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Community Council Meeting 24th March CANCELLED

If you require help, the following neighbours have volunteered their assistance:

Doug and Paula, Blair House

Gordon and Morag, Blairlogie Castle

Becky Little emailbeckie_not_becky@hotmail.co.uk or 07717253004

Cameron and Helen, Ochil Neuk

Yvonne Fergusson, Blairlogie House

Una Bryce 07517510131

Ida and Rory Bailey

An evening of calm: The Belinfante Quartet

So there we were, a not insubstantial audience from Blairlogie and considerably beyond to welcome the second coming of this string quartet on Tuesday the 11th of last month. Second coming? Well they've played in the Reading Room before – an occasion which I somehow managed to miss. Now, my musical enthusiasm tends to gravitate toward ensembles on the grand scale – Big Bands (all brass, saxes and rhythm) and Orchestras (all strings, woodwind, brass and percussion) so I approached this concert more in the spirit of support for a village event rather than any real desire to hear the meagre outpourings of a puny string quartet. Well . . . how wrong could I be?

That they were young was a start; that they were easy on the eye was a help; that they clearly enjoyed making music was a bonus; that they were good was the icing on the cake. In fact 'good' is too modest an adjective – I thought they were brilliant. Strings tend to gather in large numbers because the sound they produce lacks the strength of other brasher types of instrument (for instance, well over half of Stirling Orchestra is comprised of strings for this very reason) but, when your line-up consists of violins 1 and 2, viola and cello, the sound produced is not threatened by others so it comes into its own.

The Belinfante Quartet entertained us with a well-balanced programme full of colour and contrast – from aggressive fortissimos (very loud) to the gentlest pianissimos (very quiet) and everything in between – as imagined by Joseph Haydn and Robert Schumann; but from a personal perspective, the highlight was the programme's mid-point when this talented foursome played a Collection of Scottish Tunes arranged by the flame-haired second violin, Fiona Robertson. I've never stood to applaud a musical performance before; I did on this occasion!

It was a privilege to be there and we should be grateful to Colin and Jane Kilgour who (as they did on the quartet's previous visit) proffered generous board, lodging and a welcoming ambience clearly appreciated by the musicians. After all, they came back didn't they?

Robin Kelsall

Defibrillator Training Session

The St. John's Ambulance training session last month was very successful, giving demonstrations and information on CPR and the use of a defibrillator. There were opportunities to ask questions and practise with both mannequins and a defibrillator (the same model which we have just obtained for Blairlogie).

If anyone feels that a follow-up session would be useful, St John's have indicated that they would be willing to visit again.

Here's a reminder:

- Village defibrillator is in the external cupboard under the Crowsteps stairs, there's a big sign on the door and a light inside
- Code for the box is pinned to the inside of the door, and the ambulance service have a note of it when you call 999
- Emergency call 999 first, then start CPR, then use the defibrillator
- When you switch it on, it speaks to you and there are simple diagrams to follow. It's designed to be used by people with no experience!
- After using it, continue CPR

Jan McAndrew

Community Council Corner

Little to report this month though, as promised last time, the new signage at the car park is now in place and we can indeed hail Blairlogie Orchard and bid farewell to Blairlogie Meadow!

There has been no resolution to the debate twixt your Community Council and Stirling Council anent the collapse of part of the wall between Ochil Neuk and the path. It's looking more likely this will have to be an in-house job so the multi-taskers among you with wall-building skills should make yourselves known!

I understand another deer has been killed on the road around the Falcon Foods area. This is not good for the local deer population or the driver of the vehicle involved and Stirling Council must be persuaded to remove its proverbial digit and do something about signage to the effect that these poor beasts, having no road sense, constitute a hazard to the speedier motorist – especially at night.

Those who attend our Community Council meetings can hardly be described as a mass audience, so I saw no reason for our next gathering on 24th March to be cancelled or, indeed, postponed. Assuming you all washed your hands before attending and avoided holding those of others or, indeed, kissing, we should have been fine. Sadly, the latest government guidelines indicate otherwise and there will be no meeting this month.

LCC members: Mary Maxwell-Irving (Chair), Robin Kelsall (Vice Chair), Ken Todd (Secretary), Ida Bailey (Treasurer), Ian Doyle and Cameron Campbell (co-opted 26 November). Our e-mail address is LogieCC@gmail.com if you have any issues.

Robin Kelsall

Knitting Lessons

Reading Room Blairlogie

Beginners:

Tuesday 31st March-Tuesday 21st April 6.30pm - 9.00pm

Improvers / want back to knitting:

Thursday 2nd April - Thursday 23rd April
6pm - 8.30

All materials supplied plus refreshments.
10 hours of teaching over 4 sessions £100.
Numbers are limited to 4 spaces per course.
For more information call Helen on
07500616253 or email
helencampbell61@icloud.com

Here are a few samples of Helen's knitting



March Action Shot



Who is this member of the community? Best caption wins a hand sanitizer and a year's supply of toilet rolls.

Archaeological placer deposits of Blairlogie.

A number of years ago, before the new culvert went in, I took a gold pan to the sediments in the stream just south of the original culvert opening.

The theory was that the stream ran through glacial till up stream, and any high density minerals/metals (like gold) that had washed down, may have settled in hollows in the stream bed. It was after the flood of 1984, and the stream bed at the top end had scoured down to a lower level, a lower time horizon. At the time, I had not thought about archaeological debris being in the stream, but that was what I found, no gold, but various items.

The items were made of silver, lead, copper and brass.

The first object was the shank of a silver spoon.

I asked a friend of mine, Martin Gubbins, who was not only a collector of silver cutlery and had written a definitive book on York silver, but also a distant relative of Robin Kelsall; obviously a credible person.



This is what he found.

The duty mark shows it as being Edinburgh circa 1795. A lack of cusps on the duty mark mean it was no later than 1797. The maker, GC, was George Christie. Typically, cutlery had no date letter.

The spoon has a monogram JP on the top of the handle.



I suspect this was a casualty of some child using the spoon as an entrenching tool, and the bowl had snapped off. There was no sign of the bowl.

Lead shot was sitting in pockets in the bottom of the stream bed, as you can see, it came in three distinct calibres.

The large bore pieces, which show signs of being used, are thought to have been horse pistol shot. The horse pistol was a heavy weapon, so was mounted on the saddle of a horse and fired a man stopping calibre. (17th-18th century?)

The medium size pieces show moulding marks around their equator, and are from a smaller calibre firearm or shot gun. (18th-19th Century?)

The smallest pieces are bird shot, presumably from a cartridge, and of indefinite age.



Associated with these finds, I also found remains of brass shoe tacks and odd pieces of lead and the limb of a brass compass, probably just thrown down the bank as waste.



Alternative treasure sights.

Blairlogie is built on an alluvial fan. This is due to the stream, over the millennia, coming out of the steep narrow neck of the glen, laden with an alluvium of boulders, grits, sands and mud and onto the flatter ground, where the current reduced speed and dumped its load. The stream bed built up and the stream in spate would overflow and change course, gradually repeating the process, working back and forth, creating a fan of wash out material. It is only in the last couple of hundred years that the stream was enclosed artificially. The wash out process still goes on, now necessitating the stream bed to be dug out to maintain its artificial course.

Into this wash out material pottery can be added. Pieces of pottery have migrated down the hill and have ended up in my garden, as a consequence of gravity and water action.



Typically, these pieces have a yellow green glaze on a grey earthenware body, probably of medieval age. Similar pottery found in the Bristol area is known as “Ham Green Ware” (after the pottery location in Cheddar, Somerset), and was produced in the 13-14th century for storage jars known as “pigs”. “Pigs” were the disposable containers of medieval times. Resident archaeologists please feel free to comment.

I assume these pieces have migrated down from the King’s Highway unless my garden is on the site of some medieval building. I think not, the main archaeological action would have been up the road.

The garden of the Manse has been defined since 1761, so it is not unexpected to have finds dating after this period to the present.

Various domestic finds include glass ink bottles, broken pottery and porcelain, and other curiosities.

One of the best discoveries was a porcelain doll’s head which became the fairy for our Christmas tree. She is very petite, her size probably helped to preserve her. I have found shards of other larger, human size porcelain doll’s heads, the faces and cheeks, but as thin as eggshell and consequently in fragments.



Our young lady has 23/0 stamped on the back of her neck. Originally, the porcelain head was attached to a cloth body and dressed appropriately. Possibly, a fairing, i.e. bought at a fair, dating to the 19th century.

Clay tobacco pipes are commonly found. The stems, or pieces of them, are quite common, and the bowls are sometimes still intact.





A pair of copper button cleaners turned up. One was crudely engraved with "LMD 2791".





So, when you shone up your buttons with Brasso, these items were slipped under the button so the Brasso could be applied for cleaning and polishing, mitigating the danger of staining the uniform. Could I speculate that 2791 was a soldier's ID number, LMD the initials?

Finally, I have found frozen blobs of glass in the garden. In 1845, the Church of the Dissenting Congregation of Logie, burnt down. This is probably the source of these solidified blobs, melted glass from the windows.



My secret is out. My wife thought I was keen on gardening but in reality, I was treasure hunting all the time.

Have other people in Blairlogie made interesting discoveries in their garden? Let's hear about them.

Mike Allen

End