

# STOW & FOUNTAINHALL

ISSUE 18 ~ COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER ~ SUMMER 2014



## THE HEART OF STOW

**Stow Old School and Old Station:** No further actions as agreements between stakeholders are being negotiated. (Community point of contact: **Stow Community Trust** Chair, Alan McNeilly).

**Old Kirk.** This phase of the repair work on the Old Kirk has been successfully completed. A Windfarm Community Benefit grant has been awarded to continue work into the second phase of consolidation. Discussions are on-going with regard to the **Old Bridge.** (Community point of contact: **Stow Community Council** Chair, Diana Muir)

**Stow Park Drainage Project.** Significant work took place during June to improve the drainage in the park. This work is still on-going as the area behind the Bowling Green, including the play area, is still to be drained. Anybody using it will be aware how the pathway remains wet and muddy. Also the wet area near and parallel to the A7 will not dry until work has been done on council road drains. This came to light during the park work. The council will schedule this asap. During the summer months SBC will be monitoring the grass germination and how the pitch is settling down. Any regrassing necessary will be done. The patch at the Manor Park end was not part of the original plan but the opportunity was taken to drain that area and raise the level. It is anticipated that the park will recover in time for the football season. (Community point of contact: Cllr. Sandy Aitchison)

## NOTES ON THE WIND

Grants awarded at the Windfarm Community Benefit Fund Panel meeting June 2014.

**Parish of Stow and Fountainhall Community Council:** To carry out restoration works to the B-listed Old Kirk, Stow. £9,700

**Stow Parish Archive:** To create a part-time, short-term Community Archive post to support a local history hub with the purpose of strengthening the sense of community in the Parish. £8,528

**Stow Pipe Band:** To pay for pipe and drum tutors and hall hire in order to continue the Stow Pipes and Drums School. £7,600

The next call dates are as follows:

**deadline for submission 14 July 2014; announced Sept 2014**

**deadline for submission 13 Sept. 2014; announced Dec. 2014**

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Community Council has two main functions: firstly, to express the views of the community to the local authority and other public authorities. Secondly, to inform the community of information received from the local authority and other public bodies. Currently our Community Council is working hard to represent our interests regarding railway work, windfarm developments and maintenance of our living environment. Any member of the community can get involved. To see what's going on the Community Council minutes are posted on the noticeboards and on the community website:

[www.stow-borders.co.uk](http://www.stow-borders.co.uk). If you want to contact the Community Council, please contact **Jenny Mushlin, CC Secretary on 01578 760297**

**Next issue of the newsletter:** deadline for copy - **Sunday, 21st September**, for distribution after **Friday 3rd October**. Newsletter editor can be contacted on: [wendy@wandwball.myzen.co.uk](mailto:wendy@wandwball.myzen.co.uk)  
The printing of this newsletter is funded by the Parish of Stow Windfarm Community Benefit Fund.

## STOW PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL

Stow Primary School were honoured to have a visit from Survival International on Friday 23rd May. Nixiwaka Yawanawa from the Brazilian Amazon gave a talk to the children and community, following a school topic on the Rainforest, giving them a unique insight into life growing up in his tribe. He was so engaging to listen to, managing to vividly describe his experiences to adults and children alike. He also told us with sadness of the threats his tribe is facing due to illegal logging and deforestation. A micro grant from the Community Council was a substantial contribution to the costs of this visit, many thanks to them for that.

Anyone wishing to find out more information on how Survival International supports the rights of tribal people and how we can help, please go to their website [www.survivalinternational.org](http://www.survivalinternational.org)



*Nixiwaka and Molly Glennon. Molly raised £350 for Survival International by organising a sponsored run and this led to contact with the charity who told her about Nixiwaka's talks.*

## FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL

Fountainhall Village Hall is delighted to announce that we have been successful in raising **£300,000** to refurbish the village hall. This has come from various funders including Big Lottery (main funder) Wind Farm, Land Fill and Robertson Trust. As soon as we get the building warrant and builder organised, work can commence. The village is very excited as we have been trying for over 10 years to achieve this outcome. We have a Facebook page which is updated with all progress so feel free to have a look.



HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

## STOW "COMMUNITY" POST OFFICE

Post Office Limited has been undertaking stringent reorganisation and transformation of the Post Office network in the last few years and it is now confirmed that Stow Post Office has been designated as a "Community Post Office" and so for the meantime is not under threat of closure. This

community status is based on the importance of the outlet in the community and the fact that it is the "last shop in the village". This status was by no means automatically granted and it is thanks to our sub-Postmaster's efforts that this excellent result has been achieved. As a "Community Post Office", Post Office Limited undertakes that the current Subpostmaster's contract remains the same. However, all of us need to be aware that this situation will be re-assessed from time to time and Stow Post Office will have to continue to prove its worth to the community - we all know how we can help!



# COMMUNITY GROUP ROUND-UP

## GALAWATER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Annual Fund raising Plant Sale was held on the 31st of May unfortunately we found the Town Hall locked, but in true community spirit the sale took place on the pavement many thanks to all who helped and gave tables etc and many thanks to those who supported us and bought some plants or traybakes – many apologies for no coffee or chairs which outwith our control. The matter was reported promptly to SBC who have offered their sincere apologies and are helping to recompence our financial loses for the day.

There have been 2 successful car trips to Humble Dean and Newhall, Carlups – many thanks to their owners for opening up for us to admire their gardens.

The Bus Trip this year is to **New Lanark on July 12th** - leaving Townfoot at 9.00 am arriving back between 5-6 pm stopping at Garrion Bridge Garden Centre and Antiques costing £15 per head plus entry fee of £8.00. This trip will offer something for everyone - historical interest, the largest roof garden in Britain, woodland walks and refreshments under cover for those who do not want to picnic. Names to Debbie Crawford or Jacki Cooper.

The next Car Trip after the Bus Trip will be to **The Glen, Traquair on August 3rd**. Posters will be displayed nearer the time **THE ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW is coming soon - September 6th**. Schedules are available at the Post Office and Online via the Community Website. There will an additional award for the most **unusual looking vegetable** – this award has kindly been donated by the Committee.

## FOUNTAINHALL W.R.I.

We are now on our summer break. Meetings will recommence on 17th September and new members will be most welcome. To find out more please contact the President, **Margaret Robertson 01578730567**, or the Secretary, **Agnes Mathison 01578722654**

## STOW & DISTRICT O.A.P. SOCIETY

In spite of the pouring rain, we all had a great day out on our summer outing in June. Our next big event is The Christmas Party! **Sat 13th December at 3pm**

## STOW A.F.C. - CLUB UPDATE

The season ended in May and the club finished in 3rd place in the Border Amateur A Division. There are 31 teams in total across the A, B and C divisions so to finish 3rd is no disgrace. The club also made the semi-finals of the South of Scotland Cup.

The pitch has undergone drainage work and fingers are crossed that it will be playable when the new season starts in late August. The refurbishment of the changing facility, funded by Foundation Scotland from the EDF Longpark Community Fund, is also underway although from the outside there

will be very little change inside new shower areas and improved use of space will be the benefits. Again we hope this will be in place for the start of the season. The club is currently recruiting new players and making plans for pre-season training and friendly games. You can keep up to date with

fixtures and results at [www.stowfc.co.uk](http://www.stowfc.co.uk) (Photo © Southern Reporter: Feb 2014, Gordon-1, Stow-2.)



## STOW TODDLER & MUSIC GROUP

Stow Baby and Toddler Group is a parent/child community playgroup held weekly in Stow Village Hall during term time. There are lots of fun toys for the little ones to enjoy (trikes, cars, slide, kitchen, train sets, dressing up and lots more!) and a healthy snack too. Grown-ups can enjoy a chat over a well-deserved cuppa. Throughout the year the group organises special events such as a sponsored woodland bear walk, fun at 'Stowed Out' and of course parties!

Every Thursday  
9.30am – 11am £1

Stow Baby and Toddler Music Group

Bring along little ones to a music group held weekly in Stow Village Hall during term time. They can have fun singing songs and nursery rhymes with instruments and puppets.

Every Tuesday  
9.30am – 10.30am £1



## WHEW!!

Gala Water Singers'

third year climaxed with a glorious

Borders Tour (!) of

the memorable 'Songs of Africa!!' Concert which will buoy the hearts of all who experienced it, as performers or audience, for a long time. From Stow to Melrose to Hawick, music was made by the exhilarating interweaving of three children's choirs; four adult singing groups and six musicians with around 330 singers, 200 of them children, including 30 from our own valley schools. (Our Music Director has nerves of steel...) Many adults and children had never sung in public before and for all of us this was a spectacular and joyful celebration of fabulous music.....Inspired? We restart on **Tuesday 26th August at 7pm** at Fountainhall School. All welcome; no auditions; no need to be able to read music; two week free trial. Then £20 paid 3 times a year, reduced if that's difficult. Contact **John on 01578 730289** or email [secretary@galawatersingers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@galawatersingers.org.uk)



## STOW PARISH ARCHIVE

Stow Parish Archive Group are delighted with the news that they have been successful in their application for a Windfarm Community Benefit grant to fund a part-time freelance post for a **Community Archivist**. The person appointed is Lucy Stock who has been working with the Archive over the past year. Lucy is perfect for the job as she is studying to become a professional archivist and she was brought up in Stow.! We hope this is good news for all the community because the Archive Group are not only interested in "dusty" archives but in modern happenings, social events for all ages, connecting generations and being part of making our community something to be proud of. Here are some of the things we are up to:

**Cafe Sessions** - a sociable sharing stories from times past (contact Jessica Troughton to find out more)

**A Year in the Life of Stow - a photographic story** (contact Polli Isherwood if you have any suggestions as to what should be covered)

**Sorting "stuff"** - if you'd like to help Lucy sort the material we have already collected, please get in touch

We have several other projects on the go. Why don't you get in touch and see if there's something that interests you? contact **Wendy:** [wendy@wandwball.myzen.co.uk](mailto:wendy@wandwball.myzen.co.uk) tel. 01578 730560



# GREAT HAPPENINGS...!



## SONGS OF AFRICA

GalaWaterSingers performing their "Songs of Africa" concert in June in Stow Parish Church ... music was made by the exhilarating interweaving of three children's choirs; four adult singing groups and six musicians with around 330 singers, 200 of them children, including 30 from our own valley schools. (Photo © Bob Rowles)



## THE BIG LUNCH

A group of community residents got together and arranged for the first time in Stow "the Stow Big Lunch" held on the Quoiting Green on 8th June. The ground was soggy but the sun shone and all had a good time. (Photo © Polli Isherwood)



## STOW SPORTS WEEK

Another successful Sports Week has passed thanks to the hard work of the Stow Sports Committee, ably captained by Andrew Riddell - this year they even arranged to supply sunshine! Here are a pair of happy BAM pots who won first prize in the Fancy Dress. (Photo © www.dougiejohnston.com)

# GREAT THINGS TO COME ...!

**SHOOGLIFTV** **THE MERRY LEES**  
**Kirsty Law Band** **STOWED OUT FESTIVAL**  
**Riddell Fiddles** **AUGUSTALIA**  
**& Jimmy's Chip Van** **Kaela Rowan**  
**WHISKY TICKLERS** **THE WEIGHT**  
**SOPHIE BANCROFT & TOM LYNE** **Scottish Borders Rock School**  
**Katie Forbes** **CRICKETS SOUND PROJECT**  
**Artist Hosts**

## STOWED OUT FESTIVAL 15TH & 16TH AUGUST

Stowed Out Festival makes a welcome return this year with a fantastically eclectic line up right in the heart of our village. The Sound Out team have put together a remarkable line up of local, national and international talent. There's something for everyone. Find out more at [www.soundout.org.uk](http://www.soundout.org.uk)

► **SOUND OUT** ◀





## STOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

School has just broken up but from all accounts there is a lot of activity to look forward to in the new session which starts Tuesday, August 19th.

There will be the introduction of the "assymetric" week. The school day will begin at 8.45 in the morning and finish at 3.15 from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays, school will begin at 8.45 but finish at 12.15.

The Acting Headteacher, Amanda Findlay, continues in her post and reports, "We will be saying a sad goodbye to Miss Gemma Gilroy as she leaves to join the team at Earlston High School. Staff and pupils will miss her and we wish her all the best in her new post. We welcome Mrs Christine Jones to Stow. She will be teaching P6/7. We welcome back Miss Adele Thomson who will be returning from her career break and will increase her hours along with Mrs Lynda Gilroy."

The Parent Council has been very active throughout the past year and has a lot planned for the forthcoming session. There are planned improvements to the playground and this includes an extension to the decking area and a Yurt is to be installed as an outdoor classroom. There has been a lot of activity around a great variety of fundraising events to help support the school and the children. The next great event is on **Saturday 30th August with a Duck Race and BBQ!**

The school staff and the Parent Council have been very concerned regarding safety with the railway construction underway. There are now regular meetings with BAM and SBC to ensure that everyone's concerns can be addressed.

The current Parent Council are keen to improve communication between parents and between school and parents. They now have a Facebook page which is proving very effective at keeping in touch. They are also inviting all parents to the "Meet the Teacher" evening at the start of the new term on **Monday 25th August.**

**Leonie Cairns** [leonieccairns@gmail.com](mailto:leonieccairns@gmail.com)

**Laura Whitelock** [laurawhitelock@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:laurawhitelock@yahoo.co.uk)

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There has been a Post Office serving Stow Parish since the eighteenth century. The first one was at Stagehall on the old coach road. With the building of the modern road it was transferred to Stow in 1819 and was located on Earlston Road. A Mr James W. Sanderson, who was a printer to trade, took over the Post Office in 1886 and it was he who built the present building at Townfoot in 1896. The Post Office has been described as a business with a "powerful public purpose" and the present incumbents are true to this long tradition.

Alison and Stewart Runciman bought the Post Office in 2006 with Alison taking the helm as sub-postmaster. She jumped in at the deep end as she started at the run-up to Christmas, always a phenomenally busy time for the Post Office. Alison has a background in secretarial and administrative work and so the running of the post office was not as daunting as it might have been to some people. However, the challenge of running an efficient post office with its multitude of services alongside the village shop must be very demanding.

A typical working day begins at 6am with the early morning deliveries of milk, bread and the papers. From then on there are all kinds of things to be seen to such as making up orders for the shop, preparing for deliveries and overseeing the work at the shop and Post Office counters. Alison has seven local people working for her and she is rightly proud of her team. Apart from the day to day running of the business, Alison says every day is different because all kinds of customers need all kinds of things. There are pensioners making use of the Post Office's financial services; people popping in on their way to work for a snack and a paper; businesses sending packages and mailshots; people selling stuff on eBay; and at Christmas time there are loads of parcels winging their way all over the globe from Stow.

It must be difficult to be commercially viable in a small rural community but Alison has kept the business justified by being open to change, ready to try new stock and taking all the new Post Office services in her stride. She says she finds it a compliment when people come to the shop to look for something because they know that there is always a good chance that it will be on the shelves. Alison is also very good at predicting demands and her window dressing often anticipates what we might like before we have thought of it ourselves.

In the time-honoured way, the Post Office under Alison's guidance is still the beating heart of the community. The staff are always there to help and will do all they can to promote community events and ventures. At the school a while ago, a young primary class were looking at the topic of personal safety. Their teacher asked them what would they do if they found themselves alone in Stow and unable to get home. Several answered that they would go to the shop. This is certainly no ordinary shop!

Many of us know of the unstinted generosity in time and help that the whole Runciman family give the community. Alison says they work as a team but even so there is a lot of work. Alison does admit that she thrives on being busy but she and her staff always make time to spare for all their customers. She thinks this is very important, "I treat people who come to the shop and post office in the way that I would like members of my own family to be treated should they come to a place like this and need help or to feel welcome. Elderly family members might need some help; the younger ones might need some advice or a friendly face; and the men might need some help in choosing a birthday card!"



*Rowan Wemyss, Ian Houston and Nancy Wilson raised £92 for cancer research by running a bake sale at the end of the school day. The three youngsters all know someone who has been affected by cancer and decided to raise some funds. They did all the posters and most of the baking themselves.*