

Dunscore Digest

August 2023

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200 Years of Dunscore Church!



This year we are celebrating the bicentenary of the Dunscore Church building, the profile of which defines the view of our village from all directions. Whether you are a regular church goer or not, this iconic building in the heart of our village, is a centre of activity, both church related and in the wider community. Dunscore Church is very much a part of village life.

Those of you who have been following Roy Spence's excellent articles in the past two issues of the Digest will know that although there has been a church on that site since 1649, the existing building was completed 200 years ago in 1823.

Current members of the church are planning a number of activities to celebrate the anniversary. On Dunscore Gala Day there will be the opportunity to share in this celebration with some 200th anniversary fun. On Saturday 2nd September, many of the main organisations in the village have already agreed to provide floral contributions to the Village Flower Celebration in Dunscore Church in order to produce an impressive display. The event will take place between 10am and 4pm on that day. If your organisation has inadvertently been missed, you are of course very welcome to contribute to what will be an enjoyable day. Phone Mary Waugh on 820301 to let her know of your involvement. Mary has also advised that the floral offerings must be delivered between 2pm and 4pm on Friday 1st September.

If for some reason you are unable to visit the church on 2nd September, which incidentally is also a Doors Open Day, don't worry, everyone is welcome to the special Church service for the bicentenary on Sunday 3rd September at 11.30am with the floral displays emphasising Dunscore Church's significance in the community. With the Balliol Singers present at the service to enhance the musical experience this event is a fitting culmination of the 200th anniversary celebration.

Don't miss it!

Church News

A Summer to Join in With

Rev Mark Smith

Summer is peaking early this year! After the rain and cloud and cold winds, we're in a heatwave! With the lighter evenings and school holidays looming, we love to feel the warmth of the sun, the grass beneath our feet, the gentle warm breeze on our faces ... we want to be part of what is going on around us. We want to join in ...

It's natural to want to be part of something outside ourselves. It gives us a sense of belonging that we don't get when we're on our own. Whether we try to be one with nature, or outscore our virtual friends via the internet, or follow the best football team (no Treble-gloating here), we gain from joining in.

I would like to challenge you, reader, to join in ... there is so much going on in and around Dunscore that no-one should miss out! Watch the noticeboards around the village and the Social Media to see what you can be part of. Joining-in is great fun, good for mental well-being, and makes a huge difference to our community.

Jesus was a great one for joining-in. He went to weddings, visited the dying and bereaved, popped in at the local synagogues, had a go at fishing, dined with whoever invited Him, was part of the crowds at the big festivals, spoke to the 'unclean' and unwell, saved a woman from being stoned by a mob, generally put Himself 'out there'! We are called to follow His example as we join in life.

Enjoy the celebrations, share in sad times, be part of what is going on around us. It is an essential part of our make-up as human beings to be part of families, neighbourhoods, communities.

At Church we are holding Join In July – more than just poetic tag lines, an opportunity to be part of something big. A worldwide movement which started over 2,000 years ago and is still spreading today! The New Life of Easter is carried in those who follow Jesus, whose lives are filled by the Holy Spirit, filled with Love and Grace to share. Our current building has served the village for 200 of those years – join the celebrations later in the year.

We end July with Communion – reminding us of Jesus' Love shown on the Cross – a time for everybody to have the opportunity to remember Jesus. ALL are welcome to join in this act of worship. No qualifications or membership or checklist – ALL are welcome!

That goes for all of our activities and services – you'll make new friends, learn new skills, and be part of something bigger.

Two words ... Join In!
May God Bless you.



Watch out for ...

Café Church Summer Specials (see above)
Gala Praise in the Marquee
200th Anniversary celebrations at the start of September

Dunscore Church Sunday Worship

(also on Zoom – check website/Facebook for link)

AUGUST

6 th	11.30am	Gala Praise in the Marquee
13 th	11.30am	Café Church
20 th	11.30am	Morning Worship
27 th	11.30am	Together with KiKs

KiKs - Kids in Kirk

Tim Harmer

KiKs, our Church children's group, has continued through to the start of the summer holidays. KiKs is a group for primary school age children to help them explore the Christian faith and is held every 4th Sunday morning in Church. KiKs is a separate children's group that takes the youngsters out of the main church worship for their own age-appropriate activities. Hopefully, this will encourage families to attend church together, so the adults can enjoy the main service while the youngsters have their own group. The group, although small in number, enjoy themselves and enthusiastically give their feedback to the congregation when they rejoin them for the last hymn.

Connect

Tim Harmer

The Connect group continues as a weekly bible study group meeting in Church on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. Having taken on the Alpha course and then a busy Lent course through to Easter, we then looked at a new series produced by the evangelist J. John. It is called 'Just 10' and is a fresh, contemporary look at the Ten Commandments. It seeks to explain the Ten Commandments and their relevance for us today. J. John maintains that the world has changed but some truths remain timeless. He explains that the Ten Commandments were given to Moses 3,500 years ago, as recorded in the book of Exodus, and they contain universal values and principles for all people for all time. His proposition is that the Ten Commandments are not obsolete but that they are absolute. The group found the course stimulating and it provoked lively discussions and thoughtful reflection on faith and life. The group has been taking a summer break and will resume in the autumn.

Freecycle

Matthew Aitken

Have you ever wondered where you might be able to get a free snowboard? Or maybe you need a second bath but don't know where to find one locally (and free!). You could have found both and much else on the Dunscore Freecycle list. If you join the list, every few days (and sometimes more often) you'll receive an email with items (and requests) that are added to the list. What's more, you will also receive information about events that are coming up in and around the village. And all that you have to do is to follow this link: <http://eepurl.com/dsOCUn> and you will be added. The list was set up about 12 years ago by the church eco group and is now nearly 200 strong but more people are always welcome.

There is a second email list more specifically for church events and activities. If you would like to join this list, follow the link: <http://eepurl.com/ds0qzi>

Lubuto

Alison Robertson

Dunscore and Moniaive with Glencairn churches have been twinned for the last fourteen years with Lubuto Church of Zambia. During these years there have been a number of reciprocal visits back and forth.

This summer the minister of the church, Rev Friday Sinkonde and the church secretary, Mr Levy Mwanza were due to come to the Cairn valley. Regrettably their visa applications were turned down. There is no right of appeal which is very disappointing.

We will continue to correspond and raise funds for our friends in Zambia.

Eco Group and Repair Café

June Harmer



The Eco Group met in April and covered many things including:

We have arranged a Ranger-led walk to Hestan Island near Auchencairn on 8th August. Watch out for details.

The recent Repair Cafe was a great success with lots of items given a new life and many bird nesting boxes made, ready for distribution around the village. Tables included: technology, sewing, darning, gardening, mechanical, and Fairtrade products. There were also refreshments, with soft drinks and nibbles. Many thanks to all our wonderful experts and those who brought something to mend.

We have just written to Councillors at Dumfries and Galloway Council asking them to divest their pension from fossil fuel investments. We look forward to hearing their responses.

Our usual monthly Litter Picking will resume in September (second Thursdays, 9.30am start in Church Car Park) when the verges have died down & the rubbish is once again visible.

Children's News

Toddlers

Caroline Waugh

The toddler group has continued at the preschool during the last term.

We are going to reschedule the times of this important get-together for mums and youngsters. We will be holding the session in the morning from 10 till 11.30 on the 1st Friday of the month.

The dates are: 1st September, 6th October, 3rd November and 1st December.



Dunscore Pre-school Centre

Caroline Waugh

Last term at the Pre-school we had the exciting theme of space. We learned about planets and the solar system and, based on this information, we decorated our classroom with rockets, stars and planets. We then followed this up with a trip to Kirkcudbright, visiting the Dark Space Planetarium. This was amazing and we all enjoyed the experience. We rounded off our space-related day with a visit to Dhoon Beach, an appropriate down-to-Earth, fun activity on a stimulating and interesting day for everyone.

During the term, we also continued our normal routine activities, which balance play with allowing the children to add to their experience of the outdoors and learn from the natural world. These activities include regular visits to Dalgonar woods, the Millenium Wood and the Playpark.

At the end of term, we had a visit to the Cocoa Bean at Twynholm as well as having a leavers' ceremony to say goodbye to our rising 5s. It is always sad to see them go but we are equally excited to welcome our new intake of children from the age of 3 in August.

Dunscore school

Caroline Waugh

A celebration of the 60th anniversary of Dunscore School in its present building will take place on 30th September from 10am till 2pm. In preparation for this event, we are collecting photos and items associated with the school to display on the day, for example: tea towels. If you have anything interesting from the past 60 years related to this Dunscore School celebration, please email me carolinelester@rocketmail.com.

Thank you.



Morton Thistle Juniors - Football

Suzanne Hewson

We last wrote for the Dunscore Digest in April earlier this year and since then Morton Thistle Juniors has continued to grow and thrive! Our 2016 age group started training in March and is now at full capacity. Coaches Louis and Ryan have had the team out playing at every opportunity, travelling to Dalbeattie and Newton Stewart. At the most recent home festival in June we managed to field three teams, hosting Greystone Rovers, Galloway Thistle, Heston, Cumnock, Lochryan and Annan. We received kind donations from Keir Community Council which allowed us to purchase new goals ahead of hosting this tournament.

The 2012/13 age group continue to play as many games as possible and train hard. Although the season has stopped for the summer break, the team has continued to train weekly and adapt to the new rules as they prepare for the transition from 7 a-side to 9 a-side games come August.

The 2014/15 group have moved their training sessions from a Thursday to a Tuesday night as there just isn't enough room or equipment for us all to continue to train together.

One of the major highlights for the Club was playing in the 20th Galloway Thistle Festival over in Newton Stewart. This was a 2-day festival with the 2012 and 2013 teams playing on Saturday 29th April and the 2014 and 2016 teams playing on Sunday 30th, when it didn't stop pouring all day! It was great to play different teams from outwith Dumfries and Galloway; we were drawn against a team from Northern Ireland. The Club was presented with a pennant and all players received trophies.

In May the Club organised a sponsored walk up Tynron Doon. Again, we were very unlucky with the weather; it was a very wet, miserable bank holiday Monday with no great views from the summit but over 60 players, coaches, friends and family took part in the hike and raised over £2,000 for the Club. This was used to pay for SFA insurance and affiliation fees for the teams, places on the coaching courses for the team officials, new bibs and new footballs. Well done everyone who took part!



Community News

Community Council

Alistair McFadzean

The celebrations for King Charles' Coronation took place on May 7th, with the final event ending up as a Coronation Street Party with about 130 people turning up. Despite an ominous forecast, the weather was fine and the ice creams were welcome! Many thanks to everyone who helped make the event the great success it was.



The Community Council also gave every Dunscore Primary and Play Group child a Coronation mug and a personalised wooden pencil case with their name on the lid.

Allocations for awards from the Wind Farm funding were made at the end of June and benefited at least 10 community groups. Funds will be used for, amongst other things, repairing the preschool roof, maintaining the flower pots, furthering the play park project and keeping Santa in business.

Community Action plan

Brian Johnstone

When the Community Council commissioned research for our Community Action Plan, the consultants who carried out the work stated: "We live in a society where communities are vibrant, and people feel good about their lives.

The Dunscore Action Plan was published in April, and it was good to learn from the research that, in line with this, generally people feel that Dunscore is a great or good community to live in or to visit.

In particular, we value the sense of community, a positive reflection on the many groups and clubs, as well as community assets such as the halls, pub, church, school, pre-school centre, and the (rapidly improving)

park. People also noted the natural environment as one of the things they most value.

The research also highlighted some concerns which include road conditions, traffic coming through the village, and poor public transport. The availability of affordable housing is recognised as a real challenge, as are limited employment opportunities in the area. We need more locally based businesses!

A number of people expressed interest in a shop or café, with the emphasis on a community run venture, perhaps strengthening the existing Flying Pig Community Pub, or Glenriddell Hall.

The Report contains some useful data and information on the village and surrounding area. This will be helpful if you are involved in future projects or possibly in funding applications.

The Action Plan section of the Report is divided into 4 themes. Our whole community has an opportunity to take forward some of the Actions noted and to consider the options identified.

I have certainly seen an increased vibrancy in the village over recent years. So have a look at the report and give any of the Community Council members a shout if you would like to be involved.

Summary copies of the Report are available in the Glenriddell Hall, Church, Flying Pig, Pre-School Centre, and in the Medical Centre. You can also read and download a copy on the Community Council Website: dunscore.org.uk.

Dunscore Gala

Fiona Thompson



Gala week is upon us and everything is ready for the week. We had a family disco in May when we announced this year's royal party. Our gala queen this

year is Rosie Borthwick. She has 6 attendants: Robbie Kirk, Ellen Clanachan, Fergus Lester, Sophie Murray, Ritchie Henderson and Lucy Henderson.

We have the following competitions for the gala. 1) Tattie Bogles; 2) Miniature garden and/or Lemon drizzle cake (these have to be entered on Sunday 6th August for judging, open to children and adults). There is also an art competition where the children have to draw something relating to the 200th anniversary of the church.

We have a fantastic gala week organised starting on Sunday 6th August with the church service in the marquee at 11.30am, followed by the crowning of our gala queen Rosie at 3pm. There is an afternoon of entertainment planned with music from The Ramblers, touch rugby, games and inflatables for the kids. We will also have a bar and BBQ.

During the week, there is something on every night for everyone to participate in, culminating with Gala Day on Saturday 12th August. This starts at 12pm at the church car park for the judging of the floats followed by the parade down to the gala field. Please note: there is a change of field this year, it will be held in the field next to the usual gala field. We have a lot for everyone to enjoy on Gala Day, rounding off the week's events with the Gala Dance in the marquee to the music of Not Guilty. Free entry.

Please can children be with a responsible adult at all events.

Hope to see as many of you there as possible and that the weather is kind to us!

DADS - "A Party to Die For"

It was with much anticipation, that the audience in the 200-year-old Dunscore Church, awaited Dunscore Amateur Dramatic Society's latest foray into theatrical production. This was the third, much awaited, presentation from this newly formed, enthusiastic and hard-working group.

"A Party to Die For" is an interactive murder mystery, set in the 80's all over again. A business is changing, there is a secret tryst full of promises, a very loud party, a sandal wearing tree hugger...and a murder! The audience worked in teams, listening and watching the performances closely, enjoying an 80's inspired buffet supper and even interrogating the suspects, in order to solve the mystery and find the murderer.

The play featured an array of interesting characters, perfectly played by this lively and motivated group, who are demonstrating increasing confidence in their acting abilities.

Mark Wood played the hardheaded businessman to perfection and his long suffering wife was portrayed by Gail Renaud who was most believable in her role. As always, Olive Melville rose to the challenge, playing the faithful secretary with aplomb. Carrie Wright kept us

entertained throughout as the ambitious secret lover and trainee, with Lynne Hodge performing brilliantly as the local MP. Jennifer Dobson was perfectly cast as the colourful, environmental campaigner, acting with real passion, and Alexia Renaud in the character of a male employee, demonstrated an aptitude and flair for acting in her role.

Of course, appreciation must go to all those behind the scenes: John McIntyre for his directing skills, and Jo Abbot, Richard and Inez Scottie and Gavin and Laura Creaney for staging and front of house.

This was a fun-filled, hugely entertaining evening out in the historic Dunscore Church, with outstanding, crowd-pleasing performances from the cast, who played it all tongue in cheek. The audience showed real appreciation for their efforts, participating enthusiastically when required and showing determination when attempting to solve the murder.

This theatre group is clearly going from strength to strength, and we already look forward to their next production, "Steel Magnolias", in November. Put that date in your diaries, folks!

By a much impressed member of the audience.



Fair Trade Diane Cowen

The Fairtrade group recently held their AGM and we discussed some future Fairtrade events.

We are having a stall at the Dunscore Gala to celebrate 10 years of Scotland as a Fairtrade Nation. We will have some cakes to give out and lovely new Fairtrade products to sell. Come and see us then!

Look out for our next Fairtrade get together coming soon.

Matthew and Kath Aitken attended a reception at the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood in Edinburgh to mark the 10 years' celebration. There were many mentions of Dunscore Fairtrade Village.

We are still going into the Dunscore School once a month to promote Fairtrade.

We gave a donation to Just Trading Scotland recently towards the ongoing good work that they are doing.

Twinning Learn More About French Language and Culture! Gail Renaud

The Auld Alliance Twinning Association is offering two ways to learn more about French language and culture in the next few months.

First, closer to home, our coffee and conversation meetings have started up again. The group meets most weeks on a Thursday morning at Penpont Cafe to chat in French (mostly) about various topics. Sometimes a group member will give a short talk to get the conversation going and introduce a new set of vocabulary. All levels of French are welcome, from absolute beginners to native speakers. Come and learn a few new words!

Secondly, we are now looking forward with excitement to our next trip to France from 19-23 October. There is a group planning to make the trip to the beautiful Oise area of France, just north of Paris, to stay with hosts in the 4 French villages twinned with Dunscore, Keir, Penpont and Tynron. Planned activities for our stay include tours around local towns, discovering ceramics in Beauvais, a shared lunch with French songs, and much more. All accommodation, most food and local travel costs are covered by the hosts, so you only pay for the cost of getting there. This is such a unique way of visiting a country and learning what it is like to live there - it's like a window into another life and culture. It is not necessary to speak French and all new adventurers are welcome!

If you are interested in trying out the conversation group or for more details about the trip to France, please message Christine Carson on 07592 802548.

Glenriddell Hall - Clubbercise Nicola Boyes

Clubbercise is an exercise class in the dark with glow sticks and disco lights! We dance to tunes from the 90s through to today. All the moves can be modified to suit all abilities. Classes run in the village hall on most Monday nights at 6.45pm and are £4. There's no pressure to keep up or even do the right moves - as long as you're moving and having fun that's all that matters!

Join the Facebook group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2127652134068316>

Bread!

Mark Wood



For those of you that are unaware, on a weekly basis I bring home the end of day leftover bread from the Little Bakery in Kirkcudbright: bread, rolls, scones etc to share for free with the community. You will find this offering at the side garden gate of Willow Bank house beside the bus stop, opposite the Flying Pig, in Dunscore. Usually Monday to Wednesday and the odd Saturday, so if interested please look out for a garden table and a white tray of bread goods.

Speddoch Hall – Indoor Bowling

If you're looking for something to do on the dark winter nights then why not try indoor bowling at Speddoch Hall? The sessions run from 7.30pm to 9.30pm every Monday evening and are due to start in mid October and run through to mid March. The membership fees are £20 for the whole season. If you're interested in giving it a go and would like more information then contact Zoe Kirk on 07912853906. New members are always welcome.

Local Charities

Cause for Paws

Gill Allan

Three of us run this charitable group. We raise money with raffles and auctions to help all animals, but most requests are about dogs, I have to say. Sometimes it's about food needed by rescuers, but also people who are struggling with health issues with their own pets. Sometimes disability wheels are needed if the dog has a problem with its back legs and these allow the dog so much freedom. Two of us have disabled dogs, so know the amazing help a dog stroller can make in enabling you to take your pet out.

We have just this week raised £100 for a young lady who rescues and rehabilitates guinea pigs. She has had mental health issues herself in the past and by taking courses on these little cute "piggies" she has turned her life around and now can have up to 50 of these cuties at one time.

Hedgehogs, rabbits, foxes, the list is endless of the animals we have assisted with funds etc. I think all of us with pets know the ability they have to help us at our own difficult times and, let's be honest, our furry friends beat us mere humans hands down in the "cute" stakes!

This is a street dog in Serbia. We donate to get them spayed and neutered because they will have to go back on the street as no rescuer is willing to take them, but at least they won't be bringing more puppies into the world to live a short, miserable life.



FRED

Iraina McGroarty

Most people know that Farmersfield is synonymous with donkeys. But, did you know that we also have 13 tortoises? I have kept tortoises for nearly 50 years. Like many a girl growing up in Glasgow, I was a fanatical animal lover and was constantly bringing stray animals home. With saved pocket money, I bought my first tortoise from a pet shop near my school. My mother was appalled when I breezed home with Torty, but my dad liked him from the start.



My dad was Polish and had been sent to a concentration camp in Siberia during the start of WW2. When the camp was liberated my dad and his comrades crossed the Gobi Desert to join the allies. The men were all weakened after years of incarceration and forced labour and as they marched many died. They were starving. Then they found tortoises. The men caught the slow moving reptiles and ate them. My dad told us how he looked at the tortoises and felt an overwhelming sorrow for them with their little legs and heavy shell. He thought how it might feel to have to carry such a heavy burden and he refused to eat them - instead he released as many tortoises as he could. The men who ate the tortoises died of dysentery symptoms and of course my dad lived and he always thanked tortoises for playing a part in keeping him alive.

I think learning that fact about my dad, who very rarely spoke of his experiences in Siberia, probably cemented my love of tortoises.

The collective noun for a group of tortoises is a ... creep!! What a wonderfully apt description. Our creep consists of 4 Sulcatas, 3 leopards, 4 Horsfields, 1 spur-thighed, and 1 Hermann's tortoise. Tortoises in general have bags of personality and really good hearing. They can differentiate between human voices and they respond really well to familiar people.

Hugo, our spur-thighed boy, positively loves human company and races over to be clapped when we call him. Of course, that is only if he is warm - because he cannot generate his own heat. If he's cold, Hugo mimics a stone and doesn't move. In his previous home, Hugo was adored but alas his people didn't really know very much about tortoise care and they fed him human food. It took a long time to persuade him that weeds and flowers were better than pizza and chocolate. Sadly, the damage has already been done to his skeletal development. Hugo's people loved him but sometimes love isn't quite enough.

Most of our tortoises have been relinquished to us in much the same way as donkeys are relinquished. People don't always realise how long they live, how big they can get, how costly they are to keep properly, etc. This year we have taken in a gorgeous young leopard tortoise called Forest and a baby Hermann's called Ollie.



We have a 'Tortoise Avenue' with enclosures for the different species and space for the big Sulcata boys - Marge and Ptolomy. Yes, Marge is a boy! His previous owner thought Marge was a very unwell girl when in fact Marge was a boy who enjoyed 'flashing' his boy bits! We kept his name. Clapping Marge's wrinkly head and neck is the closest it's possible to get to touching a dinosaur. It is very humbling to be trusted by such a majestic creature. But Marge has little respect for barriers or boundaries. He loves to come into the house and wander around - he is usually uninvited and he is not toilet trained. Marge broke our previous back door with his persistent pushing because he just walks through or over anything in his path. But we love him very much and accept his little quirks.

People who come to visit the donkeys or who come for Animal Assisted Therapy generally love the tortoises. It

is great fun just to sit quietly and watch them wandering around or to bath them and gently brush their shells with a soft toothbrush. Tortoises have nerves on their shell so they feel everything that touches their shell and they seem to enjoy being lightly brushed.

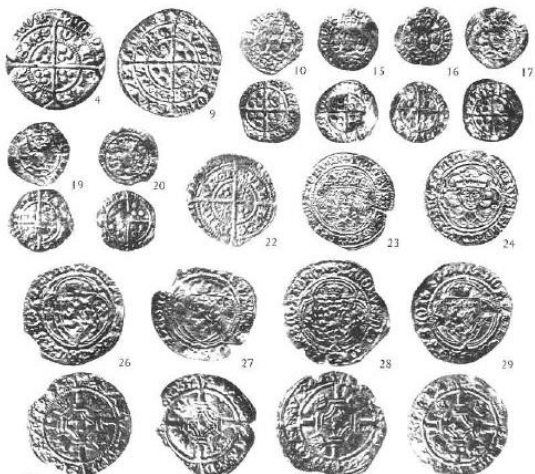
We welcome visitors so if you would like to meet our creep (saying that always makes me smile!) just get in touch.

Heritage

Rhoneston Hoard Roy Spence

The recent discovery of a hoard of coins near the village is not the only discovery of old coins in our area.

In 1961, during road works on the A76 near Auldgirth between Rhoneston Bridge and Rhoneston farm buildings, Mr Peter Mason found a hoard of 83 coins, mostly minted in the reigns of James the second and third and including 5 English coins. They were probably buried within a year or two of James III's death in 1488. The coins are now in the National Museum of Scotland; there is an image of one of the coins in the Heritage centre.



The coins are all low denominations: pennies, groats, half groats and placks. At a rough calculation about twelve shillings. We immediately think that it was a bairn's piggy bank, but, using the inflation calculator we find that one penny in 1500 would buy £4 worth of goods today, making a total of about £576.

Pennies and placks were minted with "billion" an alloy containing a small amount of silver. Placks were worth 4 pennies. Groats were made of silver and were worth 4 to 12 pennies depending on date of issue. There were also 5 English coins in the hoard, from the reigns of Henry V and VI and Edward VI. The oldest coin in the hoard was a 1351 Edward III groat and the youngest was a James III penny of 1884-89. Coin hoards and other significant archaeological finds are the property of the Crown and must be reported to Treasure Trove Scotland; not to do so is considered theft. An ex gratia payment is usually given to the finder. A 1488 billion penny is on offer on ebay at £38.

At the estimated time of the depositing of the hoard, the parish was mostly subsistence agriculture in the fermtoun system, with an infield and outfield worked by a group of families. Most trade would be by barter, so not many coins would be in circulation, although in 1489 John Halliday and his wife Margaret Grierson got a charter from the King for the land at Hallidayhill. A part of the parish was owned by the Cistercian Abbey of Melrose, the tenants paying rent and tithes to the monks. This may have been in goods but also in coinage. They had established a "Daughter Cell" at Friars Carse where they had a ford across the Nith and an agreement with the Comyns of Dalswinton to move livestock through their lands. They also established a grange at Burnhead.

One wonders what the circumstances were when the coins were buried. Was someone going on a journey and couldn't trust their neighbours? There were no banks at that time. Was it the proceeds of a crime? The rent collectors for the Abbey taking a percentage for themselves? We will never know, but we can think of lots of different scenarios.

We are expecting a report on the "Dunscore Hoard" next year.

Heritage Centre Matthew Aitken

Every Sunday, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, members of the Dunscore Heritage Centre are ready to welcome you. If you haven't visited the heritage centre, why not make a point of doing so this summer?

There are three "strands" to the centre. You will discover a great deal of surprising information about old Dunscore village, the history of Dunscore church and about the life, work and tragic death of Jane Haining. You can take a fascinating self-guided tour of the church building and there is a Dunscore Detective quiz to keep children entertained as well.

We have visitors from around the country (and the world) but we are also always delighted to welcome locals too. What's more, there is always tea, coffee, juice and cake or biscuits. And, if the Sunday afternoon opening doesn't suit, contact us through the website (www.dunscoreheritage.org) or Facebook page (www.facebook.com/dunscoreheritage) and we'll do our best to open up at a time that suits you better.

Dunscore Gardens

A Walk on the Wild Side

Jo Abbott

Covid played a large part in our decision to buy 1.7 acres of the front field in order to extend the garden. A very long time ago, we kept our ponies there and, had we bought it then, it would have been a paddock but times change. We'd been intending to do it before Covid struck and then everything halted. We'd bought some saplings and wanted a wild space with a wildlife pond, wildflowers and a wee meandering path. Then Covid lingered... and lingered. It gave us time to finalise our ideas.

Our garden is already chock full of various fruit trees and shrubs so we decided we'd go for something that needed little upkeep once started and would basically "police" itself once planted. You have my permission to snort derisively now.

Colin Potts has been wonderful in giving advice. He did the fencing and suggested that the wildlife pond go where I'd wanted it anyway. He burst into the field drain at one end, having dug it out and laid the liner, and, when full, it overflows into the other end of the field drain which empties into our burn. It works well.



So, we are having a selection of native and fruit trees with the wildlife pond and a picnic bench on the top of the hill. There will be wildflowers throughout with a wee path. We had to get rid of the grass as wildflowers would be choked by it. Colin weed killed most of the grass and then used the disc attachment to turn it over. The section of the hill has been left because we planted bulbs in there and will continue to add to them. Corncockle, camomile and other grasses have been planted there too as they will gradually choke the existing grass. We'll continue to add bulbs to the slope and Colin is coming back to lay slabs and install a picnic bench at the top. There will be no trees planted on the slope and the ones we put at the foot of the wee hill will not grow tall enough to impede the lovely view from the top.

Already we can see water boatmen on the surface of the pond. I will add water lilies and some reeds and plants from the burn and transplant some of our lovely tall Bessiewalla irises that have multiplied so much from three clumps. The memory of myself and Alison Reid up to the top of our wellies in glabber to dig them out will never leave me. The rest of the area has had wildflower seeds drilled and rolled by Mike Henderson who did a great job. I've also been collecting seeds from Welsh poppies and Aquilegia and other plants and I'll scatter them in the autumn.

We've started planting the saplings, although it's not the best time so to do but they've been in their pots for so long that they've started to root through the bases of the pots. There are hawthorn and blackthorn saplings along the road dyke, oaks zig zagging along the back dyke and willows placed around the pond. We are now planting more oaks, beeches, birches, rowans, dogwoods and hazels and will add our potted fruit trees in autumn. Other native trees will go in soon. Hopefully, most will survive. We have a large water butt on a trailer and hope that our watering system keeps the trees alive.

Most dry nights, we put in a few more saplings as that's about all I can manage and the dogs "assist" as only they can. There won't be much visible effect for a good few years but hopefully we've done our little bit for the planet and it's not too catastrophic. It's enjoyable too.

Henry's Garden

At the other end of the village, retired farm manager, Henry Gibson gardens with a completely different style and has created a spectacular display with the pots at the front of his house: Henry was too modest for us to write a full article about his fantastic efforts.



Nature

Bird of Conservation Concern Nests in Dunscore Garden

Colin Mitchell

For the last 2 years a pair of migrant spotted flycatchers have nested and fledged young in our garden. The spotted flycatcher appears on the red list of British Birds of Conservation Concern. The British population has decreased by 92% between 1967 and 2020. The cause of this catastrophic decrease is not fully understood. It may be due to poor insect food supply here in Britain or drought in areas of Africa where they spend the winter.

Our birds arrived in mid May and started building a nest in an open fronted nest box partly hidden in a Honeysuckle bush. The female laid 5 eggs which all hatched. We would sit in our garden and watch as both parents were busy feeding the young.

If you erect an open fronted nest box in a suitable position, you might get lucky and attract these wonderful summer visitors to your garden.



Local Business

Roan's Dairy

Gail Renaud

Our featured business this edition is Roan's Dairy. I found out about milk deliveries when looking for local options during lockdown and have been using Roans for our milk and other items since then. The milk lasts well and there is a selection of other items to choose from. Once registered, the online order system makes it easy to change your order or pause deliveries for holidays etc.

The Roan family have been milking cows in Dumfries and Galloway for six generations. They have 300 pedigree Holstein cows on two farms near Dalbeattie and were featured in the BBC TV series This Farming Life. They process their own milk and started delivering to the doorstep in 2016. As well as milk, they also

deliver fresh cream, local free range eggs, local yoghurts, fresh orange juice and flavoured milk.

Deliveries to Dunscore take place (very early) on a **Friday morning**.

Register by phone: 01556 620 374 or on website: <https://www.roansdairy.co.uk/>



We plan to prepare the next issue of the Digest in time for the end of November. If you wish to contribute an article for that then please contact us at dq2digest@gmail.com before the end of October. We're keen to hear from new contributors.