

*Or Moriston
Matters*



Winter 96



*A Community newsletter
serving the residents & visitors
of Invermoriston and Glenmoriston*

No 56

35p

Editorial

A very happy and prosperous 1997 to you all.

As is customary this winter issue of the magazine is crammed with reports of all the various activities which took place around Christmas time.

Unfortunately, as is also the case, this issue records the deaths of no fewer than four residents or former residents of the Glen but on a slightly happier note the magazine also reports on no fewer than four brand new residents to the Glen, four new bundles of joy, four piles of nappies, four (well, three actually) washing machines on endless cycles and three sets of tired but happy parents !!

There was a rare sighting, at the shop of all places, of one of the wild goats which used to be a common sight at the side of the road in the winter time. I personally haven't seen hide nor hair of them for a good few years so maybe he was just passing through. Perhaps he was just down in the village checking out the new proprietor in the shop !

I had a nice letter from Mr. W. Byron from South Wirral in Cheshire, a regular receiver of the magazine and a former resident, having spent the war years at Dalcattaig. Along with his letter he enclosed some of his collection of "Witty Ditties" which will appear in future issues due to lack of space in this one.

If you have anything that you could fill up my pages with then please send them to:-

The Editor, "Moriston Matters",
The Old Well, Dalchreichart,
Glenmoriston, Inverness-shire.
IV3 6YJ. Tel. or Fax. 01320 340205.

Moriston Matters Trophy

I was extremely disappointed and disheartened with the response for nominations for the Moriston Matters Trophy (15 replies out of a possible 120 plus) There are so many people in the Glen who, in one way or another, help and / or improve the quality of life for others perhaps not so able as themselves. I realise that these people (and they know who they are) are only performing these tasks out of the goodness of their hearts and not for any glory but I feel their goodwill should be recorded. I also know it's difficult to choose one person or persons over another but the trophy will be here for years to come so there's always next year !

Perhaps I should allocate a corner of the magazine for people to convey their thanks to anyone they feel is deserving of it. Messages should be sent to the usual address.

Finally I would like to thank all those who voted for me - it was very much appreciated and gives me incentive to continue !! I promise to keep the trophy well polished !

Others who received recognition were (in no special order) The Hall Committee, David Andrews, Vic Wilson, Ian Common and Steven Smith.

A Fond Farewell

Helen Marr has bid the Glen a fond farewell after 21 happy years. She and her husband Magnus moved to Torgoyle Crescent from Aberdeen when he joined the forestry in 1965, then, upon retiring, took up residence in Riverside Park. Helen maintains her move to the Telford Centre in Fort Augustus was, not only her final one (!), but her best one as she now has no worries about keeping warm, about high fuel bills or burst pipes. The only fault she has with the Centre is that she cannot find any fault with it, no matter how hard she tries !!

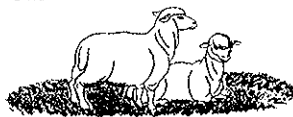
Dulchreichard School

There was an old woman from Inverness
Who went and sailed the River Ness
She ate some pork with her fork
And sailed right down to York
And met up with her budgie Bess.



Amy Bisset P.6

There was a young man from Japan
Who had a little lamb
They went for a walk
And had a little talk
Underneath an old old palm.



Nicola Curley P.5

There was an old lady from Tain
Who was very lame
Her teeth were squint
She had a blue tint
And never woke up again.



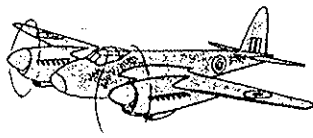
Isla Bisset P.5

There was a young lady From France
She tried her steps for a dance
She got so confused
She felt so abused
Her trainer just told her to prance.



Cassie McEwan P.5

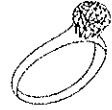
There was a young boy From Spain
Who fell asleep in the plane
The plane exploded
And he was loaded
Therefore he couldn't explain.



Katie Common P.7

Dulchreichard School

There was a young girl from Crieff
Who picked up a dirty big leaf
She went to the king
And asked for a ring
But instead she married the chief.



Vickie Common P.5

Childrens Nativity Play

On the 18th of December the children staged the pantomime "Cinders" for their parents, grandparents and friends. They all performed particularly well and the singing was lovely. The afternoon was rounded off with tea and mince pies.

Golden Wedding

Alastair and Chrissie McLeod, formerly of Dalchreichart Farm, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on the 9th January with a reception in Ardersier. It's a busy year for the McLeods : Norman and Nancy celebrate their Silver Wedding, Mark will be 21 and Barry reaches 18 !!!



Childrens Committee

Back at the beginning of November Glenmoriston Childrens Committee held a Halloween party in the hall. Ghosts, ghouls and witches attended along with angels, spiders and punks !

The Rev. Hugh Watt very kindly came along to judge the many competitions. Winners in the fancy dress competition were as follows:-

Best Witch - Cassie McEwan (Vampiress)
1st Pre-School - Sian Curley (Scarecrow)
2nd Pre-School - Matthew Harris (Robin Hood)
1st Primary - Vickie Common (Spider)
2nd Primary - Alistair Levings (Punk)

Next he viewed the array of best dressed neeps (actually they were all pumpkins !) Top of the heap was Duncan Greer closely followed by his sister Iona.

Finally a huge selection of vegetables which, in one way or another, resembled a type of animal. Some were very ingenious. We had an artichoke owl, a neep jelly fish, a cabbage leaf turtle and potatoes in various disguises. The eventual winner was a potato mouse belonging to Isla Bisset with Vickie Common's handicapped potato seal (he only had one flipper !) in second place.

With the serious judging completed the children and our sporting minister got down to some good clean fun and games. At one point the latter was sporting a very fetching wig, skirt and blouse during a heavily contested dressing up game (negatives can be purchased very reasonably !)

The children had great fun with a Touch 'n' Taste game where they were blindfolded and subjected to feeling such things as cold spaghetti and their taste buds were tempted by various 'orrible substances ranging from sago to marmalade, cold peas to yoghurt.

They finished up their party with a lovely finger buffet. Special thanks to Jean Curley and Mary Greer for their organisation of the games and to Hugh Watt for his judging and joining in !

November the 5th dawned wet and stayed that way for the rest of the day. We were in a bit of a quandry - Will we ? Won't we ? We had a 50% chance of making the right decision and we got it wrong !! We decided to go ahead with the bonfire and ignore the weather. Had we the ability of foresight or hindsight then we would have held it on the day before or the day after but we, as humble human beings, had neither so we had it on probably the wettest if not the only wet day in November !

However, moaning apart, we had a huge bonfire as usual thanks to some lorry loads of pallets from the coal yard which burnt well despite being soaking wet. There were no damp squibs amongst the fireworks (only amongst the spectators !!) and the display must surely be the best for miles around.

The Barbeque - well the valiant ladies of the committee battled against wind and water (which wasn't as a direct result of eating the onions either) and managed to produce mouthwatering burgers and plates of bangers and beans which warmed certain places that even Heineken doesn't reach ! This year the burgers fitted the rolls and apart from the occasional slightly rare burger - because we couldn't see - or the occasional cremeted one - because we were watching the fireworks - or the occasional damp roll - because it was wet - we were able to satisfy most appetites.

Our very grateful thanks to the wet bonfire builders, to the wet firework lighters, Allan Common and Billy Greer, to the wet spectators who bravely braved the elements, to the wet ladies on the catering (no comment !) and to those who provided the light and power (who were probably wet too !!)

As I said last year and the year before that, "Maybe next year we will get it right !"

Thank You

First we met in Safeways car park and each got an amount of money to spend in the shop. Afterwards we walked over to the picture house. Most of the boys went to see Arnie Swartzithingimibob in "Jingle all the Way" and the girls and two of the boys went to see "101 Dalmations". The film was excellent but the boys film; they thought it wasn't very good. After the film we went to the fish and chip shop and got some chips and various other things. The night was very good and I enjoyed it. Thankyou to everybody who took us all.

Katie Common Age 11.

Childrens Committee

On the last Saturday before Christmas the children of the Glen enjoyed their party which was once again held down in Fort Augustus hall after a referendum was held to establish the most favoured venue. There were a few children missing for one reason or another but the ones that had come along enjoyed a wide variety of games mainly due to the imagination and preparation of our top games mistress, Jean Curley !! Food as usual was plentiful and much enjoyed. Our very grateful thanks to all those who provided the spread, to all those who helped out in the kitchen and elsewhere, to all those who donated raffle prizes and to Santa for making time to come and visit the children and deliver his presents (and especially for having pockets full of chocolate coins - I'm sure I saw at least one parent rolling about on the floor chasing what they mistakingly thought to be the real thing) .

Finally I would like to thank my extremely hard working and extremely underpaid treasurer, Mary Greer and secretary, Jean Curley for all their efforts during the year - I'm sure the children, both young and old, appreciate all the hard work.

Glenmoriston Village Hall

1996 was a very busy year all round starting in Feb/Mar when an Architect was appointed to draw up sketch plans for our new Hall, to being granted Planning Permission after a number of hiccups in November.

A ceiling was put on the cost of the Hall of £ 200,000. This is to include the demolition of the existing hall with its asbestos roof, the building of the new hall, architects and surveyors fees etc.

Successful fundraising gathered £ 8,000 during the summer months. Lack of adequate heating and frozen pipes forced us to abandon all plans for further fundraising until Spring 1997.

Applications are with the Millenium Commission at present and we shall apply to the Lottery in June 1997. The Millenium will only provide 50% of the cost, the rest coming from Highland Council, Inverness and Nairn Enterprise and ourselves. Because of cutbacks in Council spending we are forced to find more than the original 10% (moving goalposts). If we were lucky enough to receive a lottery grant it would be 100% !!

A very disappointing turnout for the A.G.M. - only eight residents turned up - which forced the committee to think there was a real lack of interest for a new hall. It was therefore decided to bring forward a referendum (a requirement for Millenium and Lottery funding) before any further funding applications were made. The results were:

"I agree that the existing Glenmoriston Public Hall requires replacing"

Papers sent out	:	192
Voted No	:	2 (1%)
Voted Yes	:	140 (73%)
Not Returned	:	50 (26%)

Our fundraising efforts for 1996 ended with a craft fair held in the Hall on Wednesday 27th November. It was a marvellous, well attended evening, thoroughly enjoyed by all who were there, whether it was to browse, to learn, to take part in or just to stock up with last minute Christmas presents. The evening was made even more enjoyable by the wine, cheese and mince pies

Our sincere thanks go to locals:- Steve Henshaw, Brian Thompson, Jeff and Mhairi Dymond, Amanda Pratt and Ian & Barbara Taylor as well as to Iceberg from Drumnadrochit, Jackie MacDonald from Fort Augustus, and everyone else who donated crafts etc., for not only making the evening possible but for also kindly donating raffle prizes.

Thanks also go to Matthew Douglas who made and decorated a superb "guess the weight" cake. The evening raised approx £160.

Finally a very big thank you to all those who helped in any way during the year.

The Committee members for 1997 are as follows:-

Chairman - Ian Common
Treasurer - Tony Johnstone
Secretary - Elma Johnstone

Committee Members - Alan Draper, Brian Furie, Tommy Girvan, John Hattersley, Gordon Jones, Clare Levings, Pat MacDonald, Simon MacLellan, Paddy Paterson, Elaine Wolfendon.

Plans are afoot to continue fundraising in 1997 and hopefully reach our target (shifting goalposts permitting !) with the Easter Fun Day, Plant & Bake Sale and others not confirmed. We are open to ideas/suggestions so if you have any please let us know. One proposal we have in mind is to hold more dances in the hall, possibly a 60's evening, Country & Western/Line Dancing (see report later on), Scottish Country/Old Time.

It is hoped to continue with the tea/coffee and homebaking during June, July and August, maybe even opening on Wednesdays. This proved such a success during 1996, adding £1350 to the kitty. We would like to expand the crafts on offer for sale. It will soon be time to "spring clean" so if anyone has anything in the sewing/craft line that they no longer need and would like to donate for recycling we would be very grateful and collection can be arranged. e.g. beads, sequins, lace, material, stuffing for soft toys, wool, netting, felt, cord, ribbon etc. The idea being to have all the bits and pieces in one place available for anyone to delve into. If you have any ideas for crafts you would like to share or would like to get together sometime and have a sewing session we would love to hear from you.

We will be looking for more helpers especially bakers possibly working on a rota basis. If you think you can help please phone Clare on 351254 or Elma on 351203.

The hall is for the benefit of all resident in the Glen whatever age group. A new Hall will obviously cater for a greater variety of activities than is at present possible. Your continued support is necessary and very much appreciated.

*** STOP PRESS ***

The line dancing craze did finally hit Invermoriston after a slight delay due to the dreaded flu. In excess of 35 would-be hill-billies polished their boots, buckles and spurs, donned their stetsons and practised their "Yee Haas". Actually, if the truth be known, there wasn't one frilly waistcoat, there were no silly hats and there wasn't much skirling going on either. There was a smidgeon of stamping, an iota of clapping, a fair bit of huffing and puffing but, most importantly, plenty of hilarity. Roll on next Thursday at 8.30 sharp !

Obituaries

Back at the end of November Alf Timcke lost his fight for life after battling against cancer. Alf retired from his job in London on the tug boats and moved up to the Glen with his wife, Rene, about 10 years ago although they had been coming back and fore to the house at Dundreggan Dam for many years.

He was a larger than life man who loved his garden, especially his vegetables (when he could stop the deer from helping themselves !) He was a stalwart member of the whist club, rarely missing an evening of cards. Due to his passion for reading (enhanced mainly because Dundreggan is one of the few places which does not receive any television reception) he was a valued member of his team for the regular Thursday evening quiz nights at the tavern (as long as the questions weren't about television !)

Our condolences go to his wife Rene, sons Alf and Colin and daughter Irene.

* * *

The Glen lost one of its more recent members in the sad death of Edward (Ted) Lumb at the beginning of December. Ted and his wife Sheila moved to Moorfield, Torgoyle just two and a half years ago from Yorkshire where he had his own garage.

Both enjoyed working outdoors and between them they managed to transform the builders debris from around their home into a very neat and tidy garden in a remarkably short space of time.

Ted was also a very keen model builder, particularly boats and loved the challenge of anything electronic. Dalchreichart T.V. Club benefitted greatly from his technical know-how and he will be sorely missed by them and many others in the Glen.

Our sympathies go to Sheila who would like to express her gratitude to all her neighbours and friends for their kind thoughts and their kind contributions which added over £500 to the emergency care fund in Fort Augustus.

The obituaries for Jessie Steele and Margaret Campbell will appear in the next issue.

Local News

Cher, our golden labrador, had seven black puppies. Coby, a black labrador from the fish farm was their Daddy. I played with them every day and gave them names. Now they live at Aberdeen, Tain, Inverness, Kincaig, Fort Augustus, Lossiemouth and Burghead. I miss them but Mammy is happy.

Kathleen MacLellan Age 6

Senior Citizens Party

The freezing temperatures and threat of frozen pipes conspired to keep the numbers low at this years party at the Glenmoriston Arms Hotel. After a pleasant meal, we were given a Highland Dancing display by Anne MacLellan and Sally Phimister from Fort Augustus. The remainder of the evenings entertainment was provided by John Grant, Neil Robertson and Archie McArthur from Fort Augustus. The low numbers had the advantage of much more space on the dance floor which was appreciated during "strip the willow". A good night was had by all, with special thanks to Christine MacDonald who yet again organised this years event.

S.M.

Dulchreichard School

With the school we went to see Oliver that the pupils of Glenurquhart School were doing for a concert. It was really good. They acted really well, they spoke well too. I loved the song "Food, Glorious, Food".

Vickie Common Age 8

Church News

Many readers will know that a new Manse is under construction in Drumnadrochit. During the Vacancy in Urquhart and Glenmoriston Church of Scotland, the Congregational Board decided to build a new Manse in the grounds of the Church Hall and sell the existing Manse. Work on this project began in the Autumn and is now well under way - at the time of writing the outside shell is almost complete.

It is fascinating to watch a new house going up - many of you will have watched your own houses being erected - and to see how quickly a patch of land becomes a building site - and then a building - and soon a home. But even the best builders in the world cannot make it a home. I am amused when I see houses for sale which claim that they will make lovely family homes ! Yet no seller could ever guarantee that the building he is selling will be a home. A home is so much more than bricks and mortar - even more than comfy furniture and personal pictures on the walls. A home is the place where any who live in it feel secure, feel content. A home is a place of shared love - even a single person's home has love shared in it with those who come in and out.

I hope your house is also a home - a place where joys and sorrows are shared. Some of you may never have encountered a real home - where love surrounded every activity. Sadly this is an ever increasing part of our society - people caring only for themselves - no care for another soul. If this rings any bells with you and your experience, then let me encourage you. The Bible seems to indicate that this world can never be the real home of a Christian - for lots of reasons, but the Bible then goes on to say that there is a real and wonderful home where love and acceptance and joy are ever present. This home is called Heaven. Whatever you may have imagined Heaven to be, for all those who love the Lord, it will be home. The Irish comedian, Dave Allen, is quite wrong when he describes Heaven as boring old angels singing boring old songs.

I am looking forward to making the new Manse our home on earth - but much more to that home where there will be no more squabbles, no unhappiness - only peace and health and joy forever.

Hugh F. Watt

(Church services every week at 10.30am and 6.30pm in Drumnadrochit and 1st Sunday of every month in Dulchreichard School.)

Local Success

On the 6th December Steven Smith was rewarded for all his hard work and dedication to his sport when he was awarded the male-under-18 trophy at the Inverness Sports Council sports personality of the Year Awards. Steven is still planning a career with the Royal Engineers where he will be able to continue with his athletic training. Steven is pictured below (far left) after being awarded his trophy.



Folk Lore

As promised in the last issue here is the concluding part of "The Wholly Unlikely Story of Angelina". As you may remember this intriguing piece of prose was written by Norman Bullock , Briarbank, Invermoriston before his untimely death last year.

The story so far..... Angelina, only child of Angus and Angela McTarff found herself joining the sisters at the Convent after the fire which caused the death of her parents and the loss of the family home. However the painting of the house survived the blaze and it, together with a similar one depicting the same house site but sometime in the future, done by the same artist, turned up at the Telford Centre shortly after it's opening.

The story continues..... Sometimes visitors to the Telford Centre take walks through the surrounding wood, where they may find an attractive house with a well kept garden and rockery. Those who find the house often come back for a second look but always they return home, puzzled and frustrated because, although they were sure they knew the way and took the right path, no sign of the house could be found. Local residents, when asked about it, usually say they do not know of such a place, but, of course one encounters the occasional person, who, speaking more from imagination than knowledge, may mutter darkly that "strange things" happen in that wood. "Limbs have been broken", they go on, and according to one helpful know-all, "at least one life has been lost". The last observation is true, but I am afraid it was not in the same wood.

Perhaps there is a connection between the elusive house and the wandering spooky-feet of poor lonely Angelina. She is still looking for her Mum and Dad, you know.

Although no records are available to allow one to visualise the life Angelina led in the convent we must assume that she was reasonably happy, or, at least, content, for she still lived in that place up to the time of her death in 1502 at the age of one hundred and seven so she could not have been too uncomfortable.

Also we do not know what the Nuns, who were Angelina's companions for so long, named the Order of which they were founder members, but after a number of years living in close proximity to them, the local people developed the habit of referring to them as the Most Holy and Unlikely Order of Sisters of Unwedded Bliss, an irreverent and facetious reference to their activities in support of the Highland population's struggle towards restoring their prosperity.

Over the years, the fortunes of the Order fluctuated widely, at the time of the origin of this narrative, the Highlands were going through a period of depression, a situation closely linked to a fall in the regional population, and as the prosperity of the Order depended upon a sufficient number of Noviciates regularly coming forward, it was necessary that the population short-fall be halted and reversed. The Board of Governors therefore, with the blessing of the Pope [the first recorded use of the term 'Papal Bull'] decreed that in future, elevation to the higher ranks of the Order be offered only to those whose child-bearing capability was most vigorously applied to the solution of this very serious social problem.

For years it had been understood that upon the retirement of the long-serving Mother Superior O'Godiva Nutherbunintheoven (the well known former bare back [and front] equestrienne of Coventry), the most favoured contenders for her post would be Sister Maud and Sub-sister Angelina. When the time came for Mother O'Godiva to hang up her beads the increasing rivalry and jealousy between Maud and Angelina became intense. However, as expected, the ultimate choice was in favour of Sister Maud, who, it was said, was so often invited into the garden that her opportunities to establish and maintain a lead in the Maternity Stakes gave her a considerable advantage. She scored thirteen, the more modest Angelina followed closely with ten and felt her honour had been well satisfied, although that did nothing to improve feelings between herself and the new Mother Superior. Angelina's premature death shortly afterwards unfortunately forestalled any ambitions she may have had to try again at a later date. She was one hundred and seven years old and nothing more was to be heard of her for about five hundred years.

A short time ago Angelina came (or went) walkabout in her usual way, but we all noticed that her footsteps lacked their customary rhythm. She had a limp, a sort of hesitancy, one foot not in sync with the other, if you get my drift. The reason for this lack of coordination became clear at first light the following morning. On my doorstep was a bone. An expert identified it as a thigh bone of a female - possibly elderly - person of below average height. It appeared to have been stored under less than ideal conditions for a very long time. There could be no doubt over the cause of Angelina's limp. The poor girl was half legless.

It was not our intention to retain possession of Angelina's part indefinitely so one night we took it to a place amongst the ruins of the old Convent walls where we thought she was likely to look for it. It was laid in a shallow depression and lightly covered with earth, where it remained undisturbed for several days and nights. What a relief it was a week or two later, to hear the familiar soft shoe shuffle progressing over the floor above, and to realise that Angelina, completely restored, with her part refitted, was once again in her rightful place amongst the near-departed. And yes, of course the spare bony part in the ruins was gone !

We know that Angelina was under five feet tall in her habitual cottonsocks, a fact which fits in very nicely with the length of her now replaced femur. Another archaeological gem is an inscription on the shaft of the recently replaced femur - ANGELINA 1395 - 1502 - It may be that our Lady of the Limp had lost some of her parts on previous occasions, so in more recent times she had taken the precaution of labelling them - no doubt a habit developed during her finishing school days. Statistics held in the archives of Maugham House confirm that Angelina did live to be one hundred and seven years old and that she did die in 1502. We feel that origin of the Holy Portion in my Porch and the true nature of the nocturnal footsteps are becoming clear. Those who still dispute the factual basis of my words must admit that an impressive body of evidence is being assembled.

During the course of enquiries made at a local, highly reputable monastic establishment more significant data came to light. Some time ago, the site used by the Sisters of Unwedded Bliss, as their private burial ground was cleared, all human remains found therein being re-interred in an appropriate place within the precincts of the aforementioned local, highly reputable monastic establishment. At least it was thought that all of the remains buried in the original place had been relocated but on counting up and checking the records it was found that one "body" had apparently been mislaid. It may be tempting to think that the missing one should be identifiable as Angelina, but I think not. It is more likely that Angelina with commendable foresight has kept the bony parts handy to equip herself for later re-entry into the physical world; encouraged by the possible bonus(!) that someday she may be able to haunt the ghost of Mother Superior Maud, and thereby in some small measure, get her own back.

It that is so, we shall probably hear a lot more of Angelina during the next five hundred years.

It is a popular belief that the thousands of tourists who flock to the Highlands every summer, come to see the monster. Not so. In comparative terms Nessie is a fossil - Angelina is the Immortal One whose spooky-footsteps echo eerily along the deserted corridors of the Telford Centre throughout the witching hours of almost every night.

It is Angelina whom the world and his wife come to see - not Nessie.

Local News

Dalchreichart had it's very own special postal service in the run up to Christmas which took the form of the old fashioned "pony express". Christmas cards were delivered on four legs, ponies resplendent in tinsel and bells; children rosy cheeked and smiling. Unfortunately the weather and illness prevented the children from delivering to Redburn and Dundreggan but I'm sure all who received cards in this way enjoyed the spectacle. Many thanks to Katie and Vickie Common and their ponies Casey and Sammy.

Local News

CONGRATULATIONS twice over to Kevin and Trudi Hodson on the birth in January of their twin baby girls, Abbey Isla and Aileigh Ellen.

CONGRATULATIONS to James and Joan MacDonell on the safe arrival of little Siobhan who was born in December.

CONGRATULATIONS to Brian and Leslie Bisset on the slightly early but very welcome delivery of their son, Keith John on the 1st of February - a brother for Amy and Isla.

BEST WISHES to Agnes and Gerry McCluskey as they set up home in Culloden after 16 years in Invermoriston.

BADMINTON - Every Tuesday Evening at 8.00pm in the hall - All welcome, both adults and children.

LINE DANCING - Every Thursday evening at 8.30 sharp in the hall - All welcome, both adults and children.

QUIZ NIGHT - Every Thursday evening at 9.00pm. Come on your own or bring a team of four.

WHIST NIGHT - Dulchreichard School - Friday 21st March at 7.30 pm. All welcome.