

Dunscore Digest

Dunscore Church and Community Magazine Summer 2021

Minister's Musing

Mark Smith

Welcome to a slimline Dunscore Digest! With all the enforced inactivity of COVID many of us are carrying a few extra pounds and battling the bulge! As lockdown eases we will be more active and hopefully get fitter and leaner again. This is true spiritually as well as physically. Just as bad diet and lack of exercise can make us sluggish and moody, so our lack of fellowship and time with God can make Him feel remote and distant, maybe even irrelevant!

Masks and distancing still affect our worship, but the fellowship of being together with each other in God's presence has already been very positive for those able to come along each Sunday.

During August we have been learning about the Bread of Life then focussing on Creation and how we relate to the world around us during September. This will lead up to our Harvest Celebration – watch for details nearer the time. I hope the variety of worship and activities which take place in Dunscore Church are an encouragement to all of us on our journey of faith as we go through this life with all its challenges.

I would like to thank our Elders and Board Members for all their work in keeping in touch with our members and maintaining our buildings so that we are ready for whatever change comes next.

Whether you like a traditional service, or less formal worship, and however slimline you may feel please join us when you can – see the Diary for information.

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Community Council Column

Alistair McFadzean

Since Spring 2021, nearly all our meetings have been online:

1. We sponsored the community Easter Egg Hunt.
2. Mr Andi Martin from Riggfoot near Dalgonar Bridge has taken over the responsibility for looking after the village planters. He is open to ideas for this project.
3. Community Councillor Graeme Walker is now our representative on the Glenkens District Trust. This deals with grants from the Blackcraig Windfarm.
4. We gave support to get all the children who wanted to attend Dunscore Primary School. The outcome was successful.
5. An extra meeting was held in the Glenriddell Hall on 2 August, the first physical meeting for more than a year. This was to discuss the applications for groups to apply for money from the windfarm funds. The following groups were successful: Red Squirrel Group, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas Santa, Wednesday Club, Park Project and the Gala.

Bird of the Season Lesley Creamer

Shelduck Shelducks, those large white ducks with bottle-green heads and neck, chestnut breast-band and black 'shoulders', broad blood-red bill and pink legs, display some interesting patterns of behaviour.

You may spot one or two adults anxiously herding a large 'crèche' around mudflats in the middle of summer, quite obviously not all their own offspring. This is because many adults happily abandon their young (often just a few days old!) and fly away for a holiday off the coast of north Germany where they join most of the shelduck population of north-west Europe.

The excuse is moulting. They drop their wing and tail feathers with great haste to become temporarily flightless. Having done so (after a few weeks) you might think they'd speed back 'home' but no. They trickle back with every impression of reluctance from October right through until January.

The birds you see locally here are a few faithful parents who wait until their progeny are independent before heading off, and in August and September almost every shelduck you see will be a juvenile – very different from the adults, with a slightly gormless expression and white plumage with unimpressive brown splodges – home alone while Mum and Dad are on 'holiday'!



Appy Days

Matthew Aitken

What's your favourite phone app? I thought that I would use a wee corner of the Digest to share some of my favourites. If you are like me and pretty hopeless at identifying birds then what about a free app that helps? Birdnet is one that allows you to capture bird song, store it in the app and gives you one (or more) likely identifications. Look for the bird logo above.

It's quite simple to use and I am now able to distinguish a blue tit from a buzzard and a raven from a robin! It gives a measure of how confident the app is about the identification and, if it says "almost certain" you can be fairly sure that this is the correct identification. It's worth having on your phone if you have even a slight interest in birds and, after all Lesley's work with the Bird of the Month in the Digest, you should have some interest by now!

If you have a favourite app that you would like to share with the Digest readers, please write to me at auchenage@gmail.com.

Protecting Dunscore

Roy Spence

The Home Guard was formed in 1940 when the country was in danger of invasion from Germany. It was initially known as the Local Defence Volunteers and its main role was to act as a secondary force in case of invasion. It eventually had a strength of about 1.5 million, made up of men who were too old or too young for call up and those who were in reserved occupations. It was "stood down" in 1944 and disbanded in 1945. The local platoon was the No. 14 Platoon of the 2nd Battalion Dumfriesshire Home Guard, and the Officer Commanding was Lieut. J. Milne of Dunneslin.

There is a letter in the Heritage Centre from the Adjutant of the above Battalion assuring the Minister that they would be responsible for any damage done to the Kirk tower when it was being used as an observation post.

One of the "cunning plans" to stop the invasion of Dunscore was a road block on the C113 road at Allanton gate. A barbed wire entanglement was ready to be rolled onto the road west of the Allanton entrance. There was a trench dug behind the hedge opposite the gates with a supply of grenades and a machine gun was to be sited on Trees Knowe to the south.

I know all this because I went to school with Davy McGraw whose father was a sergeant in the Home Guard. We used to "play at sodgers" on our way to and from Burnhead school.

Another local organisation at this time was the Royal Observer Corps. It was used in the recognition and reporting of aircraft. Their observation post was on the road up to High Auldgirth. The Observer Corps was still in existence during the Cold War when they were to be used to report nuclear attacks and radiation levels. They were not "stood down" until 1989.



Next Big Push?

Matthew Aitken

Is it time that you twinned your toilet (or your tap or your bin)? All of these are possible at www.toilettwinning.org which aims to flush away poverty. Both toilets in Dunscore Church are twinned as are many toilets throughout the village and beyond – in fact Dunscore is one of very few Toilet Twinned Villages! Hopefully there will be another big push on this soon but, in the meantime, instead of giving a birthday or anniversary present, why not twin their toilet instead?

Time to Re-Connect

Tim Harmer

Connect, the informal Bible Study group, has continued to meet through the pandemic via the medium of virtual Zoom meetings. Following our study of Daniel we moved onto look at a course from the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity. The course was a six session study of 1 Peter and looked at how individual Christians can be confident in their faith when living their lives within their families, in the community and in the world. We found it challenging but much fruitful discussion lead us to find our way through the questions.

We are on our summer break but hope to return to meeting together towards the end of August. Watch out for a notice of the date in the CFNs. We will be looking at a course on the book of Proverbs from the Old Testament.

All are welcome to join the group. You don't have to be a church regular to attend. If you are interested in joining please contact me on timharmer95@gmail.com.

Lubuto Link

Aly Robertson

I asked Rev Friday Sinkonde from our linked congregation in Lubuto, Zambia for a message for the Dunscore Digest. Here it is:

"God is really faithful. We sincerely thank God for the breakthrough. As long people are able to assemble and worship, wearing a mask wouldn't be a bother.

We will always cherish Dunscore church & our partnership. Just to wish the church a great success as we reopen our worship. Stay blessed and greetings to the church out there."

A Time to Remember

Mark Smith

Looking ahead, past Harvest and towards November, we will be opening Dunscore Church for those who have lost loved ones and wish to remember, give thanks, and pray on the afternoon of Sunday 31st October from 2:00 pm. This is an opportunity to light a candle, place a picture, or simply sit and remember in this place of prayer.

1st November is known as All Saints' Day and some of you have asked me to explain a bit about this special day. It is the day in the church calendar when we remember that we are all saints if we seek to follow Christ – the word saint comes from the same root as sanctify: to set apart. If we set our lives apart for God, on the journey of faith following the Way He has shown through Jesus, then we are saints!

It is also the day we remember all the saints who have gone before us – not just the ones with a capital S – and thank God for their witness and faith and ask Him to help us in our own witness and faith. It is also the day on which we celebrate the fact that we are part of the Universal Church, linked with all the saints around the world and with those who have gone before us and are with God in Heaven – a mighty cloud of witnesses, past and present. That's a lot to remember and celebrate in one day!

Eco Group Update Yvonne Stirling

So far this year we have held a Zoom Eco-Meeting on 30th March. Then, before the Holyrood election, we hosted the Dunscore Hustings event. For Covid reasons, this was online using Zoom and environmental and climate change issues were addressed by five candidates from the main parties standing in the election.

We were delighted that Rev David Coleman, the Eco-Congregation Scotland Chaplain gave a wonderful introduction and his wise words were surely an inspiration. Many thanks to our amazing Techie Team and Time-Keepers who managed the event and organised the break-out rooms which were much enjoyed by all those who participated (although I'm not so sure that the candidates enjoyed them as much!).

Our next Eco meeting was held in June's garden on surely the most glorious of days. Matthew and Kath even managed to set up a Zoom connection (under a table) to those who could not attend in person. The wonders of technology indeed.

As ever the Church Notices Eco Snippet Rota is in hand. The Eco Group covers many subjects from litter picking, to chatting in the local school and climate change events.

Many thanks especially to Matthew as our amazing secretary / technician / organiser as I stand down as Chairperson. The next meeting will be on Monday 20th September and June will chair.

Cider into Footballs Alison Borthwick

The Fairtrade Group continued to meet every few months over the internet using Zoom. Some new members have come on board and are all very welcome! Our next meeting and AGM is Thursday 19th August where we hope to meet in person - socially distanced!

We recently applied to renew our Fairtrade status with the Fairtrade Foundation. This was successful and the next renewal will be 2023.

Steilhead Cider recently ran a promotion to raise funds for Fairtrade footballs. They gave a percentage of their local sales during Fairtrade Fortnight and raised enough to buy four footballs for four local primary schools! Thank you Steilhead Cider! Dunscore Primary will receive their football after the summer break.

Keep thinking Fairtrade folks!



On the Buses Geoff Creamer

Cairn Valley Community Transport is pleased to announce the following programme of excursions up to the end of October; these are open to anyone, even if you don't live in the Cairn Valley area:

Thursday 26th August: Kirklinton and Houghton Hall

Leaves Moniaive at 9.30

£7.00. *Kirklinton is a ruined mansion with historic gardens and a Thursday market. Houghton Hall Garden Centre offers shops, food outlets and a museum.*

Friday 17th September: Carlisle and Gretna Gateway.

Leaves Moniaive at 10.00

£7.00. *Enjoy some retail therapy in Carlisle city centre, or visit historic sites like the Cathedral or Tullie House. More retail therapy at Gretna on the way home!*

Saturday 2nd October: Glasgow (Science Centre & Braehead). £10 (children £5)

Leaves Moniaive at 09.30

Visit one of Scotland's top tourist attractions, with activities for visitors of all ages. Or indulge in some retail therapy at Braehead shopping centre. Or just do your own thing!

Saturday 16th October: Dumfries House, Cumnock. £5 (children £2.50)

Leaves Moniaive at 10.00

A huge estate, with impressive gardens, 18th century house, parkland, and adventure playground, offering something for everyone. House tour pre-booking is essential.

Following the latest Scottish Government announcement we can now return to our full capacity of 16 passengers, but it is still essential to book your seat on the bus with Geoff (details below) to spare any disappointment. The bus always leaves from Moniaive, but will normally travel via Dunscore (15 minutes after the start time), and other pick-up points can be arranged if practicable. You are personally responsible for booking admissions to any venue or events you may wish to visit. Return times will be decided by the driver in consultation with the passengers. The wearing of face coverings remains compulsory apart from medical exemptions.

The **Thursday fortnightly service** from Moniaive to Castle Douglas continues to operate (19th August, 2nd September, 16th September, 30th September, 14th October, 28th October, etc.), leaving Moniaive (Cross) at 11.15 and travelling via Kirkland, Wallaceton, Dunscore, Newtonairds, Shawhead, and arriving in Castle Douglas at 12.05. The return journey leaves Castle Douglas at 15.05, arriving in Moniaive at 15.55. Although booking is non-essential, you are recommended to do so to secure a seat on the bus.

As life slowly begins to return to normal, we would like to remind all constituted groups and organisations based in Glencairn, Dunscore, and Tynron parishes that the community bus is available for hire at very reasonable rates: £8 (up to 6 hours) / £17 (6 to 10 hours) / £27 (10 to 24 hours) plus 50p per mile, charged from the first pick-up to the last drop-off points (no limit on distance travelled). We encourage any group hiring the bus to provide their own driver, but CVCT can provide a driver if required. Sadly we are unable to accept private bookings. Contact Geoff for any enquiries.

We are also always on the look-out for new drivers to join our pool of volunteers. You must be aged less than 76 (preferably a lot less!), and will only need to have a familiarisation run with one of our existing drivers. As a volunteer there is no requirement to drive a designated number of hours or trips, though a reasonable level of commitment is expected. If you are interested, please contact Geoff to discuss.

For all bookings, hire, and driver enquiries, please contact the Secretary, Geoff, on 01848 330821 / 07702 915071 / e-mail: geoff.creamer@outlook.com (or, if unavailable, the Chairman, Stephen, on 01848 200564). www.cvct.org.uk

To Be a Pilgrim

Alison Boyes

According to Wikipedia, a pilgrimage is “a journey, often into an unknown or foreign place, where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature, or a higher good, through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation, after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life.”

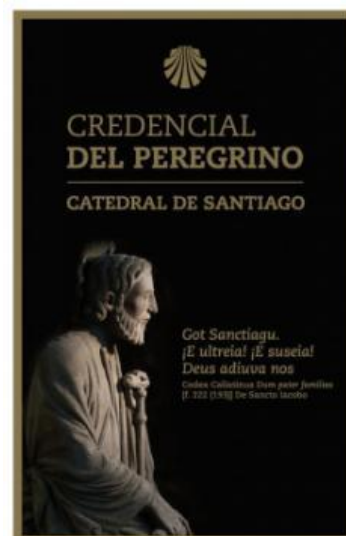
The idea of pilgrimage is central to many different faith traditions and has been widely represented in literature. People become pilgrims for many reasons - for example to visit a sacred place, for healing, to give thanks, or to discover something about themselves. Routes and reasons are incredibly varied.

I am not sure when I first thought of walking the Camino de Santiago, but it was many years ago. Running through Dock Park on his way to work, David once found a buff with the Camino logo on it and I said “I’ll have to do that pilgrimage now”. As I approached my 60th birthday, and Sarah’s 30th birthday fell just before mine, we decided that we would travel together, marking what seems like a time of change for both of us. We would use the time out of our normal lives to reflect on the past, the present, and our beliefs, as well as enjoying a long walk in each other’s company.

There are many Camino routes, all traditionally ending up at the cathedral of St James in Santiago de Compostela, in Northern Spain. (pictured below). The cathedral is the reputed burial place of the apostle Saint James the Great. We chose to walk the Camino Portugués, starting in Lisbon - a distance of almost 400 miles, plus an extra 55 to the coast at Finisterre.

This seemed daunting enough three years ago when we began to plan, but since then the arrival of a pandemic plus some broken bones (Sarah’s ankle and my hip) have meant that despite all our preparations, this journey is definitely an act of faith

Just over a month from our planned departure date (September 6th) we still can’t be sure about going, and yet we have to assume that it will be possible. As for walking (distances vary between 10 and 18 miles a day), we have decided that if it is too much in the early stages, we will not shy away from taking some public transport if necessary. This is our Camino, our journey, not way. Not a competition.



To obtain an official pilgrim certificate pilgrims need to prove that they have walked at least the last 100km to Santiago. This proof is in the form of stamps obtained along the way in the credential document (see above right). Pilgrims also often carry a shell, hanging from their pack.

Along the Camino there is a network of ‘albergues’ which offer cheap and basic accommodation (for pilgrims only) and often a communal meal. Staying at an albergue also gives a chance to meet and talk with other pilgrims and to share stories and information.

We are flying to Lisbon from Edinburgh on September 6th and returning by ferry from Santander to Portsmouth six weeks later. Our route takes us along the Tejo River to Tomar, through Coimbra and up to Porto. We then follow the coast to the Spanish Border at Tui, and then to Portavedra where we head up on the hilly Spiritual Way to Padron. The final part of this stage is by boat up the River Ulla, following the story of the stone boat, guided by angels and the stars, which transported the body of St James on its journey to Santiago. I imagine that our entry to the cathedral will be an emotional moment... We are also hoping to meet up here with Luke and Chris (Sarah’s boyfriend) who will join us on the walk to Finisterre. I am in no doubt that this journey will challenge us physically, emotionally and spiritually, but also that it might be one of the most fulfilling and memorable experiences of my life!

Mini-Gala Fun Fiona Thompson

Our mini gala was a success! The Teddy Bear Trail on Thursday night was enjoyed by everyone who took part. They had to find teddies in windows along with a letter of the alphabet which created an anagram. Once solved it read: Dunscore Gala! They then had to guess the birthday of the Paddington Bear.

Friday night saw our virtual quiz night which was a super success A lot of hard work put in by Ann for this which was enjoyed again by everyone who took part.

Saturday was our mini gala day this was an opportunity for people to get together to meet up with those that they had not seen for a long time. There was a display by Elaine Hill with her sheepdog with ducks and geese and both kids and adults had races including a cross country course. Everyone enjoyed the kite display with individually made kites.

A great day was had by everyone who came along. Hopefully we will be back to our normal gala next year but this smaller version was certainly a great success.



Thanks to Andy of www.ifilmu.co.uk for the photos.

Coming Soon...

Sunday services are at 11:45 am unless shown differently below. Evening Reflection at 7:00 pm in Dunscore Church on Messy Church Sundays

Saturday / Sunday 4 & 5 September – Heritage Centre Doors Open Days*

Sunday 5 September 1:30 pm – Stroll for Stella*

Sunday 12 September 10:30 am – Messy Church

Sunday 26 September 11:45 am – Harvest Celebration

Sunday 10 October 10:30 am – Messy Church

Sunday 24 October 11:45 am – Communion Service

Sunday 31 October 10:00 am – COP26 theme Service in St Ninian's in Moniaive

Sunday 31 October from 2:00 pm – Remembering*

Sunday 7 November 10:30 am – Messy Church

Thursday 11 November – Remembrance Day

Sunday 14 November 11:45am – Remembrance Service

Sunday 28 November 11:45 am – Advent Service

*More information elsewhere in this Digest.

You Cannot...

Vari Drabble

The following was written by Presbyterian Minister the Rev. William JH Boetcker (although originally attributed to Abraham Lincoln) and I find it thought provoking:

“You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer.

You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred.

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.

You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn.

You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence.

You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves”.



Session Clerk Report Colin Mitchell

It is good to see Covid restrictions easing and allowing our church worship to move towards normality. We still have to wear masks whilst in church, sign in and take hygiene precautions including sanitising hands. Although social distancing has been eased we still need to be cautious with social interactions.

The AV team continues to work hard to ensure we can worship to support the preaching of Mark and Tim either in church or via live streaming. We have had a few problems with the technology recently and are working hard to solve them.

The fabric of the church continues to be well looked after by Archie Anderson our hard working fabric convener and helpers. A superb new gate by the car park was adapted to by Tommy Stitt. A new ladder to make access to the tower safer has been erected.



A picture of the Jane Haining tiles that are in Dumfries Academy has been erected in the Heritage Centre. Thank you to Geoff Creamer for donating this



Thank you to all who help in the running of our church and our services including those who do readings, welcome folk into the church, supply flowers, help run Messy and Café Church, look after the money, serve on the Board, serve on the Kirk Session and our wonderful minister, Mark (ably supported by Debbie).

Chill in the Community Alison Boyes

When I was down in Sussex recently, visiting my parents, I noticed a shipping container next to Uckfield Community Centre, with the words "Uckfield Community Fridge" written on the side. I'd never heard of a community fridge before, but all was revealed on Sunday morning at church since it was the initiative of a young woman in the congregation, who stood up at the end of the service to tell everyone about it and to ask for volunteers to get involved.



A community fridge is a space where everyone can share surplus food, including donations from local food businesses, households and gardens. There are over 150 in the UK and this number is rising steadily, with funds available from the Co-op to support groups who wish to set one up. The first fridge was trialled in Derbyshire in 2016. Some fridges are just...fridges - they may be situated in a village hall, a community centre or (as in Uckfield) a shipping container.

A community fridge can be accessed by anyone and everyone who wants to share food, volunteer, or get involved with other food or environmental activities offered by the group. This could include recipe sharing, seed swaps, cooking lessons, or just a simple chance to chat with others using the facility. It can help people in need of food, but also prevent surplus food going to waste. (The UK throws away 9.52 million tonnes of food per year...This emits 25 million tonnes of CO₂e – more than Kenya's total annual emissions)

Issues surrounding community fridges include cleanliness, ensuring that the food is safe, and making sure that they are not abused (e.g. that nobody profits from the food). In the UK, setting up a community fridge requires a rota of volunteers to clean the fridge and check the food; public liability insurance; the support of the local authority environmental health officer; and, evidently, a fridge, an electricity supply (some fridges are solar-powered) and associated waste bins. Community fridges are sometimes criticized for only fulfilling immediate need and not providing a systemic solution to food insecurity.

Our nearest community fridge is at Dumfries House, and was opened by Prince Charles in September 2020. There is a Community Fridge Network, run by the environmental charity Hubbub, which offers help with advice and funding.

Life and Work

Pam Mitchell

Life and Work Magazine was founded in 1879 by Archibald Charteris. For over 140 years it has been informing, uplifting, moving, connecting and occasionally enraging the Church of Scotland. It offers news of the Church at local, national and international levels. It comments on key issues of the day from a Scottish Christian perspective, spiritual guidance and Bible study, interviews and profiles of key figures within the Church.

It is packed every month across 52 pages with news, features and opinion on Christian life in Scotland and further afield. You can buy a Digital Subscription for £20.99 a year or a Print Subscription for £36.00. Speak to me if you would like to subscribe and support this vital and vibrant work of the Church of Scotland.

Having had online services for over a year we have gradually been moving back into the church building. This has meant that we have some members of the congregation who are not yet comfortable to join live services and we have been trying to offer a live stream of the service on YouTube. This has caused some technical issues but we have been working to address these.

At the time of writing, we have decided to switch from YouTube back to the more familiar vehicle of Zoom to make, we hope, for a better experience for the online congregation.

Keep an eye on the Church Notices but, assuming that this proves successful, it will be the same link each Sunday: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86939887756>. The services will also be recorded and you will be able to watch them on YouTube later on the Sunday when they are uploaded to the Dunscore Church Facebook page and circulated round the email list. Follow this link to be added to the email list: <http://eepurl.com/ds0gzi>

Heritage Centre News Pam Mitchell

The Jane Haining Memorial Project aims to make the story of the life and legacy of Jane better known throughout Scotland and, through learning about Jane, help people be better equipped to speak up against prejudice and take action to challenge discrimination.

On 12th July a small group, working on the Memorial Project, visited the village to check out our Heritage Centre and look at what we have to show and tell visitors about Jane's life and legacy. We now have more! Read on to find out what!

They came by train from Glasgow and were met by Geoff Creamer (volunteer Heritage Centre Guide, and Community Bus Driver) and me, and taken into Dumfries Academy before coming to the village for lunch. At the Academy we saw the amazing memorial tile sculpture, created by pupils in 2014 and made by local artist Andrew Adair.

Geoff, quick off his mark, was so impressed with this piece of work that he has already had it made into a wonderful canvas print (130 x 70 cm) which he has gifted to our Heritage Centre. Come and see it. The Heritage centre is open each Sunday afternoon from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. If these times don't suit, please send a message to info@dunscoreheritage.org and we'll do our best to arrange a suitable time.

The Heritage Centre will be open for the Doors Open Days on 4 and 5 September. On the 4th we are open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm on the 5th. At 2:00 pm on the Saturday, I will give a talk about Jane Haining and at 2:00 pm on the Sunday, Archie Anderson will lead a walk round the village looking at some of the interesting and historical locations.

"Craftivism" is more than just needlework. It is a way of using textile crafts to make political statements, empower communities and promote action.

With COP26 coming to Glasgow this November, Stitches For Survival was launched with the aim "to put the Earth centre-stage". Ambitiously, it has set out to craft 1.5 miles of climate messages, representing the 1.5°C target in the Paris Agreement. Each participant would knit, crochet or quilt a piece 100 x 60 cm and the pieces would be joined together into a giant scarf. Individual pieces would be used for campaigning nationally and locally and finally the finished scarf will be displayed near the SECC conference centre where the talks are taking place. After COP26, the woolen pieces will be re-purposed into blankets for refugee communities. Other pieces will be exhibited or used for ongoing campaigning.

I had taken part in a similar craftivism event in 2014, called "Wool Against Weapons", where pieces to form a mile-long pink scarf were knitted and taken on a Peace Walk which I joined from Holyrood to Faslane. The whole scarf was later displayed along the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. This time the pieces were to be blue/green in colour to represent earth colours, but participants were encouraged to be as creative as possible. Some examples of finished pieces are shown below (mine is at top left).

Quite a few people in Dumfries & Galloway have taken part in this project, including our Eco-Congregation Group, Dumfries Quakers and local quilters. We had hoped to stage a small exhibition at the end of the summer, but some crafters have already sent their pieces in to the organisers, and it is also more difficult than usual to arrange such events because of Covid.

There is still time to take part (pieces must be with the organisers by the end of September) and if you are interested, the practical details can be found here: www.stitchesforsurvival.earth. There is also a Facebook page where you can see some of the amazing designs created by people from all over the country (and beyond!).



We Need to Talk

Rhianna Davies-McCrorie

There is a conversation that needs to happen in society right now. A conversation that is utterly vital. A conversation that I want to be a part of. This is a conversation that we should all want to be a part of. For several years now I have been an advocate online working at raising awareness for invisible and chronic illnesses along with mental ill-health and the difficulties surrounding caring for your own mental well-being. I have always tried my best to be honest about the lows, to celebrate the highs, and to open up a dialogue with other young people across social media on these issues.

Over the past few months, I have had the most wonderful opportunity to work with the CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) Young People's Participation Group which is being headed by Alison Telfer, the CAMHS Participation Lead for the service here in Dumfries and Galloway. We are a group of young people who are interested in mental health issues and want to raise awareness and combat the stigma of mental health. We are working together to look at a wide range of projects and developing new resources for mental health and exploring how we can work together with the services to improve the experience of young people who are dealing with mental ill-health.

On Monday 2nd August, myself and another member of the CAMHS D&G Young People's Participation Group were given the once in a lifetime opportunity alongside other young people representing mental health organisations throughout Scotland (See Me Scotland, BEAT, and Bipolar Scotland) to have an online conversation with the newly appointed Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care, Kevin Stewart MSP. We were able to share our lived experiences of not only the mental health services that we have attempted to access, but societal stigmas and pressures faced by young people living with mental ill-health with the Minister and several members of his team.

This was a unique opportunity for us as young people living with mental health conditions because we were able to be open with the Minister about our experiences and needs even when the topics may not have been comfortable for him to engage with. It's so important that we have those uncomfortable conversations and that we don't shy away from them because these are the discussions that can mean life or death for many of us. Throughout the two hours we spent with him we were able to discuss many things, effective signposting and lack of knowledge as to what is available for young people to access; the transition between CAMHS and Adult services; accountability and the need for professionals to listen to us when we ask for help; the availability of services in different areas; legislation and stigma surrounding eating disorders and our experiences with GPs, medical gaslighting and trust.

It is always scary to put yourself out there, to sit there and criticise those in power. We need to do it. We need to stand up and talk.

We need to be loud about our experiences and what we need if we want changes to happen. I'm utterly privileged to be a part of that change right here in Dumfries and Galloway, working with Alison and the CAMHS Young People's Participation Group. We are working together as a team to make changes so that young people can be better supported. Alison Telfer was the first CAMHS Participation Lead in Scotland. We are doing something right here. We are doing something important. We are making waves. We are starting the conversation. I couldn't be prouder to be a part of it.

Our CAMHS D&G Participation Group is always ecstatic to welcome any young people who are passionate about mental health and centering the conversation where it should be. If you are a young person and are interested in being a part of what we do then please follow @CAMHSDG on Instagram and send a message or email alison.telfer1@nhs.scot who would be more than happy to hear from you!

Stroll for Stella

Fiona Thompson

Barbara Jackie and I talked about doing a fundraiser in memory of Stella McCubbin.

Stella was a well known lady in Dunscore and surrounding areas. She would often be seen out walking. September is usually the month that Alzheimer's Scotland do their memory walk but because of Covid it is only going to be a virtual walk, so we decided to organize a "Stroll for Stella" to raise funds for Alzheimer's Scotland.

There are various routes to suit everyone. People can choose whatever route they want to take. There will be a route round the village, round the Holm or round the Craig or if you want to do two or three of them people can do whatever they want.

This is a family walk so people can bring prams, pushchairs, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, also they can bring their dogs. This is on Sunday 5th September at 1:30 pm leaving from the church car park. Please come and raise some money for a good cause in memory of a lovely lady.



Stroll For Stella
Sunday 5th September
1:30 pm Dunscore Church Car Park

Alzheimer Scotland
Action on Dementia
Scan for Just Giving link

Various routes :-
Village loop
Holm Road loop
Craig loop

Dogs, Children, All welcome.
Scooter and Wheelchair friendly.
Donations to Alzheimer's Scotland.