



The hall was finally completed at the beginning of December when we had an open evening for the village on the 4th. Despite the weather it was excellently attended and everyone was very impressed with the hall. The women's institute was our first hire celebrating 90 years of the WRI. Then it was the children's Christmas party - what a pleasure it was to be warm and not have frozen pipes (which was a common issue). Clair Norris our artist came along, spending the day with all the children in the school and nursery and then moving into the village hall to allow anyone else who wanted to take part in our artwork, to be involved. This is going to be a ceramic picture telling the story of Fountainhall throughout the life of the train and the village hall funded by the railway fund. It is going to be placed at the end of the hall as a focal point when you enter. It was looking excellent when everyone had finished and most importantly we all had fun.

We are now starting to get lots of bookings and if anyone is interested in hiring the hall speak to Jim Mercer on 07730 353916. Price list alongside - please circulate freely - and note the special rates for Stow Parish Residents.

We are planning a grand opening on Friday the 4th of March from 7.30 pm so if anyone would like to come along and celebrate with us you would be more than welcome.

Fountainhall Village Hall Hire Rates

Charges	Main Hall	Kitchen	
Residents*	£5	£4	per hour
Non-Residents	£8	£4	per hour
Clubs	£7	£4	per hour

Half day Hire of whole hall (up to 4 Hours)

Residents* £25 / Non-Residents £45

Full day Hire of whole hall (4 Hours +)

Residents* £50 / Non-Residents £100

Booking enquiries Please contact:

Jim Mercer on 07730 353916

£30 deposit required at time of booking

Residents include: Rural and Charity/Fundraising Events

Clubs: C/C; Bowling Club; Fitness Classes etc.

Corporate Rates: POA

*Residents living within the Parish of Stow

Reg Charity
No. SC024124

SITUATIONS VACANT

ARE YOU ?

- 16 or over
- on the electoral roll for Stow or Fountainhall
- able to commit most first Monday evenings of the month
- interested in shaping and supporting your community
- interested in how the public sector works
- willing to made decisions on micro-grant awards

Then you could be an ideal candidate for election to Stow Parish Community Council.

REWARDS :

- accept a key role in improving Stow and Fountainhall
- learn how local government, the NHS, the Police and other public sector bodies work
- connect with members of the local community to represent their views
- improve your CV by voluntary and civic involvement
- option to attend Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network, for training and networking
- learn to tolerate frustration and an absence of glamour
- be able to focus on areas that interest you
- know that you've served your community

BACKGROUND :

The last meeting of the existing Parish of Stow Community Council will take place on 7 March and all members will need to be nominated to continue on the Community Council. This is the chance for new people to come on. There are 10 places for Stow and 2 for Fountainhall. Councillors are elected for three years but can resign their position if circumstances change.

There will be elections if more people are nominated than there are places. Otherwise there will be no elections and a new community council will be formed from the nominees. For further details please look at the Parish of Stow Community Council facebook page, Stow Community website or watch the noticeboards.

If an election is announced, please come out and vote for who you want to represent your village.

Information provided by Jenny Mushlin, currently Secretary, Parish of Stow Community Council

PROCESS :

- 20 March 2016 - Nominations open
- 11 April 2016 - Nominations close
- 18 April 2016 - Option to withdraw nomination ends
- 27 April 2016 - Election if more than 10 and 2 Nominees
- Nomination papers available from: the Shop; Cloudhouse Cafe and Fraser Simm, Returning Officer, 5 Manor Park, Stow t: 01578 730297
- Nominees must be proposed by 2 residents also on the electoral roll for Stow or Fountainhall, as appropriate for each vacancy
- [Proposers can only nominate one candidate]



music and the spoken word at The Big Syria Gig



The Big Syria Gig on 30 January raised nearly £1000 for UNICEF's work in Syria. A huge thank you to the performers, volunteers and the very generous members of the public.

We have the Ska Band Skabas booked for the town hall on Saturday 21 May 2016 as a Stowed Out Festival fundraiser.

This year's festival is on 26 - 27 August. Book the dates in your diaries; we have lots in place but still lots to finalise - more details to come.



DEFIBRILLATOR FOR STOW & TRAINING

The defibrillator for Stow community has now been placed on the external wall of the town hall. A basic life support training kit has also been obtained from the British Heart Foundation and is available for use in the village.

Stow Lunch Club have already had a training session and if any individual and/or community groups are interested in finding out more about the defibrillator and would like any basic life support training sessions, please get in touch with Gillian Donaldson, Lead Cardiac Specialist Nurse. To arrange a convenient date please contact Gillian on 0781 1973 959 or email gilldon@tiscali.co.uk by Sunday 27 March.



MILL ROAD AND STATION ROAD

Yuk! the dog fouling issue again. Mill Road was badly hit for a while with lots of piles being sprayed pink to alert children and other walkers of the mess. Maybe the council cleaned the pavements as it was so bad but one day there was loads and then it had all gone – it would be good if it could stay that way! This is a safe route to school after all and

children were walking on the road to avoid it. [It did not stay clear - recently a five year old slipped and fell into dog mess across the whole pavement on the bridge, which then got everywhere on their person - truly foul.]

The problem persists along station road outside the school and the health centre and it's clearly the same dog/owner each time because of the sheer size of the pile left – it's someone with a very big dog so it's likely people near would know who is responsible.

Not clearing up after your dog is a civic offence as well as a health hazard. Offenders can be reported, anonymously if wished, to Scottish Borders Council via their website or call them on 0300 1001 800. Having been unable to enforce fines for a time through lack of staff, SBC is developing a new strategy to ensure culprits are identified, then penalised through fines, with Court action if the fine is unpaid. Please clear up after your dog and avoid unpleasantness underfoot and in the courts.

STOW PARENT COUNCIL

GALAWATER CAMERA CLUB

We have a facebook page which we are working on being open to everyone.



Meanwhile, if you are a facebook member have a look at what the club has been doing - outings to see the Christmas lights in Edinburgh and to Rock House (where the founders of calotype photography lived) were two recent events.

We usually meet on the last Wednesday of the month, 10.30 am at the Cloudhouse.

FOUNTAINHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

We have had another busy term full of exciting and inspiring activities. We had a very successful Christmas concert which was extremely well attended and the refreshments and raffle prizes were provided by our supportive Parent Council.

We have again had the opportunity to work with the Youth Music Initiative. This term they are working with the P3-6 children on Songs from around the World the culmination of which will be a concert to share their learning and we would very much like to invite any of our neighbours to share this experience. This will take place on Tuesday the 1 March at 11.00 am in the School.

We have been very privileged to be asked by the Community Council to participate in creating a commissioned piece for the new Village Hall. The children were able to work with artist Clair Norris, who spent the day in school using clay to make a mosaic of Fountainhall past and present. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and can't wait for the unveiling.

On Monday 25 January the children of Fountainhall travelled to Heriot to enjoy a joint Burns' Lunch. This was followed by our annual Scots Poetry recitation competition. We were fortunate to have Sandy Aitchison present to perform his own special version of 'The Bogle' which he had recited as a child. This was inspiration to the children prior to their own performance. The winners of this completion will go on to our Learning Community competition at Galashiels Academy on the 11 March.

On Friday 29 January we had a special visitor to our assembly. Evan Cornish, who is at present appearing on a television programme called 'Got What It Takes?' came along to sing for the children and to tell them all about his journey to success in the show. People can watch this on CBBC on a Wednesday at 4.30 pm. In the coming weeks there will be a live show where people can vote for their winners. We hope that many of our community can get behind Evan whose mum works at the school.

IT'S A LIMIT...

20

... NOT A TARGET

Speeding near the school is still a concern. Sadly a lot of parents seem to be some of the worst culprits for using Mill Road as a speedy short cut. Mill Road and Station Road are of course 20mph zones and both are enforceable.

A little reminder to all of us to watch our speed particularly when passing children – children are unpredictable and many of the children walking along to the school and/or nursery are very young indeed – sometimes even 20mph is too fast – don't forget Stow has very narrow pavements along the A7 and for the best part of Mill Road and Station Road where the children walk to school – a slight slip of the curb in front of a car even at 20mph could have tragic consequences.

So, if all of us could watch out for the little ones a bit more with our driving speeds – Stow can only become an even better place!



STOW PARENT COUNCIL

INVITATION TO 'GET TO KNOW US' EVENING SATURDAY 16 APRIL 7.30 PM STOW TOWN HALL

We've started the new year with some new donations and lots of new ideas.

The whole point of the archive is to collect, preserve, display and make accessible to all, the archive material we hold. We know that people lead busy lives and it can sometimes be difficult to visit the archive and even to know exactly what we do so we have decided to hold this 'get to know us' evening.

There will be wine, there will be nibbles and yes there will be old photos but there will also be lots more.

So please come along to get to know us and find out what we get up to; after all it's your archive.



STOW COMMUNITY PARK



With the council executive committee approving Stow Community Park to lease the southern area of the park for new play park equipment we are now another step forward.

A big thanks to Stow highland Dance school for donating £294 to our project. The money was raised at their pre Christmas dance show. Don't forget about our micro fundraising, with the weather being so poor it is a good excuse to invite a handful of friends around for a coffee and ask them to donate £1. The collection can be put in an envelope marked Stow Community Park and left at the shop. Lots of £5-£10 soon adds up.

Please continue to like/comment/follow us on Facebook: Stow Community Park. We are at the stage we are really looking for additional help to move the project forward you can contact us through email: stowcommunitypark@gmail.com or leave a note at the shop.

Gala Water Singers Community Choir of the Gala Water Valley



You can tell from the smiles that Gala Water Singers in rehearsal are having a good time. Having stood on one leg, massaged the shoulders of the person next to you and sung aaaaaah! in an uppy and downy fashion to start (just some of the warm up exercises we do to improve our breathing and vocal chords) the choir is in good voice for this year's spring concert.

Inspired by 2016 being the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death we're giving a nod to Romeo and Juliet with West Side Story and a selection of pieces with UK /USA and literary/musical crossover themes.

The concert is on Sunday May 29 at 7pm in Stow Church with the usual fine nibbles. Look out for posters and ticket information nearer the time.

STOW ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN



As a result of the number of road traffic accidents within Stow and along our stretch of the A7 we have set up a group called the Stow Road Safety Campaign. We held a public meeting in Stow town hall in November 2015 to gather public opinion as to where the issues are and what residents would like to see happen to improve road safety within the village and on the surrounding A7. A list of suggestions was compiled including speed cameras within the village, introducing a 20mph speed limit through Stow, traffic calming measures, improving inadequate pavements and others which look at improving road safety on the A7 outwith the village.

This list, which can be seen on our Facebook page, was submitted to Scottish Borders Council (SBC), Police Scotland (PS) and our local MP and MSP during a separate meeting later in November. Both the council and PS agreed to look at the list and let us know what could or couldn't be done at a further meeting with them on 22 January 2016.

At the January meeting, the compiled list was discussed with some encouraging outcomes. PS has agreed to set up a meeting with the Scottish Safety Camera Programme to discuss the installation of speed cameras within Stow. SBC would like to have an on-site meeting and bring along a council engineer to look at the various areas within the village we identified as problem areas. This on-site meeting will look, in particular, at pavement issues, speed signage concerns, potential traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossing points along the A7 within Stow.

Many thanks to all who have already shared their concerns and experiences on this issue and for taking the time to come along to the public meeting or email us with their suggestions and offers of help. Ahead of our meeting with the Safety Camera Programme and our on-site meeting with SBC engineers we would again like to ask for public opinion and experiences. We will be conducting surveys to gather opinion from parents, pensioners, commuters and the wider community in order to demonstrate how serious our concerns for road safety are.

We will let you know the outcome of our next meetings and use these as the foundation for making roads in Stow and along the A7 safer.
e:StowRoadSafetyCampaign@yahoo.co.uk; f:[StowRoadSafetyCampaign](https://www.facebook.com/StowRoadSafetyCampaign)

Chernobyl Children Lifeline (CCLL), based in Stow, will be the way many people have come across Fraser Simm. In 2001, with another local, Ian Anderson, he co-founded the Scottish Borders Link of the charity which had been set up following the nuclear power station explosion in 1986 at Chernobyl in Ukraine. 70% of the radioactive wind-borne contamination fell on Belarus (both countries then part of the USSR but independent since 1991) and children born there, even today, are still affected by radiation induced illnesses and cancers.

spotlight on

FRASER SIMM

With the benefits to health lasting for two years, children from Belarus are brought to the UK to have a break in 'clean' air, with health checks, good food, caring hosts and fun activities. In its 15 years the Scottish Borders branch, with many members from Stow, has: raised £60,000; recruited and supported host families across all of the Borders and into North Northumberland; liaised with opticians, dentists, medics, fruit and veg suppliers and others who generously give to the care of the children. Over 100 children have had a month-long, special, nurturing holiday giving a boost to their immune systems and often making new friends for life. How Fraser got involved is typical - walking along a street in the village Ian showed Fraser a picture and asked if he'd help. The immediate answer was 'yes' followed by typically immediate action and the Scottish Borders Link group was born. Fraser has been at the helm of the team ever since.



But long before this, it's the village of Stow itself that can be thanked for bringing Fraser and his wife Nettie to live here just prior to their son Ian being born in 1984, although it had some exotic competition. Most of Fraser's childhood was spent in the Lebanon in Beirut until he returned to Edinburgh for secondary schooling in his teens. But after qualifying as a chartered accountant Fraser's interest in other cultures and lands led to him spending a year with Voluntary Service Overseas in Nigeria assisting with the country's internal auditing. Fresh from Africa he

joined his parents (by then in Peebles) and proximity led to an accounting position with textile firm Ballantyne's of Innerleithen where he met local lass and future wife Nettie.

A change of employment meant a move from Innerleithen to be nearer Galashiels and it was the view over the park to the church and hills (framing Fraser here) from the place that has been home for the past 32 years, that decided where the Simms would settle. But really settle? 1989-1993 saw the family living on the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic, Fraser having been appointed Financial Advisor to the government of St Helena. The only way on and off the island was by ship which called every six weeks and was then five days from landfill. It was a very different life to anything that they had experienced before and Fraser says that this was the best job he ever had.

Back in Stow Fraser was appointed Treasurer of George Heriot's Trust (School) in Edinburgh until his recent retirement, but his love of history led the Governors to ask him to become Heriot's Archivist. As well as being Chairman of the Cricket Society of Scotland, he is also currently Moderator of the Church of Scotland's Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles having been its treasurer for seven years and is Finance Convener of the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council. Even closer to home; Fraser is a member of Stow Parish Archive Group; Galawater Camera Club; Treasurer of Stow and Heriot Church and is acting as Returning Officer for Community Council elections. His interest in other lands and cultures still pulls, and he has visited Israel on behalf of the Church's World Mission Council and in 2015 visited Belarus to meet some of the children helped by CCLL.

The saying 'If you want something done, ask a busy person' could have been coined for Fraser. He does find it hard to say 'no' but when asked what motivates him he replies simply "I believe that we have one life to live and we need to get as much out of it as possible; to achieve that, much also needs to be put in." He's also been 'volunteered' a lot and when asked, says it's natural to him to respond. Locally and around the world, many can attest to benefits that have come from that willingness to get involved.

SEARCHING FOR THE CHEAPEST FARES FROM STOW



After fiddling around on the ScotRail website I've discovered that the cheapest option, going up after morning peak time, but to be able to return on any train from Edinburgh, is to book an off peak return (valid one month) through to Rosyth instead of Edinburgh. An anytime day return Stow - Edinburgh is **£12.70/£8.40** (railcard discounted fare preceded by R) but an off-peak

return to Rosyth is **£11.00/£7.25**. Because the journey is passing through Edinburgh, and not starting there, the evening peak restriction doesn't apply.

Obviously the saving is fairly minor with a railcard but it would be more significant if you were travelling up to Edinburgh one day, after morning peak times, and coming back the following day or later. As there is no open return available between Stow and Edinburgh, in theory it would require the purchase of two singles at a total of **£16.00/£10.60**.

Compare this to the off-peak return to Rosyth of **£11.00/£7.25** and the saving is more significant. This might be important in conjunction with advance fares for further afield where the cheapest option was to book the main leg from Edinburgh (this won't always be the best option - e.g. there are advance fares available from Stow to London).

Bill Jamieson

THE OLD STATION HOUSE - PROGRESS AT LAST

ScotRail have accepted the formal application by Stow Community Trust regarding establishing a Heritage Hub in the station building. This enterprise is for the parish of Stow, and involves Stow Archive and others in establishing an archive/museum with facilities for meetings and e.g. pop up café/bistro. A public meeting will be held when ScotRail respond to the outline business plan currently being developed by the Trust. Everyone can then express their opinions on the way forward and all will be taken into account. Progress is reported at every Community Council meeting. Look out for the date of the meeting. For further information contact Alan McNeilly t: 01578 730209.

STOW BREWERY

Aiming for beer and lager production on a commercial scale by July and for the local building to be built and functioning by spring 2017.

MAY SPRING FLING

advance notice
SATURDAY 28 MAY 6-10 PM
STOW TOWN HALL
Disco; Tuck Shop; Home-cooked Food; Tea; Coffee; BYOB
fundraiser for equipment for Stow Primary School

STOW BOWLING CLUB

We are rapidly approaching a new Bowling Season. We will soon have the AGM and the Green will officially Open in April.

The Club extends a warm and open invitation to anyone in the village to come and meet us and to potentially get involved.

Bowling is a Social Activity so we encourage anyone interested to take part and that goes for all ages!

NOTES ON THE WIND

Details of grants awarded in December 2015 were not available as the newsletter went to press

Dates for 2016:

Application	Notification
11 April	June
11 July	September
10 October	December

STOW HIGHLAND DANCE SCHOOL

The Dancing Display in November raised £294 for Stow Community Park.

Dancing classes started in January; anyone interested in joining please contact Amanda e:allanshaws@btconnect.com; 01578 730268 / 07767 616229

NEWSLETTER DATES 2016

COPY DATE	DISTRIBUTED FROM
1 May	20 May
26 August	9 Sept
30 Oct	18 Nov

to: Heather Johnston, Editor
heather@southcottage.co.uk
01578 730507