

LEWCC attended by concerned residents

State of town becoming a major issue

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Forresters felled by Langholm

Mitchell's try secures bonus point for LRFC

SEE PAGE 16



Eskdale & Liddesdale Advertiser

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As predicted, D&G raise Council Tax by 9%

Furthermore, they will “implement increases in selected fees and charges relating to leisure and sport, licensing, registrars and bulky waste”

Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government Finance Act 1992, a local authority must set its Council Tax before mid-March in the preceding financial year.

Dumfries and Galloway Council met as a Full Council on Thursday 27 February to agree its budget and set the Council Tax level for financial year 2025/26. Councillors voted to increase Council Tax in an effort to protect frontline services and deliver planned projects. Earlier we reported that the council faced an estimated three-year funding gap of £34.32 million.

The Council says this is due to the impact of non-pay increases such as inflation, the estimated cost of implementing nationally negotiated pay increases, and cost-pressure on services – such as rises in demand for children’s residential placements within the council’s social work department.

As a result of the agreed budget and to balance its books, the council will:

- Implement a raft of revenue-raising initiatives – from a 9% rise in Council Tax charges in 2025/26 to



Dumfries and Galloway Council Convener Malcolm Johnstone

increases in selected fees and charges relating to leisure and sport, licensing, registrars and bulky waste uplifts.

- Take forward a range of measures to address the funding gap – including savings options that formed part of the council’s Budget Consultation 2025/26 late last year – totalling £3.51 million in 2025/26, increasing to £13.13 million by 2027/28.

In addition, the budget re-

flects the council’s commitment of a further £10 million to support the estimated whole-project costs of the Dumfries Academy/Loreburn Primary School Project. And an additional £1.16 million will also be allocated to tackling poverty and inequalities to support vulnerable people and mitigate cost-of-living increases.

Dumfries and Galloway Council Convener, Councillor Malcolm Johnstone, said: “Developing this year’s budget was not an easy task.

We faced difficult decisions in balancing the financial pressures facing all local authorities with our commitment to the community we serve. We have ensured that services on which our communities rely are protected and that this budget reflects the priorities of our residents.

“We are immensely grateful for the key role members of the public played in helping us set this budget – your feedback and comments during the budget consultation in November 2024 guided us in making these hard choices.

“Increasing Council Tax was a tough decision to make. However, this budget allows us to continue delivering the support and services that people living and working in Dumfries and Galloway have a right to expect.”

Councillors set the budget for financial year 2025/26 – the budget and Council Tax increases for 2026/27 and 2027/28 will be determined by Full Council in the lead up to the start of these financial years.


Dumfries & Galloway

INSIDE



Capital time in 'The Big Smoke'

A group of some 50 pupils from Langholm Academy enjoyed a trip to London via Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon recently and had a whale of a time!

Photos and report on centre pages.

Family Announcements

Deaths

HOGG, Robert (Rob)

Peacefully at DGRI on the 26th February, Rob aged 73 years.

Devoted husband of Wilma, Much loved dad, adored grandad, cherished father-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, uncle and friend to many.

Funeral Service to be held at Westerkirk Parish Church on Friday 14th of March at 11:00am followed by interment in the churchyard.

Friends are respectfully invited to attend. Family flowers only, donations if so desired will be for Westerkirk Church and Mountainhall Renal Unit Dumfries.

All enquires to Nicholson's Funeral Directors.

LITTLE, Jeannie (late of Rowanburn)

Peacefully at Annan Court Care home on 27th February aged 92

Loving wife of the late Ronnie, sister of John, sister in law to Sylvia, caring Aunty of Diane and Derek.

A private Funeral is to be held at Roucan Loch Crematorium

Info at Shaun Turnbull Funeral Directors 07896 557941

Thanks for Sympathy

FLETCHER, Doreen

Doreen's family would like to thank all family and friends for the kindness shown through cards, flowers, and visits during this sad time.

Also, a heartfelt thanks to Shaun Turnbull and Jean Martindale, who helped guide us through this difficult time.

Finally, appreciation to all who came to pay their last respects at Roucan Loch and the Eskdale Hotel. The donations you kindly gave are being divided between Friends of the Thomas Hope Hospital and Annan Court Care Home.

KINSTREY, Winnie

George and family wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the kind expressions of sympathy, cards and messages they received following the sad loss of Winnie.

Thank you to Vicki Pounder for the lovely service, also the Buccleuch Centre for the refreshments and to Cochrane's for the floral tribute.

A special thank you to all the staff at the Thomas Hope Hospital for their care and attention during Winnie's illness and to Shaun Turnbull, Funeral Directors for their guidance and support.

Thank You

Ronnie and Ann Stewart would like to thank all friends and family for the beautiful cards, flowers, gifts and good wishes received on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary

Church Notices

ESKDALE & LIDDESDALE PARISH
linked with
CANONBIE United Parish Church

World Day of Prayer Service at Langholm
Friday 7th March - 7pm

Welcome to worship
Sunday 9th March
Rev Morag Crossan led services

LANGHOLM 9.30am
CANONBIE 11am

Contact us for transport
Langholm
Tel. 07448 858818

Worship Group led services
LIDDESDALE 10am

Rev Morag Crossan
Tel: 07861 736071
or email
mcrossan@churchofscotland.org.uk

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Contact us at the E&L: Office 013873 80012
Editor Alan Weatherstone Features Editor Gilly Fraser
All correspondence to: newsdesk@eladvertiser.co.uk

Langholm author at Westerkirk Library

Douglas Beattie, who grew up in Langholm, will be giving a talk at Westerkirk Library about his book 'How Labour Wins (and Why it Loses) from 1900 to 2024' on Sunday 16th March at 3pm.

Douglas was brought up in Langholm and educated locally before studying for a master's in politics at Glasgow University. After completing a Post Graduate diploma in journalism at Strathclyde Uni he joined Scottish TV as a political producer just as the Holyrood Parliament was being set up.

While working for the Press Association in London he covered the Northern Ireland peace process in Downing Street, and interviewed Gordon Brown and Nelson Mandela, among others. On moving to the BBC, he edited national news bulletins for Radio 4 and Five Live, and was also a newsreader and reporter, covering major stories including the Iraq War, 7/7 London bombings and death of Margaret Thatcher.

Douglas, who has also written for Reuters and the New Statesman, says he 'got into



journalism because it is an important way of holding power to account; asking questions which can have an impact on the world'. He was, he says, 'not good at much else but had a love of writing'.

Parliament

In 2014 he was elected as a Labour Cllr in Camden and ran for Parliament in the general election of 2017. Already an author of several books on the history of football, he began thinking about 'How Labour Wins' after the party was defeated in 2019.

The book, which he will be

discussing at Westerkirk Library, looks at Labour's performance in each of the 33 general election since 1900, examining its efforts to reshape Britain for working people.

Douglas says it is 'a new kind of political history', one which considers not only the fortunes of the Labour Party down the decades but those of the Conservatives, other parties, and Britain itself.

To book a place for this event email westerkirkparishlibrary@gmail.com **or phone and leave a message 013873 70221.**

Probus hears about The Order of St John

Most people have heard of The St. John's Ambulance Service but it came as a surprise to me that it only exists, as such, in England. The Order of St. John does, however, have a presence in Scotland as St. John (Scotland).

Its aims are similar to those in England, in that it acts as a back-up to the NHS helping with services which are not a part of its normal remit. One of its functions is taking oncology patients to hospital where they have no other way of getting there. They also are in-

involved with CPR training and promoting defibrillators. In Dumfries and Galloway they also assist Moffat Mountain Rescue and Nith Inshore Rescue.

This, and much more information, was conveyed to Langholm Probus Club at a meeting on 19th February by Andy Brown, the secretary of the Dumfries and Galloway branch of St. John (Scotland). Andy has previous connections to Langholm working as a shepherd up The Ewes Valley and then returning as a youth worker for the area.

Although The Order of

St. John was founded in the 11th century it was only granted a royal charter by Queen Victoria in 1888 and the Scottish branch emerged in 1947.

It is present in over forty countries and one thing that Andy mentioned specifically is that it runs the only hospital in the Palestine West Bank. Nearer to home he explained that they run two cars in Dumfries for hospital visits but said that because of resources they could only do this for cancer patients.

The service is run by volunteers many of whom are



King George V, Emperor of India, Sovereign Head of the Order from 1910 until his death in 1936

over the age of sixty, but they are on a drive to recruit some younger people.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Andy

by Keith ~McCord for informing us about a very worthwhile organisation.

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Community Council hears from concerned residents

Number of derelict sites in the town is a major issue

The E&L attended the March meeting of Langholm, Ewes and Wester Kirk Community Council on Monday evening.

After the preliminary introductions and apologies, the chair, Stuart Clement opened the public session.

This was well attended by a contingent of residents of Townfoot who were there to express their concerns about the physical condition of the estate and in particular the lack of development at the north end where the unsightly 'hole in the ground' has remained for almost 16 years. The residents had approached the owners of the land, The Stevenson Trust to ask if there were any plans to develop the site, and if not, could it be at least filled in to improve the look of the place. They had had a reply from the Trust but felt it did not satisfactorily answer their questions and that they were going to be left with the eyesore indefinitely.

Containers

The residents also brought up the siting, by Wheatley Homes, of a number of shipping containers that had been deposited at the south end of Townfoot to house construction items for refurbishment of houses at Meikleholmside, on the other side of the town. The meeting concluded that little could be done about this as the ground at Townfoot is, in fact, owned by Wheatley.

In a related point, another resident of the town, David McVittie, spoke at length about the number of derelict sites in the town that had had little or no attention from their owners for many years. David went on to give a list of these properties which included:

"The state of the roadside from the Border up, it's an absolute disgrace, litter everywhere, plastic containers with God knows what in them dumped next to bins.

"The Murtholm field as you come into town; I presume they were told to return it back to the way it was but there are still things scattered about the field.

"The hole at the top of Townfoot, surrounded by



DERELICT: The 'hole in the ground' at Townfoot and the abandoned ex-council yard on William Street

Heras fencing; the flats were pulled down over 20 years ago, so the hole has sat there since then.

"Reid and Taylor's mill, all boarded up and the old council yard opposite it, another fenced off piece of wasteland.

"The collapsed wall on Drove Road, another batch of Heras fencing which nature is slowly reclaiming, or perhaps that is the plan, to allow the plant life to grow over it -out of sight, out of mind.

"And now visitors coming South are now greeted with the latest addition to the list; the Heras fencing surrounding the bandstand.

Waverley Mill

Waverley Mills which is owned by the EWM Group "Phillip Day made a great song and dance about gifting this to the town; did he actually do so or was it just to grease the knife he had plunged into the town's back?"

"As the number of employers in the town has decreased, David stated that the only thing left for the town was tourism and that, if we are to attract tourists, we must address the problem of these eyesores. "In my opinion D&G Council /Tourist Board don't want tourists to come here.

"If they come here, they might end up going up to Edinburgh through the Borders. Instead of addressing that by putting something in place to bring folk to Langholm then direct them back into D&G, perhaps via Samye Ling and

then onto Lockerbie, they leave us completely out in the cold."

To address these concerns, the Community Council has agreed to arrange a public meeting and invite all stakeholders including D&G Councillors, owners of the sites, housing providers and other pertinent organisations. This will hopefully be held during April.

Councillor Denis Male gave the following resume of action points:

Budget:

Council Tax will rise by 9%.

Scottish Water rates will increase by 9.9%.

Council needs to save £34m over the next 3 years.

General Issues:

- Kilngreen bandstand damage is being assessed for repair.

- Ownership of Drove Road wall is under investigation.

- Repairs are planned for Grieve's Entry, Lairds Entry, and Ardill Road.

- Co-op fly-tipping: Drivers will report rubbish outside bins.

- Hopsrigg Windfarm extension approved.

- Meeting requested with the director of infrastructure to discuss Irvine House development, old A7 Road, and active



travel links from Langholm to Canonbie.

- Issues with potholes and public toilets will be addressed.

- A7 Action Group to discuss road upgrades with the Transport Minister due to increased traffic from Centre Parks development.

- Border Rail proposal to serve Langholm and Canonbie will be pressed.

- 20mph signs rollout starts today, going live on March 28th. Caroline Street one-way system included.

- Meeting with Wheatley South to address parking problems in Holmwood and potential housing development.

- Bentpath flashing signs: Traffic assessment imminent.

- MSP asked to seek further powers to deal with vacant properties like Erskine Church and the empty house in Kirkwynd.

Bye-bye to lay-by bins

Last week at Dumfries and Galloway Council's budget setting meeting it was agreed that litter bins are set to be removed from lay-bys across the region in a bid to save cash. Dumfries and Galloway Council is hoping that Transport Scotland will now take responsibility for rubbish in lay-bys on the region's trunk roads, including the A75, the A7 and A76.

With 181 layby bins across the region, it was proposed to remove all those outwith 30mph limits – with some exceptions in hotspots where large capacity bins will be installed. Signs will be put up asking people to take their rubbish home. The report claims that "the removal of the litter bins does reduce the likelihood of people using these locations to dump household waste".

The waste team will remove dumped items, and the community asset team will carry out regular litter picks.

Bridge results

1, Bob Francombe & George Graham, 2 = Derek Scott & Judy Pitchford and Lesley McCartney & Doreen Taylor, 4, John Packer & Tom Stothart, 5, Jan Dunckley & Aileen Graham, 6, Nancy McLure & Anne Ferguson.

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Denizens of the fell

The quizzical looks of the three Langholm wild goats (E&L Advertiser, February 27th) aptly portray the outrage at Oxygen "Conservation's" plot to "cull" these inconveniently independent denizens of the fell.

In any case, if the case against them is their selfish consumption of fir trees and peatland as food it shows their good land stewardship, since Christmas trees after Twelfth Night are disposed of by feeding them to goats.

The opaque but ancient history of the goats surely qualifies them for statutory protection like wild birds, whose destruction is outlawed on whomsoever's land, which itself raises a few unanswered questions.

When the white man arrived in America one of the many puzzles about him that the Native American "Red Indians" could not understand was how you could "own" land. (The American Smithsonian National Museum).

Richard Lennox,
Langholm



2,746 names against goat cull by OC



Photo by David Stone

The E&L received the following update from Gail Brown who started the petition to stop the cull of feral goats that Oxygen Conservation had announced.

"I've just checked and there's 2,746 signed the online petition. I collected the paper ones here in the village (Newcastleton) on Thursday and left new ones. There were approximately 250 signatures but don't know how many on the Langholm side yet. I've handed them to Emma Ritchie as she was the one who dealt with them.

"We are trying to get a zoom meeting set up with Shirley (the specialist on goats and their habits) but Emma is the

point of contact for that. We need to collate all the information we have and decide how to move forward with it."

Gail goes on to say "Oxygen Conservation appear to be ignoring me now. I have sent them four emails and they only responded to the first one. I've also sent them from a different email address! I'll send you the last email which was asking them to engage with the wider community to resolve this matter. They don't seem to want to engage. Nature Scot say they won't revoke their licence to cull goats as it was in place before they bought the land and no reason to revoke this."

Star of Caledonia



A planning application was submitted to Dumfries and Galloway Council for the Star of Caledonia sculpture which will be located close to the A74(M) at Gretna Green. The sculpture has been talked about and proposals developed for it over many years. It is hoped to attract more people to stop on their way north and travel further into Dumfries and Galloway. The sculpture has been designed by Cecil Balmond.

The artwork will act as a metaphor for the dynamism of the Scottish nation symbolising the energy and power of Scottish invention and it's believed that it will be a welcome to Scotland.

The artist said

"The concept for the Star began with the border drawn as a dashed line. In between the gaps the journeys are marked as a series of waves flowing in and out. They are different in amplitudes and frequencies. This scenario of multiple waves offers a field of energy. Patterns emerge when you zoom in on the waves, including the image of the Saltire. As my metaphor

for energy evolved, I focused on the curves folding over each other as representation for Scottish brainpower.

"Scotland has produced many of the scientists who defined today's technological world. Telephones, steam engines, TV, logarithms, penicillin, the list is long. Looming large in this pantheon was James Clerk Maxwell, who lived and worked in the region, and his discovery of electromagnetism, essential to our descriptions of energy."

John Holliday of Gretna Green Limited said

"This is an incredibly exciting project for the Gretna and Gretna Green communities. A lot of hard work has gone into this from the Star Trust. Gretna Green Ltd is delighted to support this project, a worthy legacy for our former owner Alasdair Houston and the farmers' that battled against the foot and mouth crisis.

"I believe the Star will become a global tourist attraction, dwarfing not only the Angel of the North in terms of its size but also the numbers that it will attract and, become a recognisable symbol as The Gateway to Scotland."

Poems and fundraising at Ladies' Burns Club

President Nancy McLure welcomed everyone to the February meeting of Langholm Ladies' Burns Club.

The winners of the P7 Burns Poetry Competition came to recite their winning lines.

First was Ben Hawes who recited 'Dusty Miller', second was Douglas Elliot who recited the same poem, and third was Bonnie Rose with 'My love is like a red, red rose'.

All three were warmly applauded.

The club's guest speaker was Sharon Irving who gave an inspirational talk on her fund raising for Cancer Research she explained that the early death of her father from cancer at just 34 was the catalyst that began her involvement.

Sharon has taken part in 5k runs, The Great North Run, and half-marathons, completing her first full marathon in 2015. She



GUESTS: Sharon Irving with Douglas Elliot, Ben Hawes and Bonnie Rose

also fund-raised by distance swimming. She is a social media ambassador for Cancer Research. To date, she has raised £25,000 for the charity.

She was invited to a House of Lords 'Thank You' Lunch in 2017 and also to the Queen's Garden Party.

Sharon stressed that she was grateful for the huge support she has had from the community in Langholm.

In her vote of thanks, Aileen Armstrong said how inadequate a few words were alongside all that Sharon had achieved.

The club's next meeting is the AGM on April 3rd and not as on the syllabus, 27th March.

There will be a guest speaker that day and the club hope for a lot of suggestions for the next session's programme.

The raffle was drawn and the meeting closed.

Hearing aid support lends an ear, locally

The Dumfries and Galloway Hard of Hearing Group is a grass roots organisation, established in 2008, by local people living with a hearing loss. They provide a local service to help hearing aid users to access help and support to manage their hearing loss, and to maintain the function of their hearing aids.

They run a variety of volunteer run clinics across the region, including in Langholm which offer:

- A care and maintenance service of NHS hearing aids
- Peer support to help people manage their hearing loss
- A referral service to other organisations, such as for sensory support, visibility and audiology

The Hard of Hearing group provides a drop-in clinic at Langholm Day Centre every third



Brian Monnier has been volunteering for the service for 10 years

Wednesday of the month from 1pm - 3pm. Brian Monnier offers the service and he has volunteered for the group for 10 years.

They do general maintenance on NHS Hearing Aids which includes changing tubes and domes. They also do home-visits for those unable to attend the clinic in person as well as

maintaining peoples hearing aids in care homes. People would have to travel to Dumfries otherwise for hearing aid maintenance. For more information you can look at the website www.dghg.org.uk or contact the organisation by email or phone officedghg@gmail.com 07896 342878.

Cost of living: What's in your shopping basket?

Average basket price in D&G in 2024 was £18.21, 18.8% up on 2017

By Mairi Telford Jamme

On February 20th, Dumfries and Galloway Citizens Advice Service launched their cost of living report. This report followed up on research carried out in 2014 and 2017 that focussed on the cost of a basket of essential groceries across the region matching small rural grocers with the main supermarkets. The 2024 report also included a review of the cost of road fuel, as well as the cost and frequency of public transport.

Jane Flanagan, Fundraising Development Officer and author of the report explained "In 2024, we researched the cost of a basket of 11 basic grocery items in 35 local shops of different types across the region, updating the findings from our 2017

study. We also looked at the cost of travelling to work by car, analysing prices at 26 petrol stations, and also by public transport, focusing on bus travel."

The report found that the average basket price in D&G in 2024 was £18.21, 18.8% more than in 2017, when the average was £15.33. Basket prices varied from the cheapest at £11.92 to the most expensive at £26.98, a price increase of 126%. Variation in price depended on the location and type of shop.

Jane said "A key finding of the research showed the unnecessary variation in pricing across the major supermarkets in different locations. It demonstrated that although smaller stores tend to charge more as a result of higher costs to themselves to bring

in the produce, they lie at the heart of their communities, offering accessibility and additional 'lifeline' services to the benefit of residents.

"Commuting also presents challenges to residents. While almost 30% of workers in the region now work from home, the rest do not. Limited public transport options cause many to rely on car travel, which is much more user-friendly for those who live in rural or remote locations. High commuting costs not only impact on people's employment, but also on their access to services and social opportunities. This situation is exacerbated by lower than national average incomes and high travel distances."

A digital copy of the report can be found on the D&G CAS website at www.dagcas.org.



Basket prices varied from the cheapest at £11.92 to the most expensive at £26.98

Borders Rail feasibility

South Scotland MSP Colin Smyth has welcomed the news that the UK Government has committed up to £5m to allow a feasibility study into extending the Borders Railway which we reported on last week. He said:

"The news of funding from the UK Government to appoint a project manager and allow a feasibility study into extending the Borders Railway is very welcome. Extending the railway would be a huge boost to the local economy and would connect communities in the South of Scotland. That's why I believe the route should run through Langholm, linking one of the key populations to the rail line.

"The Borders Railway has been a huge success and there is a powerful case for an extension to Carlisle, which I hope will come out in this new study. The campaign to extend the railway is long running and has been a genuine grassroots campaign which has united communities not just in the Borders but beyond.

"The economic benefits of the Borders Railway cannot be underestimated and therefore it is vitally important that Langholm is included in the route. It is not just the town itself that would profit, the surrounding communities would also gain a vital advantage.

"Including a stop in Langholm would bring significant benefits to the Eskdale community and a local economy which has suffered a number of economic shocks in recent years."

Ministers weigh in on growing community-owned energy

Energy Minister Michael Shanks and Scottish Government Climate Action Minister Alasdair Allan spoke about the future of community energy at an event in Glasgow on Tuesday, 18 February.

The Community Power event brought together community energy groups, industry sponsors including Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) and the Government ministers, at Strathclyde's Technology and Innovation Centre. They discussed how to put more energy into community hands, and how to resolve threats to existing community-owned energy in Scotland.

Community-owned energy benefits local economies and communities and helps combat climate change. It funds 128 community benefit funds in Scotland, supporting community businesses, affordable housing, recreation facilities, school buildings and more.



Energy Minister Michael Shanks



Climate Action Minister Alasdair Allan

Both the UK and Scottish Governments have stated their support for community energy, and last week the UK Government set out plans to include community energy in GB Energy's remit. Community Energy Scotland, who organised the event, welcomed both governments' ambition for new community energy projects but raised concerns about the risk of losing some community wind projects due to barriers they face

when they need to replace the turbines, known as 'repowering'. Because Scotland has historically led the way in the UK in terms of renewables and community renewables, hundreds of wind power projects will reach the end of their planned lives within the next ten years. Without a clear route and support for repowering, communities that rely on income from their own renewables could be at risk.

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Farming with Gilly Fraser

Podcast: The Shepherd's Life

This month's podcast spot is being given over to an audio book – namely *A Shepherd's Life* by James Rebanks.

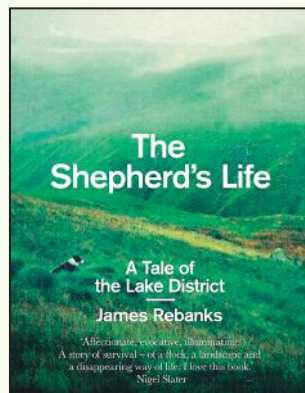
It's not new – the book itself came out in 2015, but the audio version was broadcast in the last couple of weeks on Radio 4 Extra.

James Rebanks was born and brought up on a Lake District hill farm and his book takes the listener right into the heart of that world, with all its treats and tragedies, joys and despairs.

He's a man of many parts. He left school without a single exam pass to his name, with a single-minded and passionate desire to follow in the family footsteps by devoting himself to the land.

To his surprise, he came to discover there was actually a joy to be had in learning, and after taking night school classes in Carlisle, ended up winning a place at university – Oxford no less.

A few years later he was somehow managing to combine farming with a second job advising the Unesco World Centre in Paris on how to help communities to



benefit from tourism.

The love he has for his own small part of the world shines through with every beautifully crafted word, and also the fear he holds for its future.

He's a cracking writer and funny too. When he describes the process of getting the ewes ready to receive the rams, he explains that when the females' tails are sheared it's a bit like removing woolly knickers.

The book can still be found on BBC Sounds and it's well worth the effort of hunting it out.

Greenhouse gasses high from drained peatlands

A major new initiative is underway to tackle greenhouse gas emissions from drained peatlands.

A number of different options are being considered by researchers including growing cat-tail and using the plant's fluffy fibre for insulating clothing; growing reed as a building material; growing Sphagnum moss to replace peat in horticulture and growing niche fruits such as cloud berries.

The project is funded by an EU-funded group called Paludi4all, which aims to support climate, nature restoration and carbon farming goals. The SRUC leading the UK branch of the project.

Drained peatlands become a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and the EU is committed to minimising these emissions through rewetting.

Vera Eory from SRUC says peatlands comprise 12% of the UK land area and around 80%

is degraded, generating 4% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions.

"Restoration can provide significant emission savings as well as benefits to biodiversity, water quality, and flood management. The UK and Scottish Governments have been promoting peatland restoration; in this effort paludiculture can play a role reconciling peatland restoration with agricultural production," she said.

Boris Vashev, Project Co-ordinator from the Agency for Renewable Resources says it's a complex process.

"It involves identifying suitable crops for waterlogged soils, adapting land-use practices, and developing new value chains, including specialised machinery and markets," he said. "Additionally, policy frameworks must be updated, and perceptions of paludiculture need to evolve."

The project will also explore the potential of paludiculture to



create rural jobs and support income generation, ensuring that the transition to this sustainable land-use practice benefits local communities across Europe.

Peatlands comprise 12% of the UK land area and around 80% is degraded

SRUC unit under threat

Students at the SRUC-run Elmwood College in Fife have launched a campaign to save the Animal Care unit which is under threat of closure.

The SRUC say the campus has run at a loss in recent years, with the main building costing more than £1m a year to run.

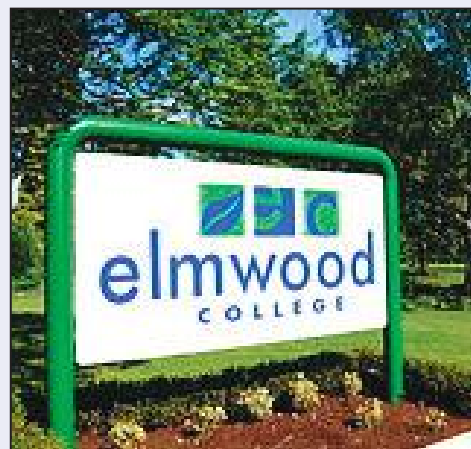
The college has now begun a consultation with a number of Elmwood staff on a proposal to close the main building but keep Elmwood House and Horticulture facilities open. Gamekeeping courses would also continue.

Students successfully fought last year to keep the Animal Care unit open and say they're upset and angry that they're now being faced with the same situation all over again.

"We intend to fight this decision and call on your support, whether you are at Elmwood or on another campus.

"We believe students shouldn't have to uproot their lives to take the opportunity to study, many people don't have this option, and it will lock many people out of this popular and rewarding course and career.

"We have yet to be invited to consultation on this issue, but we will be making it clear to SRUC management that we, student and class reps should be involved throughout. We are particularly annoyed about the lack of consideration



given the timing of this news. As students will know, the UCAS deadline to study elsewhere has expired."

Local MSP Willie Rennie is backing their campaign.

"I have made my opposition to this closure clear to SRUC and am calling for them to reverse their decision. SRUC needs to offer a decisive commitment to the future of Elmwood and ensure that it remains a viable centre with an adequate range of courses

Scotch Lamb stars in UAE

Scotch Lamb won a host of new international fans when it took centre stage at one of the world's biggest food and beverage trade exhibitions.

Held in Dubai, Gulfood 2025 attracted more than 135,000 visitors from 195 countries.

The Middle East has become an important market for sheep meat, importing an average of £648m and Scottish exporters are looking to expand in the region.

Over the course of the four-day event Quality Meat Scotland engaged with international buyers, offering tastings of premium Scotch Lamb prepared by expert chefs. At the Scottish Development International gathering more than 200 buyers gathered to sample the fare.

National Chef Gary Maclean appeared in the Scottish Pavilion, demonstrating the versatility of Scotch Lamb to interested buyers.

Gordon Newlands, Brand



Development Manager at QMS says exports are a big opportunity for Scotland's red meat supply chain.

"Last year, we set ourselves the objective of making Scotland the choice for premium red meat as part of our five-year strategy," he said. "At Gulfood, we have been showcasing the finest qual-

ity Scotch Lamb and highlighting its provenance, traceability, and sustainability—attributes that are highly valued in the premium export market."

QMS says it's continuing to strengthen its presence in key global markets, with a series of events planned across Europe and the Middle East in 2025.

Mandatory higher community benefits from clean energy

The Scottish Coalition on Community Energy is calling for higher community benefits from clean energy to be paid and has welcomed the Scottish Government's review of community benefits, but says more is needed to deliver a fair energy deal for Scottish communities.

A consultation launched in December comes after repeated calls from the Coalition for an update to community benefit standards from clean energy developments. Since 2014 the Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles have recommended a voluntary payment from developers to communities of £5,000 per Megawatt, per year, for onshore renewables. This figure has not increased with inflation.

In a report launched in December, the community coalition urged the Scottish Government to increase this 'good practice benchmark'. For onshore wind, they suggest £7.3k per Megawatt per year, plus additional payments to

bring the total to at least 2.5% of the developer's revenue from the project. Different benchmarks could be set for offshore wind, hydro and solar, and for storage and grid projects, given the different business models and expected returns.

Mandatory

The Coalition is also calling on the UK Government to make community benefit payments mandatory for all clean energy projects, including energy storage and transmission.

Amanda Grimm, Policy Manager at Community Energy Scotland, said:

"We warmly welcome the Scottish Government's consultation on community benefits Good Practice Principles. Community benefits are an investment in thriving communities and our energy future. They've already had a transformational impact, with millions of pounds from onshore wind going straight to local communities. But the benchmark has not been updated for over a decade, de-

spite sky-high inflation in the rest of the economy and technology improvements which have increased to developer profit. It's high time for an ambitious upgrade of good practice.

The Scottish Coalition on Community Energy is a group of charitable organisations from the community sector: Community Energy Scotland, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Community Land Scotland and Scottish Communities Finance.

An increase in community benefits paid out to our communities would make a huge impact in helping to sustain the many community organisations that provide services in Eskdale and Liddesdale. There is definitely a need to revise upwards the amount that windfarm companies should be paying out in community benefits given that the recommendation has not been reviewed since it was first set eleven years ago and is still only voluntary.

Co-Op recycling bins becoming a real eyesore

The recycling bins at the Co-op are being used as a dumping ground. Two local residents who live nearby are absolutely disgusted at what they see there. It would appear that people are just dumping anything at the bins.

There is now no longer a paper recycling bin in the Co-op car park but people are dumping cardboard boxes which will not be recycled. There is no information about who is doing this kind of 'fly tipping' but it has really become an eye sore.



Update on the goats

The E&L received the following update from Gail Brown who started the petition to stop the cull of feral goats that Oxygen Conservation had announced.

"I've just checked and there's 2,719 signed the online petition. I collected the paper ones here in the village (Newcastleton) on Thursday and left new ones. There were approximately 250 signatures but don't know how many on the Langholm side yet. I've handed them to Emma Ritchie as she was the one who dealt with them.

"We are trying to get a zoom meeting set up with Shirley (the specialist on goats and their habits) but Emma is the point of contact for that. We need to collate all the information we have and decide how to move forward with it."

Gail goes on to say "Oxygen Conservation appear to be ignoring me now. I have sent them four emails and they only responded to the first one. I've also sent them from a different email address! I'll send you the last email which was asking them to engage with the wider community to resolve this matter. They don't seem to want to engage. Nature Scot say they won't revoke their licence to cull goats as it was in place before they bought the land and no reason to revoke this."

Crossdykes Community benefit fund

The next deadline for applications to the Crossdykes Community Benefit fund is 26th April. Community groups in Langholm, Ewes, Westerkirk, Eskdalemuir, Lockerbie and District, Middlebie, Waterbeck and North Milk can apply to this fund. Decisions on applications submitted to the fund in April will be made in July. See www.ccbf.org.uk for more information.

Register for 999 by text

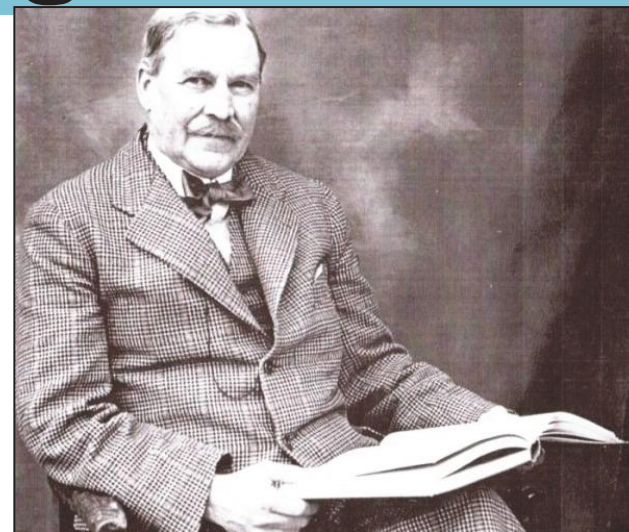
Police Scotland is encouraging people who might have difficulty with making a phone call to register for 999 text service. This is for people who might be somewhere that they have poor mobile phone signal and where a phone call might fail.

To register for this service people can sign up for it by texting the word REGISTER to 999. In an emergency the following should be included in the SMS (text) message: which service you require – police, fire, ambulance, mountain rescue, coastguard. What is the emergency – describe briefly what the emergency is. Where is the emergency? – if possible provide an address, grid reference, road names or land marks.

Local raconteur tells Ogilvie tales

Canonbie Probus Club was back in the Café at Canonbie Parish Church last Wednesday for its second meeting of the month when the guest speaker was the ever-popular Billy Young of Langholm. Billy chose the story of the distinguished border poet, balladist and horseman, Will Ogilvie for his talk which was illustrated with a slide show and by Billy's recitation of some of Ogilvie's poetry.

Members learnt that Ogilvie was born at Holefield Farm near Kelso in 1869. Initially taught at home he transferred to Kelso High School before moving to Fettes College in Edinburgh. Aged 20 he travelled to Australia where he worked as a jackaroo and drover for 10 years. Whilst there he established himself as one of the foremost poets in the country writing regularly for the Sydney Herald. However, the lure of his border homeland saw him returning home in 1900 to work as a



journalist in Edinburgh but in 1905 he moved to America for an academic life which he found too restricting.

He was soon back home and in 1908 married Madge Scott Anderson in Jedburgh. The couple eventually moved to Kirklee in Ashkirk where Will wrote many border poems inspired by the heritage and beauty of the border region he loved until his death in 1963.

After the excellent presentation President John Mitchell who lived in Ashkirk for some 35 years proposed the vote of thanks which was warmly supported by all members who found the talk fascinating and informative.

The Club hope to welcome Mark Chambers of the Travelling Bee Company to the meeting next week.

Writers Wanted!

To make the E & L a truly community and local paper we're looking for people willing to write on a wide range of subjects such as nostalgia ▪ sport ▪ farming forestry ▪ cookery or whatever else is your area of expertise!

Please get in touch if you are interested in contributing by emailing us on: newsdesk@eladvertiser.co.uk or by phoning the office on 013873 80012

School's London trip was just capital!

with a stop-off in Birmingham and overnight in Stratford-upon Avon it was on to 'the big smoke' for a whistle-stop tour for 50 Academy pupils

During the week of February half term, 50 Langholm Academy pupils left the Muckle Toon for the annual residential trip to London via Birmingham. The trip is organised each year by Mr Clement JP from the Business Management and Legal Studies department.

Our first activity was a tour of Aston Villa Football Club. We were given a tour of the club facilities including the press area and changing rooms and got to view the pitch from the stands. The crest of Aston Villa FC is attributed to William McGregor who moved from Perthshire to Birmingham in 1870.

We spent the night in Stratford-Upon-Avon and left for London first thing. Our first visit was to the RAF Museum. This is an impressive museum with a lot of interactive activities.

We saw Squadron Leader Arthur Scarf's Victoria Cross that became part of the RAF Museum's collection in 2023. Arthur Scarf was awarded the Victoria Cross for his outstanding gallantry on a daylight raid on Singora, Malaya, on 9 December 1941.

The next morning, we had a question-and-answer session with David Mundell MP. Questions asked included topics about Brexit, Donald Trump, Ukraine and UK defence spending. Following this, we were given a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament by Mr Mundell and his team. After Parliament, we took a ride on the London Eye. The views of London were spectacular. We then went on a cruise ride along the River Thames. We saw a number of impressive sights such as the MI6 Building, St. Paul's Cathedral and The Shard.



EYE,EYE: The views from the London Eye are sensational



TROOPS: 50 Langholm Academy pupils pose in front of the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square

After disembarking the cruise, we walked over Tower Bridge and boarded the bus. The driver dropped us off at Buckingham Palace and we did a sightseeing tour on foot. Following our evening meal, we went to Shaftesbury Theatre to see the musical, Mrs Doubtfire. Gabriel Vick played Daniel Hillard and Marcus Collins, 2011 X Factor contestant, played Andre Mayem. The musical was brilliant and brought our final night in London to a spectacular end.

Before leaving London, we visited the London Dungeon. The live actors, special effects and rides made this the highlight of the week for so many pupils. All the pupils attending the

trip would like to thank Mr Clement, Mr Atkinson, Miss Carruthers, Mrs Laidlaw and Miss Walker for giving up their time to make sure the trip could take place. Everyone involved in the trip would like to thank The Holywood Trust, Muirhall Energy Ltd and Langholm, Ewes, and Wester Kirk Community Council for their grant funding, which reduced the overall cost of the trip, ensuring it was financially accessible for as many pupils as possible.

Mr Clement would like to thank the office staff, Mrs Haining and Miss Bryson, for all their efforts in completing the vast amount of paperwork that is required when organising a trip.



BEWARE: at Horseguards Parade



VILLANS: in Aston Villa's press area



FLYING HIGH: ...at the Royal Air Force Museum



WESTMINSTER: The group were welcomed to the Houses of Parliament by David Mundell MP



REFUELLING: Great meal at Bella Italia



AIRBORNE: ...at the Royal Air Force Museum



SPINNING: ... on the London Eye



MAJESTIC: The Thames at Tower Bridge



COLUMNISTS: At the foot of Nelson's Column



...Liddesdale Lineup...

Blight on the landscape as SPEN plans 65 metre pylons

'Electric' meeting anticipated at Copshaw Community Council

Copshaw Community Council is anticipating a lively meeting on Tuesday when representatives of the Scottish Power Energy Network attend to answer questions about their proposals for an energy superhighway through the Borders.

The SPEN plan is to build giant electricity pylons up to 65 metres high, carrying 400kv along with large transmission sub-stations and battery farms along a route from Gala North to south of Newcastleton.

All of the energy transmitted along the line will be sent south of the border to England, with none remaining in Scotland.

SPEN say the project is necessary to "strengthen the UK's transmission network" and hit government climate targets.

Opponents to the plan say the development by the Spanish-owned company will ruin vast swathes of Borders countryside forever.

They point to the fact that governments in parts of Europe insist new power-line infrastructure is placed underground to protect the beauty of the landscape.

An online petition opposing the pylons has so far attracted more than one thousand signatures.

Determined

Local MP John Lamont says he appreciates the need to take action to reach net zero but is determined to prevent plans that could ruin the area's beautiful countryside.

"There is a real lack of common sense being shown by those putting these plans in place," he said. "They seem to be utterly disconnected from the lives of the people who would be affected by these installations.

"It's not right to arrogantly dismiss the concerns of the very communities that will be most affected by these proposals."



Tributes to stalwart Jean

For thirteen lang years oor Secretary Jean
Has ruled the Holm Show like ony grand Queen
But unlike some Queens, she kept subjects in place
By managing aye tae keep a smile on her face

That's the first verse of a poem written by Liddesdale man Maurice Carruthers in praise of Holm Show stalwart Jean Nichol when she finished her marathon reign as Show Secretary. Sadly Jean died last month at the age of 85 and Copshaw folk were swift to pay tribute to a much-loved member of their community.

Addressing a packed congregation during Jean's funeral in Liddesdale Parish Church, the Reverend Morag Crossan said her first job had been at 14MU MoD in Carlisle, but that she had gone on to work alongside her farmer husband John for 63 years, embracing the rhythms of farm life with strength and grace. She was a loving mother to their three children Robert, Joanne and Jenny and grandmother to Nathaniel, Mia, Rory and Callum.

Somehow in the midst of that busy life Jean managed to travel to Australia, Canada, Singapore, Europe and Cambodia and



Copshaw stalwart, Jean Nichol

thanks to her great love of Scottish culture, even found time to learn Gaelic.

Jean played a very active role in the farming community and will perhaps always be best remembered for the huge part she played in the running the Holm Show – a task she undertook with humour, patience and grace, as the poem records.

*On Show days she's aye up wi' the lark
Dispensing her wisdom until it is dark
Nae matter the problems, how fast is the pace
She handles them a' wi' a smile on her face
There was tact, there was humour, there was pure psychology
Laffin and daffin wi' pure methodology
Nae voice was raised, no a thing oot o' place
Juist because Jean kept a smile on her face.*

Longtime friend Beatrice Scott has many happy memories of times spent with Jean, especially working together at the Holm Show.

"She was bubbly and talkative and just a good person to know really. She was always smiling and never let anybody or anything get her down. But she could also handle the awkward ones, and there was always some of them!

"I remember one time an exhibitor had asked someone to bring her plate of tablet home for her, but it ended up in the Secretary's tent and we were all tired at the end of a long day so the tablet disappeared like snow off a dyke, and all the poor woman got back was the plate."

52 turbines near Hermitage?



Plans for a windfarm which it's feared could have an adverse impact on Hermitage Castle are to go to a public local inquiry after being rejected at committee stage by Scottish Borders Councillors.

The planning application for Teviot Windfarm by Muirhall Energy is for 52 turbines on land east of Priestthaugh near Hawick.

Officers had recommended that the application be passed but SBC's Planning and Building Standards turned it down by a majority of five to three.

The turbines would have max-

imum tip heights of up to 240 metres and one councillor pointed out that this is more than twice the height a drone can fly. Another committee member said it would be tantamount to "vandalism in the hills".

Opponents say the development would compromise several historically important sites, including Hermitage Castle, the Tinlee Standing Stone and the Catrail Earthworks.

Muirhall Energy says the development would make a substantial contribution towards legally binding net zero energy targets.

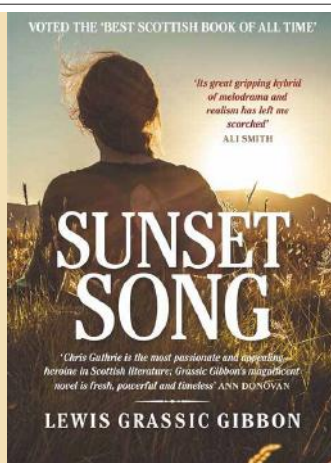
World Book Day 2025

World Book Day is celebrated annually and this year it's today - the 6th March. We asked people to send us information about a favourite book and several readers have made a contribution. World Book Day is a charity which champions the fun of reading, because it seriously improves lives. According to the charity “..reading for fun is the single biggest indicator that a child will grow up to enjoy a happier and more successful life – more than their family circumstances, their parents’ educational backgrounds or their income.

“But here’s the challenge, it’s at an all-time low, with only 1 in 3 children now saying they enjoy reading. World Book Day says they believe children are more likely to read if they enjoy it, and are on a mission to encourage them to see reading as an entertaining, social and fun thing to do.” They want more children to grow up with a life-long, life-changing habit of reading for fun, and all the benefits this brings.

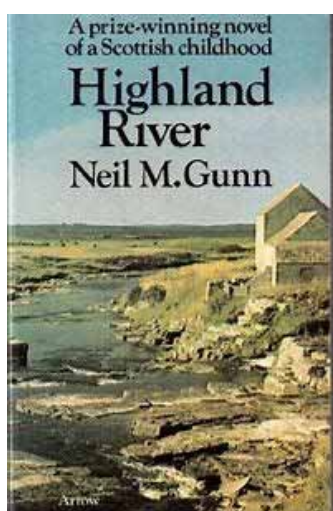
Nancy McLure

‘Sunset Song’ by Lewis Grassie Gibbon is my all-time favourite book. It is set in the Howe of the Mearns, Kincardineshire in the years leading up to and including World War One. The main character is Chris Guthrie, and the book describes her life in the crofting community ultimately changed by the war. There is comedy and pathos in every chapter, and it is one of the few books I can read over and over again.



Margaret Pool

‘Highland River’ by Neil M. Gunn and published 1937, has been one of my long-time favourite “reads”. Initially it is presented as a tale of a boy growing up in a remote, coastal community in northern Scotland in the early 1900s. Subtly, it develops into something much deeper and more meaningful. It describes the influences that shaped the boy, Ken’s, character.



The importance of kinship, history, circumstance, the ancient bloodlines; Pictish, Celtic and Norse, that permeate his community. Beautifully written, the Highland lilt is conveyed in the sentence construction and descriptive passages, as in the opening scene when nine-year-old Ken is sent to collect water from the well close to the river. He spots a mighty salmon, newly returned from the sea, which awakens his most primitive instincts, the urge to hunt and land the fish; “Out of that noiseless world in the grey of the morning, all his ancestors came at him, from his very feet a great fish had started ploughing its way across the river, the king of fish, the living salmon.” The river, is key to the boy’s identity, it charts his development, from childhood to adolescence, then adulthood. It is a truly moving and inspiring book, as often as I return to it, it always has something new and insightful to impart.

Audrey Maxwell

‘The Nightingale’ by Kristin Hannah. This book grips you from the very first page. It truly is a great book, at times it’s scary, at times it’s emotional, but all the time it’s a real page turner. I don’t want to spoil the read, so I won’t say too much but it shows how brave a group of people women especially, as well as men, persisted in their fight against the enemy, even though it was a life-or-death situation. Kristin Hannah has written many books, but this is the best.

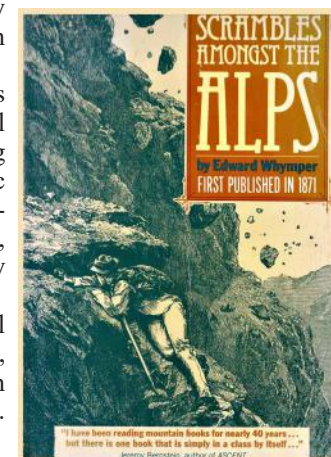


Mark Hallam

“Scrambles amongst the Alps” (1871) by Edward Whymper FRSC 1840-1911. By profession an engraver of illustrations for books and periodicals, Whymper’s celebrated interests and explorations came about through being commissioned to produce a series of alpine scenery illustrations. Naturally he put this talent to good use in his book, which features over 100 of his own designs.

In text he describes a decade of early alpine explorations in Victorian era, during which Whymper made several notable first ascents - around the central and recurring theme of his obsession to be first to climb the iconic Matterhorn 14,692ft. He made seven unsuccessful attempts, trying different routes as well as companions, before finally succeeding with a large ungainly party of seven, on 13th July 1865.

The last two chapters describe the highly successful event of this first attempt from Zermatt, Switzerland, followed by appalling tragedy on the descent, when the rope famously broke and four fell to their deaths.



Stuart Clement

My favourite book is ‘The Book Thief’ by Markus Zusak. I first read this book 12 years ago. The novel recounts events in Germany during World War II, including the Holocaust. It is narrated by Death, who poignantly states, “I am haunted by humans.” This quote has stuck with me for the past 12 years, and given the current state of the world, I believe it is just as relevant today as it was between 1939 and 1945.



Mairi Telford Jammeh

‘Out for the Count’ by Kathryn Cave is a children’s bedtime story told in verse and is a family favourite. I read it to my children and now my son reads it to my grandson. It talks about pirates, bats, goats, snakes and all the things of nightmares as Tom tries to settle down and night and go to sleep. I think my son has read it so many times he can recite it off by heart. First published in 1991 it is in my view a classic.



Denis Male

My favourite book is actually a series of 12 books. They are by Tim LaHaye and Called ‘Left behind’. It is the story of the Christian Rapture when the world moves into tribulation and all Christians and all children under the age of innocence are supernaturally removed from the earth. It describes the seven years of the tribulation and future world following it.





Looking back...

Langholm As It Was...

...with the object of hunting down the Covenanters or rebels”

Andrew Hislop

Undoubtedly, the most interesting of all the Covenanters of Eskdale is Andrew Hislop “the shepherd lad” who suffered martyrdom at Craighaugh on 12th May, 1685, towards the end of the period known in Scotland as the “Killing Time”.

According to Dr Brown, Claverhouse, who had been appointed by the Government to the command of a troop of horse, pitched his camp at Johnstone, in the parish of Eskdalemuir, with the object of hunting down the Covenanters or “rebels” as they were called in the official documents.

For some time Claverhouse went about with a small party of troopers, meeting with little success. A Covenanter, however, happened to die at the home of Andrew Hislop’s mother and was buried at night-time in one of the adjoining fields. His grave was discovered, and the news was quickly carried to Claverhouse at Johnstone.

With him was Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, himself once an adherent of the Covenant, but who, for a reward which came to him as a knighthood, had renounced the faith of his fathers and turned persecutor.

Like that of all renegades his zeal was very bitter – more so even than that of Claverhouse. On



The Martyr's Grave, Craighaugh, Eskdalemuir

Photo courtesy of Langholm Archive

hearing of the discovery of the grave, Sir James Johnstone went with a party and barbarously dug up the body. Finding that it had come from the house of the widow Hislop, he first pillaged then pulled down her dwelling and drove herself and her children, of whom Andrew was the eldest unmarried, into the fields.

Naturally, Andrew, who was not then present, at once came under the suspicion of the persecutors and was thereafter carefully sought for, but he evaded their vigilance. However, Claverhouse happened to be in Hutton parish, which adjoins that of Eskdalemuir, on his remorseless search for the hated Covenanters and on 10th May 1684

accidentally came upon four of them resting by the Windshields Burn at a place called Dumlinn

Westerhall

When the troopers appeared, each man ran for his horse, but Andrew Hislop’s was young and hard to catch and before he could reach it, Claverhouse and his men had seized him. They brought him over the hills into Eskdale to Sir James Johnstone who, being apprised of their coming beforehand, went and met the party at Craighaugh. With characteristic cruelty and indifference to justice, Sir James Johnstone would have had him instantly shot, saying that “they would shoot the rebel on the

rebel’s land”. Claverhouse was averse from this indecent haste and urged delay until, being pressed by Sir James, he yielded saying “the blood of this man, Westerhall, be upon you, I am free of it”. Whereupon they brought Andrew Hislop to the place where he is now interred, the low sloping hillside on the west of Craighaugh farmhouse. He was allowed some time for prayer and for this purpose went into a kiln hard by, but Sir James Johnstone, growing restive at the delay, asked Claverhouse to “go and hear if he had done”. Returning Claverhouse remarked that “he had left off praying and begun preaching”.

Dr Brown then relates how Sir

James ordered a Highland captain to shoot Hislop but instead of obeying this command from a civilian, albeit one of the lairds upon whom the cunning Government had imposed the duty of clearing each of his own lands of the Covenanters, he drew his men away and (so it is said) declared that he would himself fight Claverhouse first. The latter thereupon, ordered three of his own men to shoot Hislop, who was ordered to draw his bonnet over his face, before they fired. This he disdained to do, declaring that he had done nothing to be ashamed of, and could look them all in the face. Then holding up his Bible, he charged them to answer at the great day for what they had done and what they were about to do when they should be judged by that Book.

Dr Brown does not expressly mention it, but tradition affirms that on the soldiers hesitating to fire, Westerhall himself impatiently drew his pistol and fired, and in a swift moment Andrew Hislop lay dead on the green hillside.

Andrew Hislop was buried by the dalesmen on the spot where he fell. His cold-blooded murder created a profound sensation in Eskdale and an equally profound hatred of Sir James Johnstone as the instigator, if not the actual perpetrator of the crime. The hill-folk raised upon the spot a simple memorial to the Martyrs.

C & D Marts (Longtown) Primestock Report Thursday, 27th February 2025



C&D Auction Marts Ltd had forward an entry of 8,612 sheep, comprising of 4,835 prime hogsgs and 3,777 cast ewes & rams at their weekly sale at Longtown Mart on Thursday 27th February 2025.

A smaller show of cattle forward met a blistering trade. All classes were in high demand and many more could have been sold to vendor’s advantage.

The sale topped at £1,642 for a beef Shorthorn cow from Gibson farming, Cut Thorn Farm. Topping per kilo at 242ppk was a Galloway cow from R & P Okane, Closehead.

PRINCIPAL PRICES (PER KILO)
Belted Galloway 242p, 195p, 180p Closehead
British Shorthorn 222p, 202p Cut Thorn
Galloway 230p, 202p Blackhall
Luining 192p, 180p Crosslee
Whitebred 182p Blackhall

PRINCIPAL PRICES (PER HEAD)
British Shorthorn £1642, £1484 Cut Thorn
Whitebred £1537 Blackhall
Galloway £1265, £1080 Blackhall
Belted Galloway £1023, £1004 Closehead
A slightly larger show of 4,835 prime hogs were forward to a strong ringside of buyers. Export hogs were highly sought after with many selling to premium rates. Light hogs very much a stand-on trade from previous weeks, achieving an overall sale average of 340ppk, with over 45% of the sale being hill bred hogs.

Many more well finished hogs are wanted and will be sold to vendor advantage on a weekly basis to fulfil purchaser’s requirements at Longtown.
 The sale topped at 436p for a pen of Beltex

hogs shown by G & W Halliday, Crawthat. This fantastic run went on the average 406ppk and 185.

Top per head of £200 was achieved twice, with pens of Beltex hogs from Mactaggart Bros & Co, Castle Douglas and J & J Campbell, Dinnans Farm.
 Overall average of 340.0p (SQ 348.p)

PRINCIPAL PRICES (PER KILO)
Beltex 436p, 422p 413p, 409p Crawthat, 421p, 400p Station Yard, 409p Newfield, 408p Westernhopeburn, 405p Hardriding
Texel 380p Cobble Hall, 379p Sorbie, 378p Copperthorns, 377p, 367p High Crusasdale, 376p Glendearg,
Charollais 377p Donerentin, 348p Stewartfield, 345p Cara View, 342p Backburn
Cheviot 382p, 367p, 375p Glendearg, 378p Sorbie, 376p Ravenside, 372p Copperthorns, 372p Nethermyers, 367p Cara View
Blackface 370p Sorbie, 361p Larg Farming Co, 359p Mid Harrietsfield, 353p Syke Head
North Country Cheviot 368p Byers, 354p Oswie
Suffolk 368p Galleywreay, 361p Brae Edge, 366p Edingarioch, 354p Newfield, 354p Syke Head, 351p Archerbeck
Mule 363p, 354p, 350p Cara View, 355p High Crusasdale, 350p Killipol, 340p Todsyehead, 337p The Flatt
Herdwick 358p Copperthorns, 356p Prior Rigg, 351p Orthwaite Hall
Easycare 343p, 340p Edingarioch
Shetland 340p Prior Rigg
Dutch Spotted 328p, 324p Little Mark
Cheviot Mule 327p Culquhasen, 320p Todsyehead
Kerry Hill 320p Todsyehead
Hampshire 320p Oswie
Swaledale 317p Orthwaite Hall

PRINCIPAL PRICE (PER HEAD)
Beltex £200 Dinnans, £200, £194, £192, £184 Station Yard, £194, £192, £186, £184 Crawthat, £184 Bombie
Texel £190, £178 Dinnans, £189 Mid Banks, £183 £181, £178, £170 Riggheads, £177 The Land, £176 Cubbyhill, £175 Glendearg, £175 Cobble Hall Barn
Suffolk £178 Burnside, £177 The Lands, £175 Grindon Hill, £174, £164 Chesters Brae, £173 Culquhasen, £173 Burnfoot Hill, £172 Mid Banks, £169 Cleughbrae, £166 Dunbeath
Charollais £167 Tinnishall, £163 Rigfoot, £159 Cara View, £157, £153 Stewartfield, £136 Donerentin, £120 Backburn
Cheviot £166 Braes of Enzie, £164, £162, £161 Macharioch, £161 Nethermyers, £162, £158 Glendearg, £160 Nethermyers, £158 Hindhope
North Country Cheviot £165, £148 Larkhall, £158 North Synton, £154, £150, £146 Westernhopeburn, £147 Byers
Mule £164, £153 Grindon Hill, £155 Wanwood, £153 Westernhopeburn, £150 Aldery Terrace, £150, £149 Syke Head, £150 West Newlands, £144 Archerbeck
Blackface £163 Larg Farming, £160 Craig Douglas, £160 Millmark, £155 Wanwood, £154, £149 Glendearg, £154 New Field, £154 Grindon Hill, £150, £148 Wanwood
Dutch Spotted £151, £146, £130 Little Mark, £140 Kinnelside
Cheviot Mule £154 Todsyehead, £144 Culquhasen
Zwartbles £150 Syke Head, £128, £126 Wormerlaw
Easycare £144 Edingarioch
Herdwick £139 Prior Rigg, £133, £130 Orthwaite Hall, £129 Copper

Swaledale £130 Orthwaite Hall
A Larger show of 3,777 ewes were forward with heavy ewes holding up recent rates of returns and the best ewes seen dearer on the week. A larger show of plainer ewes on offer met a slight resistance on previous weeks. More ewes are wanted for next week’s sale as customers are keen for supplies with trade set to at least maintain these very high rates of return. Numbers are handled with ease and are keenly sought after.
 The sale topped at £400 for Texel ewes from James Erlam, Mid Banks, Lockerbie.
 Beltex peaked at £290 from J Watret, Burnside, Annan.
 Hill ewes topped at £158 for Cheviots from R Vevers, Burnfoot Hill and Blackfaces selling to £154 from Oliver Routlage & Partners, Selcoth Farm.
 Rams to £270 for Suffolks from J & MH Brims, Thuster Mains, Wick.

HEAVY EWES
Texel £400 Mid Banks, £355, £330 Craig Douglas, £350 Dinnans, £330 Carran, £320 Beckfoot, £300 Burnside
Beltex £290 Burnside, £275, £175 Lairdlaugh, £265, £180 Chapelton of Menmuir, £218 Crawthat, £195 Borthaugh
Suffolk £252, £245, £230 Bethal, £245, £232 Beckfoot, £238, £230 Thuster Mians, £228 Burnside
Charollais £238, £185 Beckfoot, £225, £215 Stewartfield, £205 Mid Banks, £200, £182 Bethal
Bluefaced Leicester £225 Clifton Cote, £218 Millknowe, £210 Bethal, £210 Mains of Collin, £200 Fala Hill, £198 Mainside, £198 Arnice
Cheviot Mule £220, £192 Uras, £215 Fala Hill, £186 Howgillside, £185 Culquhasen,

£175 West Millhills, £175 Shaw Head, £174 Glendearg, £160 Barnglies
Border Leicester £198, £156 Septre
Mule £195 Oldham Rd, £195, £194 Thruster Mains, £195 Spetre, £195 Mains of Collin, £192 Dinnans, £192 Uras, £190 Bethal, £188 Druchtag
North Country Cheviot £192, £168 Uras, £192 Redford Smithy, £182 Burnfoot Hill, £180 Cut Thorn, £180 Beckfoot, £172 Lowry Gardens, £168 Tormore
Hampshire £185 Bethal, £150 Septre, £145 Beckfoot
Dorset £182 Beckfoot, £172, £152 Bethal, £170, £164 Oldham
Zwartbles £180 Evertown, £112, £110 Wormerlaw
Dutch Spotted £170 Bethal

LIGHT EWES
Cheviot £158 Burnfoot Hill, £146, £136 Crossdykes, £146 Redford Smithy
Lleyn £155 Oldham Rd
Blackface £154 Selcoth, £148 Grindon Hill, £148, £140, £137, £136 Mains of Collin, £138 Toft House, £136 Larg Farming Co
Shetland £148, £120 Burnfoot Hill, £112, £108 Blackpark
Easycare £144 Stewartfield, £135 Stewartfield, £132 Edingarioch
Swaledale £100 Grindon Hill, £92 Sheepriggs
Herdwick £96 Dykeside, £88 Sheepriggs

RAMS
Suffolk £270 Thruster Mains, £190 Edingarioch, £185 Bethal
Texel £245 Torkirra, £240 Sheepriggs, £230 Beckfoot, £220 Staingills, £200 Howard House
Beltex £235 Cleughbrae, £200 Woodhead,

£185 West Millhills, £170 Priory Nook, £170 Wormerlaw
Charollais £225, £200 Septre, £182 Tinnishall, £170 Bethal, £165 Galleywreay
Bluefaced Leicester £192 Wallshield, £180 Keppochan
North Country Cheviot £185 West Millhills, £178 Fala Hill, £156 Keppochan
Millennium Bleu £180 Bethal, £150 Glenart
Lleyn £172 Buteland, £168 Septre, £150 Castletown Est, £150 Glengolly
Oxford £160 Septre
Dutch Spotted £155 Little Mark, £150 Dykeside
Cheviot £146 Eldinhope, £122 Keppochan
Romney £140 Castletown Est
Blackface £138 Dallowie, £128 Knockreoch
Easycare £138 Edingarioch
Wiltshire £110, £108 Port O Spittal
Swaledale £100 West Newlands

Averages:

Hogs	
Light to	386.2p (333.4p)
Standard to	409.0p (350.7p)
Medium to	436.0p (348.3p)
Heavy to	422p (338.4p)
Ewes	
Light to	£158(£96.18)
Heavy to	£400 (£164.75)
Rams to	£270.00 (£138.61)

CONTACT:

John Walton07880 527 066
Daniel Lynn07584 200 489
Sam Hogg07584 207 323
Norman Douglas07786 366 833
Helen Rickard07741 313 029

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WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK
CREATION MILL W/C 10th Mar 2025
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Day	What	Time	Where
Mon	Scrap Store Mending Monday	11:30-2:30 1-3	Creation Mill space
Tues	Canonbie In Stitches Afterschool Club	2-4 4-5:30	Canonbie Hall DG14 0UX Creation Mill
Wed	Welcome Wednesday & Scrap Store Kirkpatrick Fleming In Stitches	10-3 10-12	Creation Mill space Victoria Hall DG113AU
Thurs	Dumfries The Standard Knit Social	4-6:30	Dumfries High Street DG1 2QT
Fri	Scrap Store Langholm weekly In Stitches	10-12 1-3	Creation Mill Social Club DG13 0DN
Sat	Intro to Fairisle Knitting	10-1	Creation Mill DG13 0ES

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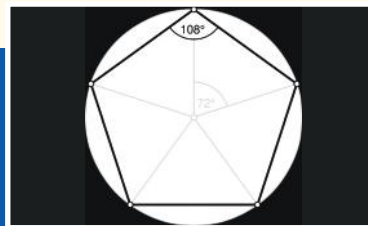
WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

Fri 7th	The Brandon McPhee Show	The Buccleuch Centre 7.30pm
Sat 8th	Langholm Baby & Toddler Group Bake Sale	Langholm Pop-Up Shop 8.30am - 12pm (or sell out)
Sun 9th	Langholm Social Club AGM	The Social Club 1pm
Wed 12th	Antique Valuation Day with Paul Laidlaw	Eskdalemuir Hub 11am - 2pm
Sat 15th	Benty Hall Bingo Night	Benty Hall 7.30pm
	Taylor Fever Taylor Swift Tribute Show	The Buccleuch Centre 7.30pm
Sun 16th	Westerkirk Library A chat with Douglas Beattie	Westerkirk Library 3pm - 4.30pm
Thu 20th	Hot Flash Café	Langholm Community Centre 6.30pm - 8.30pm
Sun 23rd	Indoor Car Boot Sale	Eskdalemuir Hub 11am - 3pm
25th to 29th	LAODS presents 'Annie Get Your Gun'	The Buccleuch Centre Tue - Fri at 7.30pm Sat at 2.30pm
Sat 29th	Canonbie United Church Soup Kitchen & Table-top Sale	Canonbie Public Hall 11.30am - 1pm

The E&L General Knowledge Quiz

No. 2508 answers next week

1. What term is used in golf for a score of one over par at a hole?
2. Who plays astronaut Neil Armstrong in the film First Man?
3. For what did the JS stand for in the name of the composer JS Bach?
4. Which frontiersman was known as "King of the Wild Frontier"?
5. In which year were the first Nobel Prizes awarded, Queen Victoria die and Australia become a country?
6. Which city is overlooked by Table Mountain?
7. Which capital city represents the letter L in the NATO phonetic alphabet?
8. Reaching speeds of over 200 miles per hour in its hunting dive, what is the fastest bird in the world?
9. Annie Lennox and Dave Sewart made up which eighties pop duo?
10. Charles Ogle in 1910 was the first man to play what on film, later actors doing so including Boris Karloff, Christopher Lee and Robert De Niro?
11. BALPA is the abbreviated form of the registered trade union for which occupation?
12. Benjamin West was in 1792 elected the second president of which artistic body?
13. In which country are Njal's Saga, Laxdaela Saga and Grettis Saga set?
14. Which two seas are separated by the Skagerrak and the Kattegat?
15. What is the sum of the internal angles of a pentagon?
16. How many lines does the type of poem called villanelle have?
17. What nationality was magical-realism writer Jorge Luis Borges?
18. Hathor was the cow-headed goddess of love in which ancient religion?
19. At which Olympics did Britons win both the male and female long jump gold medal?
20. Author of Tamburlaine, Edward II and The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, which playwright was stabbed to death in a tavern brawl?



Crossword & Quiz Solutions from last week

Quiz 2507

1. The Muppet Show
2. African and Asian
3. Stanley Kubrick
4. Habitat
5. Mecca
6. Screwdriver
7. Mount Etna
8. Grease
9. T (Titan, Titania and Triton)
10. Hans Geiger
11. South Korea
12. Countdown
13. St Leger
14. Two shillings (or ten new pence)
15. Charlie & The Chocolate Factory
16. Spurn Head
17. South Africa
18. Melbourne
19. 50
20. Mark Twain

Crossword 2507

Across: 6 Saul, 7 Two-to-one, 9 Vibrates, 10 Page, 11 Topaz, 12 Beliefs, 14 Vending, 16 Feral, 18 Gaza, 20 Nepotism, 21 Spinster, 22 Rims.

Down: 1 Camisole, 2 Flora and fauna, 3 State, 4 Mousse, 5 Complimentary, 8 Nag, 12 Big, 13 Fearsome, 15 Ninety, 17 Sport, 19 Amp.

NEVER A CROSSWORD!

No. 2508 answers next week

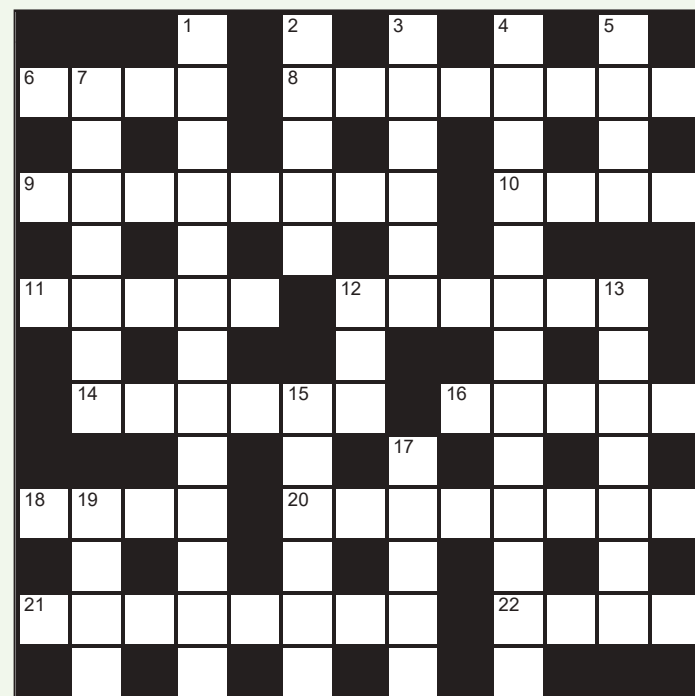
A wee mix of cryptic and general knowledge puzzles to get the grey cells moving!

Across

- 6 Cold, dry Adriatic wind (4)
- 8 Gloaming (8)
- 9 "---, home's best" (4,4)
- 10 German idealist philosopher (4)
- 11 Pot bakers (5)
- 12 "Who cares?" (2,4)
- 14 Lot, to Abraham (6)
- 16 Cake topper (5)
- 18 Burn slightly (4)
- 20 Kind of aural implant (8)
- 21 Pack it up (4,2,2)
- 22 "--- of the D'Urbervilles" (4)

Down

- 1 Essential constituent (4,3,6)
- 2 Stately horse (5)
- 3 Small informal restaurant (6)
- 4 Very popular confection (4,9)
- 5 At that time (4)
- 7 Like some cysts (7)
- 12 Baste, perhaps (3)
- 13 "--- That Shook the World" (John Reed book) (3,4)
- 15 Money held by a third party (6)
- 17 Chip off the old block (5)
- 19 WWI field-marshal (4)



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 gov.uk/planning. Written comments may be made to Head of Economy
 and Development by email to Planning@dumgal.gov.uk or via the Council's
 website, as noted above, by 27/03/2025 (Type B).

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended
 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act
 1997 (B)

Ref No/Type Address/Proposal
 25/0092/LBC (B) Andrew Hislop's Grave, Craighaugh, Eskdalemuir -
 Repointing and recut original inscription of tablestone
 grave and erection of protective railings



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Cricket Club update

Cricket

By Chris Stewart
LCC chairman

2024 was a challenging year on and off the pitch at the club. On the pitch it was a constant struggle to raise 11 players each week and off the pitch because of the wet summer we didn't take as much money on our bar than we predicted. However, it was a phenomenal effort by the team to survive our first season in the Premier League.

There were some fantastic games and thanks must go to last season's captain Duncan Elliott for everything he did over the course of the season.

Off the field, in the last few weeks we have begun work to "modernise" our clubhouse with a new floor being put down in the bar area, new bar furniture and blinds going up.

Our toilets are also getting a much needed freshen up. I am hoping all this work can be completed before the new season starts at the end of April.

We have also purchased a new practice net which will allow improved training sessions for our players and the wicket cover which was damaged in a storm last April will be replaced before the start of the season. The Eden Valley League have joined together with Cumbria Cricket so the leagues have had a bit of a shake up, we will now be playing in an Eden Valley Division 1 which will consist of 7 other clubs. After everyone has played each other twice, the league will be split and further games played to decide on promotion and relegation. We think the new league looks highly competitive which should bring some close and exciting encounters to the Castleholm



Outgoing captain Duncan Elliott and incoming, John Bell (r)

this coming season. At our recent AGM it was decided that John Bell will be captain for the new season and will be assisted by his vice-captain Andrew Paisley. Both these lads have come up through the youth set up at the club and it's great to see them both taking on these new roles. John has just done 5 years as treasurer during some challenging times which included 2 years of Covid and 2 break-ins at the club. John has been fantastic for the club and someone who has also helped me out a great deal in my job as chairman. I thank John for all his hard work and look forward to seeing him take to the field as captain.

Memberships are now due, £30 for players and £10 for social members. Details on how to pay your membership is on our Facebook page.

If you would like to have your company logo displayed at the Castleholm please contact the club for more details. Home matches can be sponsored for £50 where you can enjoy an afternoon in our "sponsors shack". Details will become available when fixtures are announced but you can register your interest through our Facebook page. Our training will begin soon so keep an eye out on social media for more information. If your keen to get involved on or off the pitch, then please get in touch. I would like to thank everyone for their continued support and look forward to seeing you all at a sunny Castleholm this summer!

300 kids attend Youth Rugby Tournament

Huge team effort produces great day for the juniors

Youth Rugby

Langholm Youth Rugby Trust hosted their annual Borders Tournament with over 300 kids from 6 Borders towns competing in their age groups.

From Primary 3 through to Primary 7 all kids played with great enthusiasm & sportsmanship.

It was good to see The Langholm Youth Rugby getting the use out of their new jackets, these were kindly sponsored by S.Richardson Contracting, Cochranes Nurseries & Telfords Coaches. A huge thank you to them as they certainly helped on this chilly morning!

Tournaments like these are a good fundraiser for the youth section and a massive thank you must also go to those involved organising, coaching, refereeing, pitch managers, car parking, kitchen & stall helpers! Also, to the parents who supported their children on this cold day, We couldn't manage without you all.



Langholm Youth Rugby members and coaches sporting their new winter jackets



Plenty of games during the day's tournament



Lovin' the jackets!!

U14s Rugby at Annan Academy



Another super day at the rugby for Langholm Academy pupils at Annan. Try scorers for the day were Frederick D x 3, Murray M x 2, David G x 3, Jayk F x 1. Well done to the girls who also enjoyed a training session! Thanks to Alan and Aidan Wilson for supporting the teams

Sports Nostalgia



Langholm Tennis Courts in Rosevale c. 1935

Photo courtesy of Langholm Archive



Langholm battle the 'Yellow Storm' to take Bonus Point win

Multiple yellow cards in fiercely contested match

Rugby

By Jason Ratcliffe

Forrester 15 - Langholm 31

Langholm made the penultimate journey north knowing they couldn't reach Broughton at the top of the table but still had all to play for to secure second place.

Early penalties from the hosts gave Langholm field position, from which fly half Bailey Donaldson gave Langholm the lead with a simple penalty in the 6th minute. Hopes for an easy victory against the league's bottom team were soon dismissed as Forrester fought back. The home side took the lead with a well-earned try after some slack Langholm defense, and with the conversion on target, followed by a well-taken penalty, Forrester led 10-3.

As play advanced into the Langholm half, Colin Dirom was penalized for tackling the scrum half at the back of the ruck. A scuffle ensued, resulting in yellow cards for both Dirom and Forrester's No. 5. The second quarter was disrupted by a series of penalties for both sides, losing the flow of the game.



Fraser Mitchell scored Langholms 4th try securing the bonus point

Ben Jardine took a quick tap from one of these penalties, only to be taken out by a high tackle from Forrester's No. 5, who received a second yellow card, resulting in a red. Forrester had to play the entire second half with only fourteen men.

Half Time:

Forrester 10, Langholm 3

The second half started with more penalties. Bailey Donaldson kicked two penalties, bringing Langholm within one point at 10-9 to Forrester with 10 minutes of the second half gone. Momentum was with Langholm, and in the 57th minute, Ben Jardine forced his way over between the posts. With an easy

conversion for Donaldson, Langholm led 16-10.

Coach Craig Hislop made several changes, hoping fresh legs against Forrester's tiring 14 players would extend Langholm's lead. It worked, as Ben Jardine broke down the touchline to score in the corner. Donaldson's conversion drifted wide, but Langholm extended their lead to 21-10.

Forrester tried to battle back, winning a series of penalties. Langholm's lead wasn't just on the scoreboard; Fraser Mitchell was shown a yellow card for a high tackle, and Jay Gordon joined him on the touchline after a deliberate knock-on. With Langholm down to 13 players, Forrester sensed an opportunity.

Aidan Wilson, playing his first game since September after a shoulder injury, intercepted a Forrester attack and sprinted 75 yards to score in the corner. Donaldson missed the difficult conversion, but with seven minutes remaining, Langholm led 26-10. Langholm collected a third yellow card as Thomas Hope was sin-binned for taking a Forrester player out in the air, leaving Langholm with just 12 players.

Forrester managed to score an un-

converted try, narrowing the gap to 15-26. Both teams pushed for the next try—Forrester aiming for a losing bonus point, while Langholm chased the four-try bonus point. With Mitchell returning from the sin bin, Langholm's forwards continued to apply pressure, only to knock on at a crucial moment. The referee called the final play, awarding Forrester a scrum underneath their own posts. However, the referee penalized Forrester for an early push. Taking a quick tap penalty, Langholm piled on the pressure, and Fraser Mitchell powered over for Langholm's fourth try, securing the try bonus point.

Bailey Donaldson's conversion attempt led to controversy, as the two touch judges disagreed on whether the ball had passed through or over the top of the short posts. The points weren't awarded, but it mattered little, as the referee blew for full time, sealing Langholm's 31-15 victory.

Langholm now visit Champions Elect Broughton on 22nd March, knowing that a win may still not be enough to secure second place as Haddington still have two games to play.

ESMP Hall bowling revival

The ESMP Hall Committee at Eskdalemuir have been asked by some residents if they would start the bowling up again in the hall. They are going to hold the first meeting in a few weeks - Wednesday the 12th of March at 7pm. If folk are interested but can't come that night, they can get in touch with May Reid to let her know. You don't need to bring anything as they have the Bowling Balls and Boards. A small donation for the heating would be great but not necessary.

A good year for Aoiffion

12-year-old Aoiffion Mcvittie-Brangan of Langholm took part in her final indoor athletics meet for the season on Saturday. She finished in 6th place in what was her first year in the under 15 age group in which she is now participating. In this indoor athletics season she has had personal bests and has a lot of work to do as she goes forward. Aoiffion is supported by the 'Welcome to Langholm Future Champion' awards. We recently reported that she had been presented with the Under 13 girls track and field award for 2024 by her Edinburgh Athletics club.

Rhapsody's refrain!

Whillans wins 'the big' one again

Horseracing

By Gordon Brown

Ewan Whillans-trained Cracking Rhapsody raised the roof at Kelso when winning the £120,000 bet365 Morebattle Hurdle for the second year running.

Ridden again by Craig Nichol, the 12/1 chance came through to beat Alnilam by a length and a quarter in Scotland's richest hurdle race.

The Hawick raider has earned the chance to go for a £100,000 bonus at Chel-

tenham but connections have yet to make a decision on his next outing.

"Let's enjoy today first as he isn't the best of travellers so we're not sure if he'll go to the Festival," said Whillans, who also won the Morebattle as a jockey in 2007.

"I knew I'd never had him better so I was expecting him to run well but this was a much better race than last race - he wouldn't have gone in this year's race off last year's rating. He's still only six and we might look again at the Scottish Champion

Hurdle in which he was third last year.

"We could even look at Punchestown or perhaps a run or two on the Flat. I'm just delighted for his owners John and Shiela Wright as they have been with me right from the start."

Grey Dawning returned to form with an impressive success in the Premier Chase under Harry Skelton.

Trainer Dan Skelton said: "That was much more like it and he is likely to have a little break before going for the Bowl at Aintree next month. Harry was over the



Ewan Whillans-trained Cracking Rhapsody raised the roof at Kelso when winning the £120,000 bet365 Morebattle Hurdle for the second year running.

moon with him and hoped it looked as good from the stands as it did from the saddle."

Lucinda Russell enjoyed a great afternoon with a stunning 604/1 treble courtesy of Bold Light, Walk On Quest and Jet to Vegas, who

sprung a 16/1 upset in the Grade 2 Premier Hurdle.



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