

Stow & Fountainhall

community newsletter
in print and online
www.stow-borders.co.uk

issue
41
Autumn
2020

FREE

CHEERS PAUL! - THANKS FROM US ALL AND WISHING YOU BON VOYAGE(S)

Stow and Lauder Health said a sad but fond farewell to Dr Paul Cormie who retired in October after 31 years service to the practice.

He qualified in 1984 at Aberdeen University and arrived in Stow and Lauder in 1989. The Stow surgery had a very small patient list size at that time as many Gala Water residents chose to travel to Galashiels for their health care. Paul worked hard to improve the local service for our community and is largely responsible for building the foundations of the busy, comprehensive medical practice we have today. His campaign to the Health Board to replace the old cramped surgeries in Stow and Lauder resulted in the spacious, modern health centres which now benefit staff and patients.

As Borders Lead Cancer and Palliative Care GP between 1998 and 2012, Paul



worked at local and national levels to improve the journey for patients with cancer and provide the highest quality of end of life care at home for patients Borders-wide by improving education for GPs and District Nurses, developing guidelines, anticipatory care plans and drug boxes for patients' homes.

Paul's compassion and dedication, strong leadership, wisdom and quirky sense of humour will be greatly missed by colleagues and patients alike.

Paul is being replaced by Dr Bethan Williams and Dr Matt Coles, both well known to us as regular locums. They join Dr Cath Cormie and Dr John Usher and the GP we welcomed to the team in August, Dr Phillipa Hyde.

We wish Dr Paul a long and happy retirement with many caravan trips and long walks with new puppy Poppy!

WANTED YOU!

ARE YOU SOMEONE WHO ...

- ... enjoys and celebrates all that is going on locally
- ... wants to hear about local heroes
- ... wants to keep people in touch with important local issues
- ... wants to make our community more inclusive
- ... enjoys talking to people or creating material using IT?

... IF THIS IS YOU, PLEASE READ ON ...

We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter. We feel that it plays an important role in keeping us all in touch with what is happening in our community by highlighting all the activities and contributions of many individuals and groups, as well as sharing relevant news.

The newsletter was started in 2009 by Wendy Ball; this involved reaching out to all the community groups, gathering copy, editing, designing, making print ready and then organising a distribution network that is a band of stalwart volunteers who bring the newsletter to your door. In 2015, Heather Johnston brought her knowledge of printing and desktop publishing and became the new editor. She took on the editorial tasks Wendy had been doing as well as expanding the size of the newsletter. Wendy continued to organise the distribution.

All these efforts were supported by the Community Council who offered encouragement, (particularly important in the early days!) and provided the funding for the printing, in the first instance through their own budget, in latter years through grant funding from the SSE Windfarm Community Fund.

We are both keenly aware that there was a risk in having the newsletter rely on one or two individuals and have tried on various occasions to remedy this situation but no solution presented itself. Having hugely enjoyed producing the newsletter, unfortunately we now both need to move on to other things and so the future of the newsletter is uncertain.

We would like to suggest that the best way forward is to gather a group of people together as an 'editorial team'. Such a team might comprise:

- **editor:** overall planning and co-ordination; some writing
- **designer and layout editor** (would need access to desktop publishing programme)
- **section editors:** each one gathering, editing and sometimes writing on a particular subject, e.g. 'Spotlight On...'; gardening; windfarm/ funding/ business news; community group activities; schools and education; out and about - walks, cycling, natural history etc. - details to be worked out
- **image editor:** adjusting images contributed and taking some photographs
- **distributor:** organising the distribution

Both Heather and Wendy would work with the new team over a handover period and we suggest that the new team's first issue is the next issue, No. 42, due for publication in May 2021.

THE FUTURE OF STOW AND FOUNTAINHALL COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER IS IN YOUR HANDS!

- **TO EXPRESS INTEREST** (firm commitment not required at this stage) PLEASE CONTACT HEATHER JOHNSTON (see back page)
- **BY 10 JANUARY 2021**



SING, SING, SING!

Our Parish Partners in Luwatala, Malawi have been singing for us during lockdown. Luwatala Church has four choirs and they usually sing out their praise during church services making each church service beautiful with sound. When we were unable to have praise in church the Luwatala Choirs recorded their music to be part of our online worship, along with music played by Stow Church member Alexander McDonald playing piano.

(<https://www.stowandheriotchurch.org.uk/prayersandsermons.htm>)

Now we are back into our churches for worship our Partners have continued to provide us with the joy of their singing. Luwatala were surprised to learn that we have been advised not sing during our services (COVID-19 prevention). Their choirs have prepared short hymns and praise tunes, sung for us to be part of our worship. The choirs also performed at Stowed Out [Locked In] during the summer; the event supporting the Scottish Charity Tiny Changes.

Luwatala does not have any musical instruments but create the most glorious a cappella singing. Listen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_y8T-prmS8 or explore Luwatala at luwatala.link

Stow Church sponsors a phone to be used in Luwatala so that music and messages can be shared. I am happy to report that, thus far (mid October) Luwatala has not knowingly had any cases of COVID-19 and the country is seeing far fewer cases in recent weeks. We pray this continues. We thank Luwatala for their music, prayers and messages of support for their partners throughout this lockdown and pandemic.



STOW & HERIOT CHURCH

The past six months have been a difficult time for the local church; for the first time, not only in living memory, but in recorded history, it has not been possible to attend local worship in person.

However, there was some good news, as our congregation has been able to watch and take part in online services each Sunday. We have got used to "switching on" to the online services, which has the advantage of being able to be watched at any time or day.

Good news came at the end of August, when government rules were relaxed and with the guidance and permission of presbytery, we were able to open our doors again in early September; and following certain protocols required by presbytery – such as spacing and mask requirements – we have been able to take part in weekly services again. There is some way to go before things like singing and social mixing can resume, but we feel that we have gone halfway to resuming "normal service". Presbytery has also approved short weekday worship on Wednesday mornings at Stow and Heriot. Meanwhile, for those shielding and others, our Sunday services continue to be available online.

Our discussions with Caddonfoot have also been delayed by the inability to arrange meetings, but it is hoped that this will pick up again soon, probably through remote contact.

STOWED OUT 2020



Stowed Out took a break in 2019 to reassess the event with a new committee to consider its sustainability and its value to local community. For 2020, our focus was on presenting high-quality local performers with a more local flavour and provide a recognised event where local bands and performers could enjoy experience (often their first) of performing at a festival.

We kept options open for as long we they could, but by mid-June it was clear that the event could not go ahead as planned and the tough decision had to be made to cancel the live festival. However, we had a think about what we could do instead that would be Covid safe but still capture the spirit of Stowed Out, and the idea of *Stowed [Out] [Locked In]* was born. Rather than look to raise funds for ourselves we settled on Tiny Changes as the charity for Stowed Out to support.

The response from performers, the majority of which were based in or from the Borders, was phenomenal: several were in the line-up for the live event and did a video for us instead and the majority of performers recorded a live and unique session just for us. One advantage of the on-line event was that we were able to include many more performers than we could have accommodated otherwise. We had never tried this type of event before: it was ambitious and it had a steep learning curve. However, there was lots of great real-time and later feedback from those that watched either our Facebook Live event or YouTube channel (still available to watch). We streamed over four hours of music, spoken word and video that raised £690 plus £160 in gift aid via our Just Giving page and over £170 in direct donations to Tiny Changes. It was watched locally, across the Borders and by people, mainly by people with a Stow connection, across Scotland and the UK, Poland, New Zealand and Canada and the USA – a small but nonetheless global audience!

We want the festival to be a community oriented event aiming to bring great level of cultural experience while offering opportunities to all sections of the community to use the Festival as a vehicle to promote and develop their skills or business, or be part of the team of volunteers to further develop the event and perhaps develop new skills while doing so. With that in mind, we had an online public meeting on 1 October advertised on social media, via the school and on Posters around Stow to discuss the 2021 event. Disappointingly, no-one from Stow other than the committee joined us, not even the few who had posted comments on our Facebook Page.

We have funding in place for next year, if it is possible go ahead, but the lack of interest and input from the community at large is a huge concern if the event is to be sustainable. On the positive side, we were joined by Sam from 3 Out Of 4, one of the young bands appearing on Stowed Out [Locked In] and had a lively and informative discussion (you can see the whiteboard and post-its on our Facebook Page) about future directions.

If after reading this you would liked to get involved, at any level, please look out for our AGM notice coming soon, or contact me at andy@wedale.co.uk

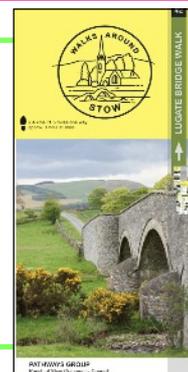
Andy Anderson, Chair, Stowed Out Festival Committee

PATHWAYS GROUP

Leaflet 1: Stow Heritage Trail is now available at the Post Office priced £1 (to be used for further publications)

Leaflet 2: Lugate Bridge Walk is at the printers, to be available early next year.

Leaflets 3 to 5: At the design stage





Life has been busy for the Stow Community Trust Board since the start of lockdown. We have fortnightly Board meetings as well as regular meetings with the professional team working on the Station House, and monthly meetings with our funders. The Trust's AGM took place on 11 November, and, like all of our other meetings was on Zoom.

The builders, Swintons, are making good progress with the Station House since they returned to site. Weekly photographs of progress are posted on our Facebook page and website on a Tuesday morning to let you track progress. The target completion date for the building is now 19 January but we will have work to do on fit out and furnishings after that date. So, a Spring launch is what we're aiming for.

Our work hasn't just focused on the Station House, however, and we have worked with the Community Council and the Stow Road Safety Campaign to ensure a strong response from the communities of Stow and Fountainhall to the Scottish Borders Council as part of the Spaces for People Consultation. This has resulted in the introduction of an 18 month trial of 20mph in both villages and 40mph on the Old Stage Road (the C11) all the way from Clovenfords to Heriot. This together with the experience of the closure of the A68 has made us all more aware of the impact of traffic on our lives. The hard work begins now as we all adjust to a slower pace of driving and show others what we expect of them.

There are plans for the erection of the speed indicator cameras over the coming weeks and we will undoubtedly need more measures before we achieve the slowdown that is required. But it's a fantastic

development and shows what we can achieve things when we all work together. We need to set an example and although it's difficult, please keep it up and please do your best to drive at 20mph in our villages and at 40mph on the back road between Stow and Fountainhall.

We've also been working with the Pump Track Group whose hard work has seen them receive funding from Foundation Scotland EDF Longpark Community Fund and the SSE Toddleburn Community Fund for phase 1 of the project. This will fund the design, surveys and site investigations required for a planning application. This is the first step in what will be a fantastic resource for young and old, situated right in the heart of our village.

The reductions in the local speed limits, the huge increase in cyclists in and around the village and the very successful Three Hills Race that was held in the village recently, have made us more aware of the potential to attract more cyclists to the village as well as the opportunities for all of us to enjoy cycling. We're looking to apply for funding from the Energy Savings Trust for funding to set up a local E-bike project. The aim of the project will be to encourage more local people to use electric bikes instead of their car for local short journeys as well as for leisure and exercise. Stow Health Centre is lending its support to the project and believes that access to e-bikes could be really beneficial for some patients. Applications need to be in by 18 December so watch this space.

All of these things together, and others in the future, helps our community to be a great place to live and visit.

NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVE

So winter is coming and it's time to reflect on the past few months.

The archive has been busier than ever.

- We've had more material handed in, thank you.
- We've worked with the school producing material for the children while they were home-schooled. This included the challenge to find all the bridges over running water in the valley and a 'poetree' project that involved measuring a tree and then writing a poem about it.
- We've summarised the Rev Duncan's papers covering church and village life from 1929 to 1992, that were donated previously.
- We've worked on producing a booklet - on the lockdown - which will be sent to our Friends instead of an exhibition this year. Look out for copies on our website and facebook page later in the year.
- We've increased our presence on Facebook.
- We've looked at how we can work differently in these unusual times.
- We have been fortunate to receive another grant from the wind farm which will allow us to continue our work for another two years.
- We've planned out a great community project investigating the numerous castles and forts in the valley.

And the near future?

- Maintaining our core collection; increasing the ways we connect with the community
- Encouraging people to investigate our local castles and forts
- Continuing to support the great work of the local schools in all that they do for the children.



STOW COMMUNITY GARDEN

Much has been achieved in the last few months despite lockdown. The garden was full of weeds after not receiving much care but it has given many of us lots of pleasure with a succession of beautiful flowers and colours which continued until late October.

Stow & Fountainhall Community Council has been very supportive as usual by funding a huge amount of bark, eight cubic meters, and three brand new compost bins constructed and put in place by the Justice Community Service.

Volunteers have put in lots of hard work removing weeds, planting, spreading bark, filling compost bins, strimming the wildflower meadow, washing pebbles and much more.

Given how much children enjoy walking on the stepping stones we are in the process of creating another path which will go behind the rockery (as a health and safety reminder please do not allow your child to walk on the rockery) with logs donated by Andy Miller.

Donations of plants and bulbs are gratefully received.

We have a WhatsApp group, if you would like to join it please contact Andrea on 07915 479294.

We have now stopped gardening sessions to give the soil and ourselves time to rest. We will be back in Spring 2021. Meanwhile all the best and Happy New Year!



STOW HEALTH CENTRE will be CLOSED on 25th & 28th December and 1st & 4th January

~ Advice on Prescription Ordering ~

- You do not need to order double amounts of your medication; we will be closed for just two days of Christmas week and the same for New Year week.
- Ordering in plenty of time would be helpful as the run up to Christmas is very busy, this will allow the dispensary staff to prepare your medication. Orders are usually ready for collection 3 working days after placing the order.
- It would help us very much if patients could order all of your medication at the same time if you are on several medications as it makes it much easier for us to process the orders. Thank you.

The Staff at Stow Health Centre wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

RECEPTION OPENING TIMES

	Morning	Afternoon	
Monday	08.00-13.00	14.00-18.00	During the lunch time hour break, the practice can still be contacted for urgent matters on the usual telephone number 01896 661440
Tuesday	08.00-13.00	14.00-18.00	
Wednesday	08.00-13.00	14.00-18.00	
Thursday	08.00-13.00	14.00-18.00	
Friday	08.00-13.00	14.00-18.00	
Weekend	closed	closed	Outside of these times and over the holidays please ring NHS 24 on 111

Please ring after 10.00am to re-order prescriptions.
(There is an option to use the online service; apply via the Practice website or at Reception)

STOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Stow Community Council has not been having meetings but community councillors have been keeping in touch and **continuing with our business and the projects** we are working on. We have also had regular updates from our local SBC Councillors who regularly attended our meetings.

Stuart and the Paths around Stow Team have produced a leaflet on a local walk, with more paths in the pipeline; **Jack MacKenzie and co** have been keeping up the planters; and the community council have part-funded the electric cart which is being converted to a water bowser. This will make maintaining the planters much easier. **Jenny Mushlin has been in regular contact with Mary Craig**, Archivist, working on the book about the history of Stow which is due to be launched next year.

We have for a long time been concerned about Road Safety in Stow. Neil Hodgson received a windfarm grant for speed indicator signs which will be fitted to the A7 in Stow. These should be appearing in the next few months. We responded jointly with Stow Community Trust to the SBC consultation regarding speed limits and fully support the 20mph speed limit in Stow and Fountainhall. Unfortunately a 40mph speed limit was placed on the back road to Heriot but not on Old Stage Road north of Fountainhall towards the A7, which has an unrestricted speed sign. This issue is being raised at the moment and we hope to see a 40mph sign there shortly. It may be already there when you read this. The Community Council was responsible for

achieving the layby repairs in Stow which was a joint project with SBC and part funded by each.

Planning applications have come to us and we have responded. We are very much open for any issue which anyone feels should be raised. We have also awarded microgrants and this continues; **anyone looking for a microgrant** should contact the Secretary.

Both EDF and SSE have generously contributed through the windfarm panel to the Community Council to **mitigate the effects of COVID** on the community. **The Windfarm Panel have awarded us a grant which can be used for anyone on hard times who lives in Stow or Fountainhall. The maximum we can give is £150 and this is decided quickly. We can give up to £50 for food immediately. This is totally confidential.** The four office bearers of the community council make the decisions. If anyone needs this help, please contact the Secretary.

These are very strange times and these funds are intended to help people to get through. We are very aware that people who have never experienced financial difficulties may suddenly find they have been affected. We will treat everyone who comes to us for financial help with sensitivity. There are no forms to fill. Just a chat with Jenny who will take down details of your situation. We have details of other people who can help if you need money advice and more than we can offer.

SECRETARY CONTACT DETAILS:

Jenny Mushlin
e: jjmushlin@gmail.com t: 01578 760297

WIND FARM AWARDS SINCE LAUNCH

EDF LONGPARK

Gala Water History and Heritage
£26,703

To fund the costs of the freelance Archivist carrying out ongoing archival activity plus a new 'Forts and Castles' local schools over two years, the expansion of, preservation of, and engagement with, the area's local history.

Stow Community Trust (Pump House)
£7,192

To complete all survey and design for the 'Track' in Stow which will become a cycle track promoting cycling, healthy active living and connections amongst residents and visitors and associated spend to the community.

SSE TODDLERBURN

Stow Community Trust
£7,192

Match funding with EDF for the

Application dates for 2021 will be available on www.foundationscotland.org

Stow Shop and Post Office Festive Season Hours

DATE	SHOP	POST OFFICE
CHRISTMAS EVE	close at 12.30pm	close at 12.30pm
CHRISTMAS DAY	CLOSED	CLOSED
BOXING DAY	CLOSED	CLOSED
Sunday 27th December	8am - 11am	CLOSED
Monday 28th December	6.30am -12 NOON	CLOSED
31st December	close at 4pm	close at 4pm
1st & 2nd January	CLOSED	CLOSED
Sunday 3rd January	8am - 11am	CLOSED
Monday 4th January	6.30am -12 NOON	CLOSED

Stow Shop and Post Office Normal Opening Hours

DAY	SHOP	POST OFFICE
Monday - Friday	6.30am - 5.30pm	9am - 5.30pm
Saturday	6.30am - 4pm	9am - 12.30pm
Sunday	8am - 11am	CLOSED

News from the Shop and Post Office

2020 has certainly been a different year thanks to Covid-19. Stow has shown us that it has a great community spirit and that has helped carry us through a tough few months into autumn heading to winter and the festive time of year.

Our Christmas shopping night will not happen this year but the shop and post office will still have all the usual things ideal for gifts or Christmas treats for yourself. To make it easier to browse the gifts/cards/wrap etc stock will be spread out further in the rear area of the shop on Saturday afternoons (from 12.30) and Sunday mornings during November and December.

Leaflets are available at the Post Office counter outlining the Christmas posting dates. Please ask if you need any help re cost of posting, sizes or packaging.

*Thank you all for your continued support and custom.
Alison, Stewart and all the team at Stow Post Office and Shop*

ARM FUNDS AST NEWSLETTER

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Track)

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the area.

Pump Track project

ill be set soon and then will be
the website:

.uk/programmes/edf-longpark/

Notes
on
the
Wind



If pandemic stress and Brexit shenanigans are getting you down, why not turn your attention to something more relaxing?

Heartfulness Meditation and relaxation techniques are simple, extremely effective and open to anyone over the age of 18. They are also FREE!

Our friendly local group meets via Zoom on Wednesday evenings at 8pm

Ring Sarah Naylor on 07784740179 to find out more



Stow toddlers and baby group is still very much alive and kicking! We are here for you! Just because the village hall is closed, that doesn't mean we will be defeated!

We have a WhatsApp group, Facebook page, email and good ole telephone...

Please please reach out if anyone would like to join us in

a wee play date, coffee in the coffee shop or just need a chat and a rant!

We are always looking out for new members to join our board too (I promise its not as scary as it sounds...)

Please visit our Facebook page and keep our lovely wee group going.

Stay safe, stay cosy and keep communicating.

Did we already say... we are here for you! Contact us by:

email:
stowparentgroup@gmail.com
tel:
07706 199505

STOW BOWLING CLUB



At one point during lockdown we thought would not be on the green at all this year but we were really pleased when we were allowed to open the green just six weeks later than normal. The 'opening of the green' each year is normally a great day when everyone comes out after the winter and has that air of expectation for the coming year ahead. The first 'Jack' was thrown by the President on her own and the flag raised by Hamish MacGregor - the season has begun! Luckily Bowling is a sport that you can play with a minimum of two players and even practice on your own, which is what many of us had to do early on.

We managed to move all the competitions that were missed in April and May to all the Sundays in June, July and August. However, some of the in-house competitions we could not run i.e. triples and mixed pairs as too many players would be mixing in the early days of lockdown. Later in the season restrictions eased and we were permitted to have a max of 30 on the green as long as social distancing was adhered to. I think 30 on the green at Stow was wishful thinking! Bowls Scotland were excellent at keeping us informed every step of the way during this trying time and kept us updated on what we could and could not do. The competitions were very well attended including our three floodlit tournaments, the weather was perfect and none of them had to be cancelled – thank goodness.

Below is a list of all the competitions and winners for 2020

COMPETITION	WINNERS	COMPETITION	WINNERS
Mens Singles	Kenny Johnstone	Craigie Trophy	Jonathan Davidson
Ladies Singles	Jane Ellis	Scott Medals	Stewart Runciman & Jane Ellis
Selected Pairs	<i>Not played</i>	Club Pairs	Stuart Cunningham & Anne Swan
Ladies Doubles	<i>Not played</i>	Stewart Cup	Stewart Runciman
Club Mixed Pairs	<i>Not Played</i>	Hunter Cup	Kenny Johnstone
Herd Trophy	Kenny Johnstone	Fox Trophy	<i>Not Played</i>
Torquhan Trophy	Kenny Johnstone	Willie Pryde Trophy	Stewart Runciman
Stow v Killochryett	<i>Not Played</i>	Crawford Trophy (for Ex-Presidents)	Ian Swan
Neil Beaton Trophy	Carol Davidson & Scott Hunter	Hat Night	Bill Fotheringham
Club Triples	<i>Not Played</i>		
Sanderson Cup	Scott Hunter		
4 Bowls Singles	Kenny Johnstone		

Well done to all the winners and runners up for 2020 and a big thank you to Stewart Runciman who organised all the competitions. The green is now closed and our contractors have begun preparing the green for next season. John McCann kindly brought the flag down at the closing of the green.

As I write this article I am sitting in the clubhouse with a few members, getting ready to put on our coats, gloves, hats and scarves as we prepare to brave the autumn elements, because today (09 Oct 2020) new restrictions mean that we can only serve alcohol outside. We are looking forward to next season already and hope that we have a better playing year.



It has been lovely to see the park equipment being well used over the past couple of months on the many sunny days we have had. Now that the trees are taking on their glorious autumnal golds and reds, the views in and around the park are spectacular too - we're so lucky to have this space in which to walk, chat and play! A big thank you to The Haggis Box, who kindly donated £50 to the running of the park. Donations are always welcome! Also, many thanks to all the volunteers who make up the rota to ensure the equipment is regularly monitored.



Kathleen Lofthouse are doing a great job continuing to beaver away for the park! At the same time we welcomed some new committee members: Eleanor Dearden, Laura Baigrie and Kat Custard - good to have you with us!

Around this time of year we usually hold a fundraising event to make sure there are enough funds for the yearly insurance bills. As face to face social events are not possible, we are putting together some alternative ideas. Please check our Facebook page, Stow Community Park, and look out for notices around the village in the near future to see what we come up with - your ongoing support is much appreciated!

At the end of June this year, we held our AGM and said goodbye to two important committee members: the Chair, Sharon-Anne Young and the Vice-Chair Andrea Carlino - many thanks to them for all their hard work over the past few years. Helen Houston, Helen Corcoran and

On behalf of Stow Community Park Committee
Penny Rackett, Chair

STOW KIDS CLUB IS BACK !



Finally after a long shutdown the club reopened on 14 September. We also held our covid-19 safe AGM.

Committee

We accepted the resignations of our Chair, Jemma Reid and Secretary, Helen Wilson with many thanks to both for all their hard work and contributions to making the Club a success.

The Committee now comprises:

Angela Wells - Chair
Jennifer Boyle - Secretary
Claire Hendry - Treasurer
Danielle Paterson
Tracey Stewart
Lindsay Easter
Helen Wilson

After School

We are open to all children aged between 4 and 11 years, Monday to Thursday from 3.15 to 5.30 p.m. The earlier closing time is to facilitate the deep cleaning of the school.

We are based in the school's gym hall but prefer to spend as much time as possible outside, weather permitting. We offer a variety of indoor and outdoor games and resources and we foster freedom, choice and social skills.

The cost is £8.50 per afternoon for members (with a one-off annual fee of £15.00 per family) or £10.00 per afternoon for non-members with no annual fee. We provide two snacks every afternoon. There are always two adults looking after the children and facilitating their play: they are Andrea and Janice, both very experienced in working with children. For more information please come and see us or contact Andrea at e: stowkidsclub@hotmail.com m: 07709 234413



CALCETTO CLUB IN STOW?

Fancy a game of five (or six) a side in the newly refurbished sports court? Then contact Andrea on 07915 479294.

We are trying to organise a weekly game of five a side football, THE beautiful game, possibly on a Friday evening or Sunday morning. It's non competitive, mixed gender, purely for fun and to help stay fit. It will probably cost £1 or £2 each to cover the rental of the court. Training/running shoes are fine and shin pads are optional.

STOW PLANTERS

First of all I would like to say a big thank you to everybody who has been involved with the village planters this year; whether it was with the planting, maintaining or watering. Without your help we wouldn't have the displays we have had in the village.

To give you an update we have purchased an electric cart which John at Milburn Garage has kindly offered to adapt to carry the water bowser. This should make the watering easier. Looking forward we would welcome any offers of help to plant, maintain or water in the future.

Please contact Jack MacKenzie
e: mackenziejwf@gmail.com
m: 07711 021219

Stow children went back to school and nursery a week earlier than usual in August, after almost six months away. Physically things are very different - parents are not allowed in the building and have to queue in a socially distanced line to pick up their children; classes don't mix at break or lunch time; desks are arranged more formally and there is less moving around classrooms and singing is not allowed. However, the staff and children have been incredibly resilient and adapted to the 'new normal', finding ways to communicate and work together.

The House captain candidates held Team meetings to get their messages across. The results were also announced on [virtual platform] Teams as whole school assemblies are not allowed. Inter House challenges are also happening virtually. The newly appointed Junior Road Safety Officers have been busy making videos and have been involved in the new 20mph speed limits.

Every year Stow Primary has held a coffee morning, open to the community in aid of Macmillan. This year coffee and cakes were swapped for something healthier as children, families and staff took part in 5km in 10 days. People ran, walked, scootered, cycled, swam and even rowed, raising an impressive £356.41p



Global Goals Week launched Stow's understanding of what the Sustainable Development Goals are and how these issues affect everyone. Each month the school will focus on a goal. This coming term these will be - No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Peace & Justice - strong institutions and Responsible Consumption and Production.

The Disrupters have been continuing their work on single use plastic, thinking about disposable face masks and are in the process of moving the recycling centre out of the school building so the whole community can again use it. Watch this space for both of these initiatives.

Just before the summer holiday the P6 and P7 children were each given an iPad by SBC. These are used regularly in class and are invaluable in allowing children to do homework without taking paperwork home. Last week the P5s and P6s joined them and now have their own iPads.

Everyone was sad to say goodbye to Mrs Henderson who retired at the end of term. Mrs Henderson has been the welcoming face of the school and administrator for several years and will be greatly missed.

Sadly, the Head Teacher, Miss Collins, will also be leaving at Christmas due to personal circumstances. This will unfortunately mean that the school will have had four Head Teachers in six years.



spotlight on

MARY CRAIG

To tell the story of the storyteller. Daunting. Will it be rich in atmospheric tales? Full of carefully researched accurate detail? A carefully crafted weaving of fact, mood and event...? Let us begin.

In this newsletter, mid (I'm guessing - a tricky thing to do with history) pandemic, in our spotlight is someone steeped in the power of history, its stories and reach. Someone who can bring alive cold facts and breathe them into living and dramatic tales and who has served Stow and Fountainhall by doing this since 2014 when she became Stow Parish Archives' second Community Archivist. Now under the guidance of Gala Water History & Heritage Association (formed in 2016 wherein the Archives now sit) Community Archivist Mary Craig is known to many locally for her meticulous academic, yet at the same time engagingly personal approach to recording the history and heritage of Stow, Fountainhall and the Gala Water Valley. This, coupled with a flair for creating the context of that history and the people whose lives illuminate it, means many a primary school pupil has been engaged in fun exploration of our area and in stimulated thinking about the meaning of how people live together in that past and its meaning for our present. (A session with primary school pupils explained how most boys and girls in the early 1900s were in education but at around the age of 12 girls stopped being educated and were trained to do home care i.e. housework. 'You mean... the girls were to become the servants...?' was one of the perceptive questions from Mary's young audience).

So our spotlight falls on Mary and her story. How did this academic-cum-community recorder and communicator come to be in Stow and to then become our Community Archivist?

Enter the Southern Upland Way, Britain's first official coast to coast long-distance path. An unexpected actor but one with a significant role. Although the 212 mile/ 341km long-distance walk's nearest point to Stow is some six miles away on Lauder Golf Course, Mary and her husband, Jim Stewart, both keen walkers who trod the route several times, knew Stow from those treks and liked the village. The couple had talked of moving to Stow at some point but that shared future vanished unexpectedly when Mary's husband became ill and died. Mary decided she would still move from their home in North Berwick to Stow and has been part of our community since 2009. But Mary is not an East Lothian Lass - she is a Glasgow Gal - and Glasgow will forever be 'home' in the way that only a heart knows.

Since growing up in Glasgow and graduating from Glasgow University Mary's career has taken her across diverse settings which all involved working with a detailed eye for contemporary and past history coupled with direct contact with people. From community history in Shettleston, Glasgow with young people at risk of expulsion from school; a loup across the central belt to the

then newly re-convened Scottish Parliament as a researcher; a stint in Brussels with the European Commission and the Scandinavian Roma people; to almost a decade at the Edinburgh College of Art's School of Landscape Architecture. Mary is also a registered historical researcher with the War Crimes Division of the International Criminal Court in The Hague where she is likely to be asked to check the archives to establish the accuracy of a defence alibi e.g. was defendant X where he said he was at the time of the events? Work she describes as "you get the facts, then it's a question of [the prosecution team] joining the dots".

With the range above, it comes as no surprise to find that Mary describes herself as the 'magpie' variant of historian. 'Some historians are known as hedgehogs, happily snuffling about rooting out the minutest of historical details. Others are known as eagles, soaring on high they see the great vistas of historical events. A few are known as magpies: If something shiny and interesting catches their eye they try to capture it where possible' taken from the back cover of *Beside the Annexe* Mary's first venture into fiction. Published this summer she greatly enjoyed its creation "It's a different discipline from writing history; it allows a bit more expansion with the characters". Some will remember Mary's author signing session in the Cloudhouse following the launch of her first book, a biography of Mata Hari (see newsletter No 29 Summer/ Autumn 2017) but unfortunately Covid-19 has put paid to that this time, though as



Mary has another book on Witchcraft in the

Borders just out, she's clearly on a roll, with another book, commissioned by the Community Council, due out next summer. So signings alongside coffee and cake still holding a wistful place in our memories can be on the horizon for when the good times return.

By now it's not hard to see what attracted Mary to the post of Community Archivist. Shiny and interesting applies not only to the physical part of the archives - the artefacts and texts - it also applies to the methods of acquisition, presentation and engagement. There's the annual exhibition; outreach in our schools; monthly cafe sessions at the Cloudhouse with stories at times "sad, hilarious and insightful"; a Facebook page; an online, growing catalogue; ongoing debates '...exactly when was the chimney stack on Stow Town Hall demolished...?' showing the slippery fun and joy of memory; seeing skills develop amongst volunteers; plus the satisfaction of being part of the team restoring to Historic Scotland requirements, the Auld Kirk, its graveyard and gravestones.

One of the pupils she taught was once overheard describing Mary as 'the Lady that keeps the Olden Days'. How apt. For those of us who live alongside the Gala Water we're fortunate that our very own magpie historian keeps 'the Nowadays' too, all together and glittering brightly in our Archives.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter is dependent on fresh people coming forward to create it, so the dates here are provisional; if you are on the email reminder list you will be advised of the outcome of the appeal for new volunteers; to be included in that list, please email your request to Heather Johnston

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PROVISIONAL

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GIVE YOURSELF AN EXTRA
CHRISTMAS PRESENT
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THE FUTURE OF
STOW AND FOUNTAINHALL
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER
IS IN YOUR HANDS!
(see front page)

WANTED

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- BY 10 JANUARY 2021