

STOW & FOUNTAINHALL COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER ISSUE 29 ~ SUMMER/AUTUMN 2017

CULTURE ON OUR DOORSTEP

If you've been around in our part of the Gala Water valley this summer you're likely to have been aware of the rich mix of cultural events that our part of the world seems to have developed a thirst for and which it's bursting to slake.

Stowed Out, a triumph of local passion and organisation, has just finished at the time of collating the newsletter - our own Music and Arts Festival which brings to the Quoiting Green annually an ever-evolving mix of musicians to the sound stage; contemporary performers to the ROAR spoken word stage; and connects this year with the thought-provoking Cloudhouse Café and Gallery-based 'Sanctuary' exhibition of painting and sculpture by local artists, inspired by our area's history and location, curated by one of our local artists, and running until late September.

A few days after Stowed Out, two Fellows of the Royal Photographic Society connected to our locality, gave an enthralling photography presentation in Stow Town Hall which was enthusiastically attended. Over the summer Fountainhall Village Hall committee brought a play, an (orchestral) performance and puppets to our smaller village, enriching our days and cementing Fountainhall as a venue for small touring theatre companies - a direction of travel begun earlier this year.

The Backroad Picture House began in late 2016 and its programme for the coming season is unveiled inside offering another fine mix from classic to contemporary films, across genres, for both adults and children over the coming winter. We've grown used to, but not blasé, as Gala Water History & Heritage Association present our history and artefacts to us with deft explanation and skilful presentation. Toward the end of this month their latest exhibition will guide our focus to specific decades of our heritage and make it accessible. And who can forget the site-specific Poppy and Forget-me-not ceramic and stone artwork made throughout 2015 by local people under the guidance of one of our local potters, as part of the WWI commemorations; the artwork which still stands at the War Memorial in Stow?

There are many other cultural events throughout the year - this timely summer torrent seems exceptional, but perhaps it's not? As residents of Stow Parish we are being showered generously with Culture on Our Doorstep through the passion and interest of local people working together and it shows no sign of abating. Stow and Fountainhall as an Arts Hub in the upper Gala Water valley? It seems to be happening already; how fortunate are we?

Heather Johnston - Editor



SANCTUARY IN STOW

Even in pre-Christian times, Stow was a sacred place of refuge and sanctuary. This probably focused around the spring that was later developed into the Lady's Well and its associated chapel. Legend says this was built by King Arthur to honour the Virgin Mary. Stow's powers of sanctuary continued throughout medieval times based around the church of St Mary of Wedale and as the Community Archivist, Mary Craig, has discovered, the village was hotly contested by the competing dioceses of York and St Andrews.

The rights of people to claim sanctuary in a particular place from pursuit or persecution was abolished in Scotland in 1623. But the idea of sanctuary as a place of safety, remains with us to this very day. Local resident, artist and teacher, Andrea Carlino, wanted to explore this idea further and has curated 'Sanctuary in Stow' where ten artists were invited to submit work exploring their personal interpretation of the meaning of sanctuary. The exhibition is running at The Cloudhouse until September 28th.

The result is an eclectic range of work from figurative to abstract, from acrylics to bronze, from the intensely personal to the broader view. About 60 people attended the opening night and judging by the enthusiasm, the idea of sanctuary still holds resonance for many. Later in the week, there was a visit from John Lamont, M.P. for the area and he noted how, 'sanctuary has many meanings for many people on all sorts of levels'. He thought it was a powerful concept and that the exhibition made him think about this more deeply. The artists show that sanctuary takes many forms and will always be a precious thing.



From left to right: Andrea Carlino, curator; John Lamont MP; Lesley McLaren, participating artist. On the walls, work by participating artist, Alexandra Warren.

TANZANIA ADVENTURE

Stow girl Erika Doherty is off on an exciting adventure in the spring of 2018 together with a group of fellow S5 and S6 students from Galashiels Academy. They will be going to Tanzania with the fundraising organisation Vine Trust as volunteers building sustainable housing for, and together with, the local community.

The young people will work at the project for two weeks and this involves taking part in building almost a complete house. So why does this interest Erika? She says "I am really happy to have been given the opportunity to go on this trip. I have never been to Africa before. I am looking forward to meeting new people and learning about life in Tanzania. I think there will be a lot of new experiences for me."

But the first challenge the students have is to fundraise themselves for the cost of their journey - around £1800. Erika had a successful fundraising Quiz Night in May and also had a small Toys and Books stall at Stowed Out Festival to make some of the funds needed. She would like to thank everyone for the support and help she has received so far.

Anyone looking to help Erika with raising funds for her trip please go online to <https://www.gofundme.com> and put the name Erika Doherty in the search box. For more information about the trip log on to www.vinetrust.org.



STATION HOUSE REGENERATION PROJECT

Over recent months we have made some progress in securing funding for the project, albeit at a much slower pace than we had hoped. As a consequence, preparation of the business plan, crucial to securing the main grant funding required for renovating and extending the station house, has been delayed.

We now hope to have overcome this hurdle before the end of the year and in the meantime we are taking the grant application process with two major potential funders as far as we can. These bodies are very enthusiastic about the project so we are quietly confident, but let's not count our chickens before they are hatched!

GALA WATER CAMERA CLUB

On the 30th August, Galawater Camera Club was delighted to host an evening of photographs by Dr Hazel Mason and Dr James Frost on their visits to the Bay of Bengal. Titled "From Rangoon to Calcutta" the photographs gave a deep insight into the people living between the two cities. The two Stow doctors have travelled to Burma and Bengal several times and this has given them a special insight of the lives of the local people which they were able to capture in their photographs. Both Hazel and James are Fellows of the Scottish Photographic Society and the sizeable audience were impressed with the quality of their show. The local Camera Club greatly appreciates the time and effort taken to provide this evening of quality viewing, and looks forward to its own exhibition at the Cloudhouse Café in October. New members are always welcome (please contact Fraser Simm or Carol Davidson). To see some of Hazel's and James's work, visit: www.hazelmasonphotography.com/ www.jamesfrostphotography.com



CLASH CALENDAR NO GO: In newsletter 28 the idea of a 'Clash Calendar' was floated. Hosted on the Community Website it would be a one-stop-shop where all parish organisations could post their upcoming events so clashes could be avoided. This idea did not find favour. Comments were to be posted on the website in response to the article which was reproduced there, and the number of replies were... 0,000,000. 'Nuff said.

NOTES ON THE WIND

Awarded in May 2017

SSE Toddleburn Fund

Stow Baby and Toddler Group: operational costs. Awarded: £472.00

Fjordhus Reivers Hockey Club: To run hockey sessions in Stow. Awarded: £1,049.00

Stow Community Trust: To prepare a feasibility study and business plan for the renovation and operation of the Stow Station building. Awarded: £5,000

EDF Longpark Fund

Stow Kids Club: To run a school holiday club for 4 weeks over the summer. Awarded: £2,500

Gala Water History and Heritage Association: To employ a part-time Community Archivist over 12 months. Awarded: £12,627

Stow Community Trust: To prepare a feasibility study and business plan for the renovation and operation of the Stow Station building. Awarded: £5,000

Stow Pipe Band: To fund tutor costs, drum repair, and hall hire involved in continuing the group's pipe and drum tuition programme for young people. Awarded: £8,271

Stow Baby and Toddler Group: To fund hall hire for 5 months. Awarded: £384

Awarded in September 2017

SSE Toddleburn Fund

Fountainhall Village Hall Committee: to extend the external walkway to improve access to the hall. And to purchase indoor curling equipment. Awarded: £7,466.89

Stow Baby and Toddler Group: to purchase new toys and equipment for the group. Awarded: £365

Stow Parish Trust: to purchase new LED external lights for the former parish church. Awarded: £1,000

EDF Longpark Fund

Stow Baby and Toddlers Group: to purchase new toys and equipment for the group. Awarded: £380.00

Next deadline for grant applications is **9th October 2017**, with a decision made in mid-December.

As noted in a previous issue of this newsletter, both SSE Toddleburn and EDF Longpark Funds can provide upwards of £250 per grant. There is no upper cap but of course the amount of funding received by the Funds each year should be a guide. If a grant for more than £25K is being requested, applicants should certainly contact the relevant fund administrator for advice.

For SSE Toddleburn: Gareth Shields
gareth.shields@sse.com 0141 224 7712
For EDF Longpark: Tom Black
tom@foundationscotland.org.uk
0131 524 0331

Our attention has been drawn to the long-term planning that the Windfarm Panel has undertaken on the community's behalf. A Parish of Stow Community Endowment has now been created, with £25K of Longpark monies and £25K of Toddleburn monies (so total invested is £50K). This investment is aimed at providing an income for the community after the expected life of the windfarms.

BUSY SUMMER AT FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL

After a busy lambing we kicked off the new season with a beetle drive which was enjoyed by all ages. Jackie and Charlie hosted another fantastic quiz night, extra tables had to be added and everyone had a fun evening.

Live Borders then worked with us to organise a few arts events and we started with Stick Granny on The Roof Rack. This was a one woman play which was performed excellently by well known actor Fiona Knowles and was exceptionally funny. Then a last minute booking of the Dutch Street Symphony Orchestra Ricciotti Ensemble became available. Thanks to some lovely weather we were able to hold this in the school playground after the Orchestra had played down Still Haugh and along Old Stage Road. There were so many of them the Village Hall might have struggled to fit them in! Finally we had Rapunzel by Clydebuilt Puppet Theatre and again this proved popular to old and young. Everyone got the chance to meet the puppets afterwards and see how they worked. We are hoping to get some more shows like this and will advertise as and when. If you are into technology the face book page is a good place to see what is happening.

Upcoming events to date:

Christmas Carol Singing on Sunday 17 December 5pm.

A good opportunity to sing some traditional carols with a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie. £3 for adults; children Free
Hogmanay Party 31 December 7pm till late. Free entry. Licensed bar. TV room for the kids; bring your bean bags.

Burns Night Saturday 27 January 2018 7pm £15 per Ticket. Tickets must be booked in advance. Available from Jenny on 01578 760297.

If you're thinking about holding an event then give us a shout. Hall bookings start from the low rate of £7.50 per hour. Free WiFi is included and we can arrange a bar for your event if required. Please call 07730 353916 for further information.

FOUNTAINHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Here at Fountainhall Primary School we are all happy to be back at the start of another exciting school year. We have had a few changes for the start of our year. Miss Becca Mackenzie our class teacher and Principal Teacher, has gone on a secondment to Philiphaugh Primary School in Selkirk. We wish her all the best for her year away and hope she enjoys her new class. We are very pleased to welcome Miss Jane Hamilton to be our class teacher and Acting Principal Teacher while Miss Mackenzie is away.

We have also been able to welcome three new children into our Early Learning and Childcare Centre and three new children into our P1-7 class as well. We hope they will enjoy their new settings, make new friends and learn lots through many different experiences. We also hope that our last year's Primary 7s who are now at secondary school have settled in well and are enjoying their new places of learning.

Fountainhall Primary School

family QUIZ NIGHT

Come and test your knowledge!

- ◆ Kids & Adults quiz rounds
- ◆ Bar & Snacks
- ◆ Raffle

£2.50 per adult, max 4 adults per team.

Don't worry if you don't have a team, come along and we'll organise teams on the night.

Accompanied children free!

**Friday 29th
Sept 6.30 for
7pm @
Fountainhall
School**

Powered by Mail.com

BACKROAD PICTURE HOUSE

CINEMA
FOR ALL

Galawater Community Cinema at
Fountainhall Village Hall

Tickets £3 for adults, £2 for 16 and
under, under 5s free

PROGRAMME AUTUMN/WINTER 2017/18

FRI 27 Oct 2017: 8pm The Wicker Man (1973)

The original and the best. A police sergeant is sent to a Scottish island village in search of a missing girl whom the townsfolk claim never existed. Stranger still are the rites that take place there... Dare to be scared. Cert 15
Followed by movie quiz and late night bar. How well do you know your films...?

FRI 17 Nov 2017: 8pm The Commitments (1991)

Funny, musical and occasionally dramatic, this is the story of the tumultuous rise and fall of a Dublin Soul band, The Commitments. One of the best Irish films ever made and not to be missed - with an infectious soundtrack. Cert 15
Followed by soul disco and late night bar. Bring your dancing shoes.....

SUN 10 Dec 2017 : 3pm The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992)

Dust off your vocal cords - this is a sing-along showing !! One for the whole family, all ages welcome. Lyric sheets supplied but bring your own bean bags! Cert U
Mulled wine and mince pies for that festive spirit.

FRI 19 Jan 2018 : 8pm Mad Max – Fury Road (2015)

A woman rebels against a tyrannical ruler in post-apocalyptic Australia in search of her homeland with the help of a group of female prisoners, a psychotic worshiper and a drifter named Max. If action films are your thing – this one's for you. Cert 15

FRI 16 Feb 2018 : Amélie (2001)

This feel good French film is already a classic. Comedy about a young woman who discretely orchestrates the lives of the people around her, creating a world exclusively of her own making. It perfectly captures the exquisite charm and mystery of modern-day Paris. Shown in French with English subtitles. Cert 15

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT....

YOU, THE AUDIENCE CAN DECIDE !!

We have chosen two films to finish this season and YOU get to vote which one we show. Choose between the following two films ...

STOWED (OUT) FESTIVAL

This year's Festival was another huge success with fantastic feedback from both the public and performers. The profile of the event has attracted country wide attention including BBC Scotland, 6 Music DJ's and tens of thousands of social media hits which really helps to put Stow on the map.

Stowed Out Festival has been striving to create an event that brings together a diverse range of quality acts and the highlights for the Organisers were Emme Woods with her gravelly soulful voice and the classical Indian Dance troupe Dance Ihayami. This is the first time dancers have been part of the Festival and the crowd loved them.

The ROAR spoken word performance stage brought its own diverse range of quality acts and Jules Horne, always popular, generously gave permission for the newsletter to reproduce a poem of hers with special meaning for Stow. The Scottish Refugee Council stall in the festival grounds was thanks to our associated 'Sanctuary' Exhibition at the Cloudhouse where another diverse range, this time of stunning artworks, is still on display.

On a more sombre note, as the popularity grows we have been attracting more and more young people who have been drinking. The committee have already met to discuss this and our first proposal is to fence along Station Road and the edge of the Gala Water. Keep the ticket booth at the gate to the Quoiting Green all evening to carry out a bag search there and also breathalyse all young people who have bought a concession and may have been drinking.

Stowed Out Festival would like to give massive thanks to the Volunteers and the supportive members of the community who made it all possible.

FRI 16 March 2018 : 8PM choose between ...

No 1 : I, Daniel Blake (2016)

A 59 year old carpenter recovering from a heart attack befriends a single mother and her two kids as they navigate their way through the Kafkaesque benefits system. With equal amounts of humour, warmth and despair, the journey is heartfelt and emotional until the end. Ken Loach at his absolute best – a must see film about the state of the nation. Cert 15

No 2 : Brief Encounter (1945)

Written by Noel Coward and directed by David Lean with music by Rachmaninoff, this classic black and white film could not be more iconic. Celia Johnston meets Trevor Howard and is tempted to cheat on her husband. Hankies at the ready. Cert A

Votes open Fri 27 Oct. Please vote at our screenings, on our facebook page (Backroad Picture House) or email us.

If you would like to join our mailing list please email: Plenloth.oo@btinternet.com

Find us on facebook – Backroad Picture House

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Two years ago in September 2015 the Borders Railway re-opened as did Stow Station. The train announcements had been pre-recorded in Milton Keynes without attention to how we locally call ourselves. Jules Horne performed her 'a song for sto' on the ROAR stage at Stowed Out this year and generously gave us permission to reproduce it here. For the full effect, read aloud in a measured tone.

a song for sto (the stow row)

a no it's no sto
you no it's no sto
how stow
did they no no
it's no sto?

this is no wold
so folk note
glasgau no more
linlithgau no more
auchencrau no more
sto no more
glasgau no more
linlithgau no more
auchencrau no more
sto no more

stow crowd
shout it loud
out and proud
stow
stow
stow

©2017 juleshorne
www.juleshorne.com
Scots sound poem and homage to Tom Leonard



Tuesdays have just returned to normal for lots of us - the community choir restarted on Tuesday 5 September and our lives always get better with singing in them. Until the end of 2017 we're being led by Music Director Nancy Muir. Nancy has enabled us to keep singing while we continue our efforts to appoint a permanent choir leader following Jim Letham's resignation at the end of last season and we are hugely grateful to her. If you, or anyone you know of, might be interested in this remunerated position, please contact Ruth on 01578 730246.

We held an enjoyable Singing Workshop in August with Ellie Logan from Edinburgh who led us in 'a cappella' (unaccompanied) singing which floated off the curved roof of Fountainhall School Hall in a wonderful way. Over the next few months we'll be rehearsing for our Christmas Concert on 17 December 3pm in Stow Church; look out for more information nearer the time.

We always welcome new members and don't be concerned about starting a few weeks into the season, there's plenty of help given to people joining at all times. The main thing is - if you want to sing in a group, come along and try it out; the joy of it is just... joyful! If you're not sure, enjoy a two week free trial, and if the cost is a worry (£20 for this block to December) it can be reduced - please contact John on 01578 730289. Also if you need a lift, ring John. Remember - no auditions; no need to read music; previous experience or none - if you want to sing with others; just come along. Fountainhall School, Tuesdays, 7-9pm.

COMPETITION NEWS FOR THE PIPE BAND



Another successful year comes to a close, and at the time of writing our last competition is due to take place at Peebles which closes the season. The band takes competitions very seriously, it helps focus the band and encourages members to strive to improve their playing whether on the drums or piping. It also encourages the band to learn new tunes which in turn helps us comply with the requirements of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA).

The RSPBA organise and manage all of the completions where the band play, some are classed as Majors and some Minors; the minors tend to be more local with less bands taking part. The RSPBA set the time limit on the playing time and the time signatures of the tunes - for example Grade 4 bands play three marches as their competition piece, whereas Grade 3 play more Strathspeys and reels. The tricky part and the part that gets scrutinised by the judges the most, is going from one time signature to another, seamlessly. There are normally two piping judges, one drumming judge and an ensemble judge who is listening to ensure an overall sound. Competitions can be very nerve racking and sometimes silly mistakes are made just due to pure first time nerves.

Our more notable results this year are sixth at the Scottish Championship, second at Dunbar, third at Edinburgh, fourth at North Berwick and third at the prestigious Cowal Games. You can see from the photo over the page that we won one of the biggest trophies ever!

As autumn sets in we are starting to learn the new sets for next year's competitions. Please feel free to come up to the church on a Thursday night for a listen.



Heartfulness

Through meditation, joy

Heartfulness Meditation Trainer Sarah Naylor has been running two Heartfulness Meditation Groups in Stow since January and they have been enthusiastically attended, with those coming along enjoying feelings of relaxation, less anxiety, sounder sleep and other positive changes in the way that they feel and experience life. The sessions take place every Tuesday morning at Sarah's home at 25 Townfoot, Stow (next door to the Cloudhouse Café) 9.30am-10.30am, and every Thursday evening in the Archive Room at Stow Town Hall 8pm-9pm.

The sessions are open to all who are interested on either a regular or sporadic basis so feel free just to drop in as and when you feel like it! Heartfulness Meditation uses a very simple technique and even if you think you "can't meditate" you may be pleasantly surprised at what you gain from the sessions. There is no charge for coming along although a small donation is appreciated just to cover the cost of room rental in the Town Hall. Give Sarah a ring on 07784740179 or see www.heartfulness-uk.org to find out more.

STOW AND HERIOT CHURCH NEWS

Stow and Heriot church offers a special welcome to all over the next two months:

* Open Churches Weekends at Heriot church 2/3 September and Stow church 23/24 September. Light refreshments and exhibition telling the story of the church; see poster for timings.

* Conversations on Christianity: Wednesdays 6 & 20 September and 4 & 18 October (all at 7.30pm) in Stow Town Hall.

YOGA WEEKLY CLASS

with Susan Cotterill



FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL

Mondays 10.10* - 11.40* am

#lifts available from other students

*fits with bus times from & to Stow

Starts 2 October 2017

£7.00 per class

suitable for all levels, beginners to experienced

Combining traditional yoga practice with Mindfulness, Meditation and elements of Qigong and Sound Therapy, the class is a unique blend of traditional yoga styles and methods, focusing on an holistic and compassionate approach towards wellbeing. The aim is to provide the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of the ancient traditional practices of Yoga, Mindfulness, Qigong and Sound healing in the spirit of 'Ahimsa' - no harm and gentle kind attention.

for further information or to book a place
contact Susan on 07983 167075 or email sueandkev1@aol.com
#to arrange a lift contact Lesley on 07707 695473

STOW: A SNAPSHOT IN TIME

22nd September - Save the date - 22nd September

The GWHHA will be having its annual 'Friends Evening' on Friday the 22nd September between 7pm and 9pm in Stow Town Hall. The evening will be a chance to hear what the GWHHA has been doing, how you can get involved if you wish and an early viewing of our exhibition of images of Stow from the 1950s and 60s, "Stow: A snapshot in time". So please pop the date in your diary and maybe even bring along a new friend on the night?

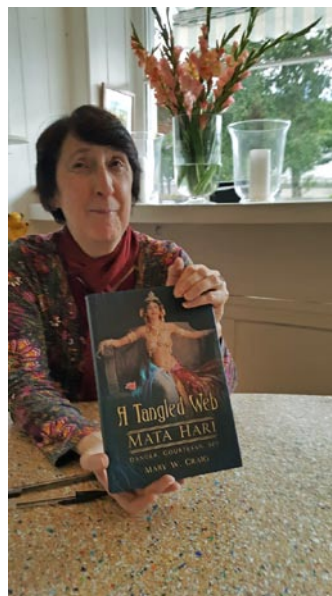
23rd September - Save the date - 23rd September

The GWHHA is holding an exhibition of images of Stow from the 1950s and 60s, "Stow: A snapshot in time" on Saturday the 23rd September from 1pm til 3pm in Stow Town Hall. The exhibition is free and open to all. Who knows who you might spot? The fellas from Fairgrievies, the sprinters at the sports week, the fancy dress, the pipe band, the Boys Brigade and the Girls Guildry, the list goes on and on. We look forward to seeing you on the day.



STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVIST

What has (arguably) the most notorious female spy of the First World War to do with Stow and Fountainhall? A rule-breaker, an emancipated woman, a woman who had many personal sorrows and with male friends amongst all combatants at a time of war? Mata Hari is the subject of a new book by our very own Parish Archivist, Mary Craig, and it's a cracking read.



Anyone who's been to one of Mary's talks knows how she makes history come alive by her stimulating style of 'info-telling', making learning seem effortless. The History Press thought the same and has recently published Mary's new book 'A Tangled Web: Mata Hari: Dancer, Courtesan, Spy' to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Mata Hari's execution. A launch at the Imperial War Museum, London, was swiftly followed by an author signing session in the Cloudhouse Café, Stow on 4 August. Congratulations Mary; good to know more people will enjoy your brilliant way of sharing meticulously researched discoveries. (Did I say it was a cracking read...?)



STOW COMMUNITY PARK IS ALMOST HERE!

We are now another big step closer to having our new community park. Our fundraising target has been met and a tender has been put out for the project build!

We have raised a fantastic £90,000 through grants, fundraising events, and donations. This, and the generous donation of path and access ramp by Scottish Borders Council, means we are in a position to go ahead with our multigenerational play/leisure park.

It has been an exciting few months for the Stow Community Park (SCP) team. In addition to our windfarm grants we most gratefully accepted funding awards from The Robertson Trust, the Scottish Community Landfill Fund (through BCCF Environmental), the SBC Community Grant Scheme, and the Scottish Borders Housing Association (see picture). We had a successful fundraising cheese and wine evening during Stow Sports Week, were beneficiaries of cash for kids superhero day and as winners of the Tesco Bags for Help Scheme were awarded a brilliant £5000. A huge thank you to you all for supporting our project with your token drop.

We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the project on facebook and via the newsletter. If you wish to contact the SCP committee you can do so by emailing: stowcommunitypark@gmail.com.



The summer club was terrific fun with trips to Edinburgh, the mining museum and local amenities; also we did some fantastic arts and crafts activities.

We are now open for the new term and welcome children from four to eleven years old. We have new resources including a Wii, a tent, a kitchen, some lovely rugs, an easel and more. Some activities this term will focus on seasonal and multicultural festivities around the world. The photo shows us making apple crumble using apples from the school garden!

We are also delighted that the club was recently inspected by the care inspectorate in an unannounced visit on 28 July and was graded 'good' in all the criteria which are:

- Quality of care and support
- Quality of environment
- Quality of staffing
- Quality of management and leadership

The full report can be accessed at <http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/care-services>.

Please feel free to come and talk to Andrea and Janice or email us at stowkidsclub@hotmail.com or ring us on mobile: 07944617310



STOW OLD KIRK AND GRAVEYARD

Well, work continues to restore the gravestones in the old graveyard in Stow. Meetings have been held with Scottish Borders Council and Historic Environment Scotland. Lots of forms are still to be filled in and lots of details are still to be confirmed but things are progressing - slowly! Once all of the official aspects are covered we will then be applying to Heritage Lottery for funds to carry out the work. One important aspect we must comply with is to tell as many people as possible what we are doing so that anyone who has a relative in the graveyard can be informed. If anyone does have a relative buried in the graveyard and is at all concerned about what we are doing or just wants some more information then please contact us at:

galawaterhistoryandheritage@gmail.com



Stow Pipe Band flushed with success winning their huge trophy from the Cowal Games!

On June 30 the Cloudhouse Café and Gallery, now ten years old, changed hands and the upbeat reign of Gemma Blacker, familiar to us all since November 2014, segued into the cheerful presence of Caroline Krause. At this passing on of the baton of ensuring that scrumptious food for the body and soul remains available to our parish in a setting of style and substance, we thought we'd ask Gemma for some of her thoughts on moving on, and Caroline for hers on moving in.

spotlight on THE CLOUDHOUSE



GEMMA BLACKER

With many examples of tasty and imaginative food and a warm and welcoming manner, have you ever wondered about Gemma's background for being both in the kitchen and at front of house? Well, the driver for Gemma taking over the Cloudhouse was wanting to own her own business. Her previous working life included significant amounts of customer service, and running a café in an area she wanted to settle in, seemed ideal. As to the cooking - never done any professionally,

but she did enjoy cooking so the idea didn't faze her. Enjoying a challenge / adventure is a theme, as you will see - Gemma moved from sailing boats professionally, to teaching sailing and then to café and gallery running, without missing a beat.

Her fond memories from the Cloudhouse keep on coming back to the people. Those (you know who you are...) who came most days for lunch in a big hearty group; who came almost daily or at weekends for coffee and chat; regulars for whom remembering how they liked their beverages was a pleasure... Highlights were doing the food for Stowed Out in 2015 (remember the smoke, the heat, the 'yum' factor...) doing weddings, and the special nights when along with a meal there was live music. In fact, don't be surprised if Gemma turns up at one of those in the future.

Some challenges were less welcome. Finding that the turnover wasn't enough really, to employ three people full-time, resulted in Gemma reducing staff and working six days a week in the café, with the seventh day often taken up with behind-the-scenes management of the business. Work/ life balance was askew and then another challenge came along. The chance to work freelance (the self-employed bug having thoroughly bitten) with a company which arranges bespoke travel itineraries for customers all over the world. Having lived in several countries outside of the UK, Gemma was immediately attracted to drawing on that previous experience and to exploring the bigger world again.

Working from home near Heriot she's now engaged globally both physically and via the net. The Cloudhouse having been her anchor and stimulus is now passed confidently on to Caroline and when she can spare time from travelling, Gemma will always find the generous welcome she offered every customer warmly reciprocated from all of us. Go well Gemma and thank you!

CAROLINE KRAUSE

For Caroline, running the Cloudhouse is a change of lifestyle but not career. A professionally qualified chef with a career in varied hospitality environments - the last one involving 400 lunches a day - this may be the smallest venue Caroline has worked in but is one which has been very carefully chosen and for which her enthusiasm shines out. Born in Milton Keynes to a family from Dumfriesshire, Caroline has strong Scottish connections and has spent a lot of her adult life working close to both sides of the Scottish/ English Border - the last 20 years as Catering Manager at a boarding school near Berwick, living in nearby Foulden until moving to Clovenfords with partner Richard 4.5 years ago. This added a 2.5 hour commute to her day and when that eventually palled, led to Caroline looking for something nearer home.

Exploring cafés on the market she dropped in as a customer to the Cloudhouse and in looking around and listening to the chat, had been struck by the friendly, sociable atmosphere. The staff certainly, but also folk coming in. "People were smiling; they were recognising each other and obviously enjoyed being in the café. It all added up to a good feeling. And I liked that it was also a gallery - it is a lovely venue. It makes a difference to be somewhere all day where there are beautiful things around you and on the walls. That was part of it too." and that's what made the Cloudhouse stand out. "I like that it's got an important place in the life of the village; that people want it to succeed and want to support it. That it's possible to respond to what people want from it. It's more than just a business."

That 'more than...' is what's engaging Caroline right now. She's finding her way through finding out what people want and already has been nimble off foot: the menu adapted in response to requests; the Sanctuary Exhibition opening; individual evenings for community groups; regular events planned such as folk gigs the first Sunday afternoon of every month and themed food nights on some Fridays including



a Christmas special on 22 December. Deliberately choosing a place that was a 'café plus' at the heart of a community, Caroline invites anyone who has an idea of what the café could do, in and out of its stated opening hours, to have a chat. Two months in and Caroline is completely happy with her decision to take on the Cloudhouse and wants to thank everyone for the support she's received. We in turn, are very glad to welcome her.

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