, but not least, is on **3rd November**, the speaker is Alison Younger of Old Leckie Farm and her talk is called T**his (old) Farming Life**. Her chosen charity is the Royal Highland Educational Trust.

Put the dates in your diary and we hope to see you there.

Old Leckie

Along at Old Leckie there has been a collective sigh of relief that the relentless rain of spring has finally ceased. April brought with it the usual busy lambing period – overall a good lambing at the farm, but a hard one that required constant shifting around of sheep and new borns to dodge the worst of the weather. With the sun out and temperature lifting the 'growing season' is now well and truly upon us. Driving along the Carse it will have been hard to miss tractors out harrowing, seeding, fertilising and spraying. With the cows only just out their wintering sheds the first silage (winter feed) is getting cut for local dairy farms and we would hope to get our first made in June. And so the cycle goes on!

Livestock wise our spring calving went well, the final calf being born last week to the black highlander in the corner field by the sheds. It's a cross with our heritage Angus Bull Eoin and is a happy wee thing despite initially latching onto one of the male highlanders in the same field (much to his dismay). The lambs are growing well and the next few weeks will see us setting up gates out in the fields to bring them in for checking and dosing and the all important task of selecting some for entry to the Gargunnock Show on 1st June.

Summer is always busy for farm tours. We have bookings in for tourists from all round the world to come and explore the farm and get a real sense of what farming in Scotland is all about. We're also looking forward to welcoming Gargunnock Playgroup and Toddlers for their end of term outing and some local primary schools, supported by the Royal Highland Educational Trust – fingers crossed the weather stays good!

On the local produce side our new Leckie Layers have settled well into their new laying patterns and we've picked up a few new customers recently. If you're out and about and eating at The United Auctions' Deli, Nick's, Friends of Mine or Havn butchery in Bridge of Allan you can enjoy our free range eggs. Salad season has been slow to start with Alison having been away during April. Transplanting has begun though so we hope to have some ready into June. We've got loads of our grass fed native beef and pork in the freezer available for order, and it's been great to get so much positive feedback on our beef – the cross between the Highlanders and our Aberdeen Angus is working really well and delivering fabulous taste and quality. Visit our website www.oldleckie.co.uk to set up a regular home delivery, or one off orders, of our eggs and meat – and don't forget to come and say hello at the Gargunnock Show this year where we are serving up our own produce.

Alison Younger

the Woodhouse

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An oasis in the damp

Everyone deserves a quirky hobby, and mine is cacti. I hope to provide some enlightenment into this curious hobby at a later date. But after nearly a decade in the village I finally have a new greenhouse and I can give my collection the light it needs. I am already being rewarded and would like to share a picture of the first flowers of the season.

These cacti are a few of my Rebutia hybrids. At a little over 1 inch in size they reward with a display nearly 6 inches across. In light pink we have Rebutia "Magic Moment" and Rebutia "Roxanne". In dark pink we have Rebutia "Victoria" and Rebutia "Marina".

And for a bit of bright orange contrast, this is Rebutia “Georgia”. More cacti are coming into bud and I hope to share some more with you.

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Editor: Louise Crawford
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Contributions: Letters & submissions may be made to the Editor (deadlines are shown elsewhere in the newsletter). We reserve the right to edit, shorten, or refuse to publish any article or letter submitted.

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