

the Pen Mag

January 2023



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Editorial



What with so many sabres being rattled between fractious territories, a full blown European war still ongoing, and the political world giving turmoil a bad name, it's perhaps more in hope than real expectation that we wish each other a Happy New Year this month.

Just the same, here on our own wee patch, there's still plenty of evidence of community, of folks helping each other out, and getting involved in worthwhile local efforts from running a food bank – though heaven knows that should hardly be necessary in 2023 – to cleaning up our shorelines.

The Hogmanay Dance, a very family friendly affair, saw out the old year with a sellout crowd in Cove Burgh Hall, so well done Messrs Arnold and Reeve for taking a traditional format and shaking it up in the most inclusive way.

Here at the Mag we're in recovery mode – not so much from celebrations as having to combat a very nasty lurgi which chose Yuletide to do the rounds. But we got there, and inside the first edition of 2023 is another of our occasional Peninsula Profiles.

Moira Frize-Williams is the new music director of the reformed Peninsula Choir, whom we interviewed in her home in Rhu. Moira, a former music teacher and considerable music scholar also accompanies Helensburgh's Miitary Wives Choir.

Our author of the month from Jeanne Brady captures the life and times of the immensely talented Maggie O'Farrell whose output is

remarkably varied in terms of scope and subject matter, but who is clearly a woman at the peak of her writing powers.

Bottled Pleasures this month is devoted to the water of life – Scotland's premier national drink. It comes from Jim Auld who, in addition to his funeral director's business, has been known to have the odd dram after work. His own favourites come from Islay, a small inner Hebridean island with a very large impact on the whisky business. And one which is about to expand even further, as he details.

Our cookbook recipes are selected for their comfort food ratings – all easily made dishes which will help stave off the January blues.

Roo Irvine, one of the victims of the Peninsula virus, has given us a charming history of pearls, how they're made, who most coveted them and how to tell if they're the real thing. Turns out some folk feeling the urge to clutch their 'pearls' at some new scandal or other, are actually just troubling common or garden beads.

January of course is Burns month, and there will be a special Rabbe Burns tribute night in Cove Burgh Hall on the 20th, with music and verse and some very special talents. Full details in News in brief.

If you want any news of your organisation's ongoans included just get in touch with either Rona or myself at the addresses below.

Editor: [Ruth Wishart, ruth@penmag.co.uk](mailto:ruth@penmag.co.uk)

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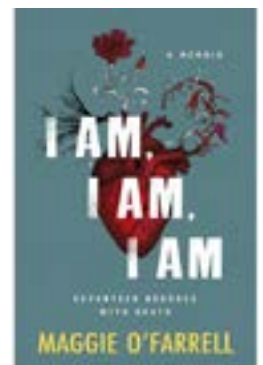
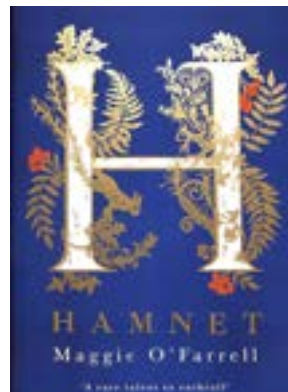
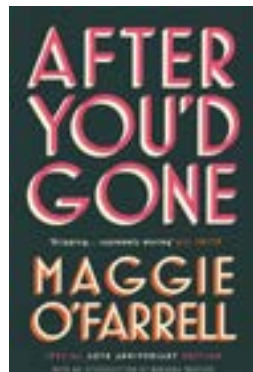
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Author of the Month

Maggie O'Farrell

with Jeanne Brady



Born in Northern Ireland in 1972, and raised in South Wales and Scotland, Maggie O'Farrell won immediate acclaim with her debut novel, *After You'd Gone* (2000); subsequent works of fiction and memoir have also garnered prizes and appeared on numerous shortlists.

At age 8, she was diagnosed with a mystery virus with the symptom of encephalitis and was paralysed for over a year. She was home-tutored during that time, and upon returning to school, her family had to struggle with the Brigend (S. Wales) education authority to move her classroom to the ground floor, as she could no longer climb the stairs. She was happier when they moved to North Berwick, where she attended the comprehensive. From there, she went to Cambridge University, where she studied English literature and writing at New Hall College.

In her 2018 memoir *I am, I am, I am: 17 Brushes with Death*, she examines her childhood near-death experience, along with 16 other frightening brushes with the mortality of herself and her children – threatened violence, a plane crash, a fraught childbirth, her daughter's encounters with anaphylactic shock – and how life keeps going on either side of these incidents.

These types of real-life encounters with precarity are also a narrative element in O'Farrell's fiction. In *After You'd Gone*, on a family visit, Alice travels by train to Scotland, only to witness on arrival something so shocking that she immediately returns to London.

She is found lying in a coma, after either an accident or possibly a suicide attempt. As her family gathers at her bedside, tensions arise and secrets are unwittingly revealed, as Alice herself drifts between the present and the past. O'Farrell's debut novel was compared to the writings of Edna O'Brien for its ability to depict love and family relationships.

The Hand That First Held Mine (2010) uses the lives of three people over two generations to draw a map of relationships and the need to recover memories for healing. Young Lexie leaves her genteel country family home for 1950s bohemian London, where she meets magazine editor Innes.

She becomes a journalist, is enmeshed in the burgeoning London art world, and upon discovering she's pregnant, has her baby on her own. In present-day London, young artist Elina struggles with the first weeks after a traumatic childbirth of which she has no memory. Meanwhile, her partner Ted finds fatherhood is raising long-forgotten and disconcerting memories. Over the course of the novel, O'Farrell weaves the two women's stories together with Ted's recollections, to reveal how we construct and re-construct our lives to extract meaning from them.

This Must Be the Place (2016) is another novel that gradually draws complicated and seemingly distant characters into proximity with one another over time and space. Daniel is a New Yorker with family members scattered all over, who is living in Ireland with his reclusive, former film-star, wife. But their quiet retreat is disrupted when he discovers

something about a woman he's not heard from in two decades, and everyone must learn to navigate the rapids of memory and expectation, with some laugh-aloud moments.

Hamnet (2020) is a fictional account of William Shakespeare and his family at the time of his son Hamnet's death from bubonic plague in 1596, and the writing/production of the play *Hamlet* in 1600. The story is told in two alternating narratives. The first depicts the events leading up to Hamnet's death; the second explores the background to Shakespeare and his wife's first encounter, their early life together and marriage, and subsequent growing apart as Will gains a reputation as a playwright and lingers more in London than in Stratford. The novel gained critical acclaim and the 2021 Women's Prize for Fiction and the 2021 National Book Circle Prize, among others.

In 2021, O'Farrell was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and 2022 saw the publication of *The Marriage Portrait*, a novel based on the short life of Lucrezia de' Medici, who possibly may have been poisoned by her husband, Alfonso II, Duke of Ferrara. The novel was inspired by Robert Browning's *My Last Duchess*, a dramatic poem in which Alfonso show off a portrait of his late wife and implies that – insanely jealous – he murdered her at the age of 16 after only a year of marriage.

O'Farrell has woven fact, Renaissance art and poetic fiction to tell the story of a young girl forced into a dynastic marriage.

What's On - January 2023



Community Groups are welcome to advertise their regular event slots in our What's On page.

If you know of any community groups that should be or would like to appear in What's On please contact ronatmc@hotmail.com

AMENITY SOCIETY COFFEE MORNING

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ASPIRE DANCE THEATRE

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Wednesdays Gibson Hall, Garelochhead, 10am-11.15am

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Members competitions are An article in Origami and 3 assorted Chinese snacks
Raffle and refreshments served. Visit our Facebook page SWI Cove and Kilcreggan for more information

YOGA

Ashtanga Yoga, Mon 6pm, Cove Burgh Hall. Come along or Contact Roni 07799 031649
Chair Yoga, Thurs 2pm, Cove Burgh Hall & Online followed by tea and cakes.
Contact Roni 07799 031649

CONTENTS



Understanding Antiques

With Roo Irvine



Emerge, a Pearl

As we tiptoe into 2023, happy to leave 2022 behind, but also hesitant as to what might be in store for all of us, it feels nice to have shaken off the Year That Never Was.

I'm not alone in hoping we all come out of this kinder and more compassionate. We should emerge stronger from our shell, almost like a Pearl. A Pearl has grown out of hardship and is all the more beautiful for that challenge, so it only seems right we kick off 2023's Antique musings, with a closer look at my favourite gemstone.

Pearls are technically gemstones, but they're a world apart in terms of how they're created. No other gem is physically formed within a living creature. They are naturally formed in their perfect state, whereas the gemstones we know, such as diamonds, rubies, emeralds all require cutting and polishing until they are usable. They need to be perfected, whereas a Pearl is simply born that way!

Surprisingly, pearls are formed when a foreign body or an irritant such as a grain of sand, gets so deep within the shell of a mollusc that it can't be removed. Cleverly, the shell produces Nacre to protect the mollusc; coating the irritant layer by layer over time until eventually the nacre becomes a pearl.

Nacre is the gloriously shiny material found inside most shells. Here is where the penny drops. Nacre is also known as mother-of-pearl, because it creates the pearl itself. Quite eye-opening to see a sense of protection, survival and family in amongst

the humble mollusc, no different to our own current preoccupations.

We see pearls as being a relatively modern opulence, but they are in fact an ancient gem and have been worn as jewellery for over 6000 years. Our very own Queen Elizabeth I was obsessed with pearls, as seen in all of her 16th Century portraits.

She is adorned with pearls, on necklaces, her clothes and even worn in her hair. One dress in particular was covered in 30,000 pearls and her long necklaces held up to a 1000 pearls each. Was she just fascinated by their beauty, or was the ultimate display of wealth a perfect calling card for a Queen's ego? Perhaps the demure Elizabeth preferred wearing the symbol of purity and innocence.

It is whispered in some circles that, upon finding out Mary Queen of Scots had a necklace of 600 pearls, she lost sleep over it, and after Elizabeth I had the Scottish queen executed, the pearls 'appeared' in Elizabeth's possession. The Renaissance period opened the floodgates for 2000 kilos of pearls finding their way into Europe when Columbus discovered America and many Aztec temples were plundered of their treasures.

How do we know if we have any of these treasures? True pearls are very rare- only one is produced every several million shellfish. Before cultured pearls were created in 1893, only Royalty and the very wealthy could afford real pearls. Despite of the snobbery over cultured pearls, wild pearls and cultured pearls are BOTH real

pearls, formed naturally, and organic.

The only difference is that with cultured pearls, human intervention places the 'irritant' within the mollusc shell. All very painstaking work, but it's opened up the pearl market to the world, regardless of social class. Synthetic pearls are the ones that have no element of pearl whatsoever. Often they are plastic or glass beads, coated in lustre.

There are a few tips to help you determine your pearl. The obvious test is to run your teeth against a pearl. A real pearl will feel gritty, whereas a faux will be very smooth. Real pearls are unique; no two pearls have the same size, shape, colour and lustre. Faux pearls are also lighter than real pearls too.

Fifteen years ago, a Filipino fisherman discovered a 2ft long pearl inside a giant clam. He kept it under his bed for good luck. When his house later burnt down, the 75-pound pearl survived. It has since been valued at \$100million. The fact the pearl was found inside a clam as opposed to an oyster shell makes this rarer.

Unless your pearls are vintage or older, it is unlikely that they are true wild, uncultured pearls. Having said that, enjoy the cultured pearls, they could still be antique and are still borne within that shell! Beauty at its finest!

Roo Irvine owns Kilcreggan Antiques and is a regular presenter on Antiques Road Trip and Bargain Hunt. Find out more at www.rooirvine.com and www.kilcregganantiques.com

Peninsula Cookbook



Some more recipes for your collection. We would like to encourage more readers to send in their favourites – doesn't matter whether it's a starter, a main, or a pud. Or your favourite baking recipe. Just send the ingredients and method to either ruth@penmag.co.uk or rona@penmag.co.uk Thanks in advance!



CONTENTS

CHICKEN IN A MUSHROOM SAUCE

(serves 6)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 chicken. 1.75 Kg
- 2 onions
- 2 sticks celery
- 1+half oz unsalted butter
- 1 bay leaf
- 12-16 button mushrooms
- Worcester Sauce
- Level tbl plain flour
- 2+half fluid ozs double cream.
- Salt and black pepper to season,
- Parsley to garnish.

METHOD:

1. Finely chop onions and celery and saute in butter until soft.
2. Wash the chicken and put in pan with onions and celery and cover with water.
3. Bring to the boil, remove any scum and add salt, black pepper and the bay leaf.
4. Cover with a lid and simmer for around an hour and a half.
5. Lift chicken on to a warm dish and keep hot.
6. Strain the liquid and set aside.
7. Trim and thinly slice the mushrooms and cook in butter for 2/3 minutes.
8. Add a few drops of Worcester and sprinkle with flour.
9. Stir until all the fat has been absorbed.
10. Blend in quarter pint of the strained liquid to make a smooth sauce. Stir in cream and heat through.
11. Carve the chicken and arranged pieces in a deep serving dish.
12. Pour the sauce over and garnish with parsley.

RHUBARB CRUMBLE

(Serves 4)

- 700g – 1kg rhubarb
- 50g castor sugar
- Half a level teaspoon ground cinnamon

FOR THE CRUMBLE

- 175g self raising flour
- 100 g butter or marge
- 100g demerara sugar

METHOD:

1. Wash and trim the rhubarb,
2. Cut the stalks into 2 and half cm pieces
3. Place in the base of a buttered shallow baking dish.
4. Sprinkle with castor sugar and cinnamon and set aside.
5. Sift the flour into a basin add the butter or marge cut into pieces and rub into the flour till evenly mixed.
6. Add the sugar and rub in again until the mixture becomes short and crumbly.
7. Sprinkle over the rhubarb and press down lightly
8. Place in the centre of a hot over (400F 200C gas mark 6) and bake for 40 minutes until crisp.
9. Serve with cream.

Katie Stewart



HAM SHANK AND PEA SOUP

(serves 4)

INGREDIENTS:

- 300 g green split peas
- 1 ham shank 600-750g
- 1 large onion peeled and chopped
- 4 sticks of celery chopped
- Dijon mustard (optional).

METHOD:

1. Steep both the peas and the ham
2. shank overnight in separate dishes.
3. Next day drain peas and put in soup pan.
4. Rinse ham and add with onion and celery
5. Add about 1.5 litres of water, plenty of
6. black pepper and bring slowly to boil.
7. Skim off any scum and boil rapidly for
8. five minutes
9. Put a lid on and simmer for another hour
10. adding boiling water as needed
11. Remove shank and set aside.
12. When cool shred the meat discarding any fat
13. Liquidise the soup, adding boiling water if needed.
14. Serve piping hot with pieces of ham and mustard
15. (if used).

Sue Lawrence

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Bottled Pleasures



with Jim Auld

It seems I volunteered to write a few words on whisky! This has been harder than I anticipated; I now understand writer's block!

Scotch Whisky is divided into five regions: Campbeltown, Highland, Islay, Lowland and Speyside each offering a different perspective on Uisge Beath (Gaelic for water of life).

Scotch Whisky has three ingredients: water, yeast and malted barley, and by law has to be produced in Scotland and stored in oak barrels for three years and one day before being recognised as Scotch.

It is said everyone has a spiritual home. Well in my case I think it is Islay, the southernmost island of the Inner Hebrides. It's a two-hour sail from the Kintyre Peninsula and has a population of just over three thousand.

The beaches are stunning, the wildlife is incredible, the locals are so friendly they acknowledge all visitors on the island they meet on the roads with the famous Islay Wave. As this is supposed to be drinks column and not a travelogue, I'll not digress any further!

For such a small island Islay has an incredible number of distilleries, nine at present with two more due to open in next few years.

The whisky from the island is renowned for its smokiness as the island's abundance of peat has historically been used to dry the malt. In fact a favourite tippie of His Majesty the King, Laphroaig is considered one of the most aromatic of the island's drams, with some saying it tastes or smells of the disinfectant TCP!

As I write I thought I should refresh myself with Laphroaig Ten Year Old a currently on offer from Morrisons at £27.99 for a 70cl bottle. It's a wonderful golden dram made from the simplest of ingredients. Yes the nose is quite clinical but on the palate along with the smoke I get salted caramel with a warming lasting finish. Perhaps not for the faint hearted.

One of my favourite drams comes from Morrison's Bowmore Distillery on the shores of Lochindall in the heart of the principal village on the island, (incidentally Laphroaig and Bowmore are now in the ownership of Beam Suntory the International Drinks company whose wide portfolio include Courvoisier Cognac and Jim Beam Whiskey).

Established in 1779, Bowmore is the oldest distillery on the island. Bowmore's twelve year old Morrison's (£29.99 a 70cl bottle) on the nose Coastal smoke and ash soon make way for bergamot, orange zest, lemon slices and some hay before becoming rather floral, heather smoke now competing with the ash.

The palate Lovely and rounded, honeyed even, initially. Vanilla, perfumed smoke and coastal

elements develop. Dark Peat. Blossom, oily sweetness.

Finish: Smoky and long. Sea spray, dry grass, a touch of ash and citrus.

Another thoroughly enjoyable dram is Ardbeg's Uigeadail. Ardbeg is now in the ownership of LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessey) the luxury brand company whose CEO Bernard Arnault currently the richest man in the world.

Ardbeg is rarely discounted as it is seen as a premium brand and to discount it would devalue it in the eyes of LVMH. Nose: Multifaceted, notes of peat and little flourishes of dark sugar, freshly ground espresso beans, cereal notes and a most sophisticated tar.

Palate: Led by sweet, ripe fruit and black forest honey. A good helping of malt. The throne then usurped by a powerful peat and smoked barley.

Finish: Very long, caramel and malt weave their way through peat smoke and dark sugar and just a hint of fresh espresso coffee before it finally peters out.

Overall: Such deft balance! How wonderful to sample Ardbeg so beautifully complimented by sherry. Selling on Master of Malt for £58 a bottle, I was lucky enough to receive this as a present and as an occasional treat I will pour myself a glass. It is non age specific which is fast becoming a trend throughout the whole industry as producers struggle to keep up with unprecedented world-wide demand.

To balance things out I felt compelled to try Ben Bracken, an Islay Whisky produced for Lidl by an unknown island distiller again, non-age specific, but it has such a rawness I don't think it will have spent more than three years and one day and thirty seconds in a cask.

It needs a good lot of water with it to make it more palatable. The tasting notes say: Powerful and unforgettable with a barrage of aromas. Tangy sea spray, bonfire smoke, salted bananas and baked apples arouse the senses.

With an obviously peaty aroma, this whisky has notes of soot and smoke that are backed up by sponge pudding and candied orange. The smoke is perhaps more restrained on the palate, giving way to a wasabi spice and a meaty quality.

Yes, powerful and unforgettable, I got hints of banana but I'm afraid the overwhelming smell I got reminded me of walking on the forest track and smelling a fox in the distance; not pleasant. I would leave this one on the shelf. To try and forget this one I'm off to pour an Bowmore 12 and think of walking on Machir Bay.



Peninsula Profile

Life has been something of a circular tour for Moira Frize-Williams. Born in the Helensburgh maternity hospital where her mother had once been matron, she then lived with her family at Inverary till she was 5.

Dad, a builder/engineer with somewhat exceptional DIY skills, built a family home from a single decker bus, then restored the steering wheel and drove his wife, son and daughter to his next big project in Ayrshire.

It's a home she fondly remembers, even though, by the time they relocated once more to Stirlingshire, her folks had the wherewithal to buy a proper house – a 60's villa, it cost a whopping £5k she recalls.

It was in Stirling that the new music director of the Peninsula Choir went first to secondary school and thence to Aberdeen where her teacher training course equipped her for her first career as a music tutor.

Although she had a class of pretty rough and ready 16 year olds, she recalled that during her two probationary years they head teacher was always popping in and very supportive.

From there it was off to Germany with a pal to teach army cadets piano and flute where she taught for 4 years.

She met her former husband there, and she has three lovely daughters – one now working in Thailand, one in London and the youngest just along the road in, yes, Helensburgh, after Moira bought a home in nearby Rhu.

Her youngest is autistic and, as is often the way with those on that spectrum, has a very good musical

ear, and a lovely singing voice. Having a mum who has run several choirs was really rather fortunate for daughter number three.

Moira's been involved with several choirs and teaching roles over the years, often in the south of England. But having a brother still resident in Scotland, that's where she's come back to settle.

Initially she saw that the Helensburgh Military Wives choir was seeking a conductor, but when someone else took that over she spotted that our own Peninsula Choir was also seeking a music director when its founder, Stephen Adam, went to live in Helensburgh.

Ironically, the Military Choir now use Moira's skills as a pianist which she juggles with her role in Cove and Kilcreggan where she took up her post a year past last October.

Inevitably Covid meant a lot of zooming and, even when they were all together again, a lot of two metre separations,

She says that their first proper concert was a very moving affair, since it was the first time both choir and audience were back together again. There was no shortage of tears all round.

Moira has taken many courses to broaden her musical knowledge including an LRAM at the prestigious Guildhall and another at St Andrews University.

She also partially sated a lifelong passion for opera by joining a country house opera group who, as the name suggests, held their concerts in some rather fine premises!

Yet she's a proper musical democrat



asking both choir and audiences what they would like to sing or hear and taking care to seek feedback from both.

She's a firm believer too in the ability of music, and most especially choirs, to confer all manner of social benefits as well as the obvious health ones.

All of her roles have arrived serendipitously, she says, and it's certainly been serendipitous for a choir which had a very existential crisis after the departure of the popular Stephen Adam to pastures new.

The revamped choir are clearly very happy to have found someone as enthusiastic and experienced as Moira, whilst she reports being very happy to become part of a vibrant new community. Result all round!
RW.

News in Brief

BOOKFEST NOW ALL UP ONLINE

If you missed the Cove and Kilcreggan Book Festival (hope you had a good excuse!) worry not – all the interviews are now up on You Tube.

Here are the links you need:

Channel URL

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIt3cXBN0OAz0GoX0tPsPw>

Channel handle

[@coveandkilcregganbookfesti9183](https://www.youtube.com/@coveandkilcregganbookfesti9183)

Angus Roxburgh

<https://youtu.be/Z6Ds0cVH-5E>

Clare Hunter

<https://youtu.be/Qi8za4G0SJc>

Ambrose Parry

<https://youtu.be/bNAOq9Ik2VQ>

Denise Mina

<https://youtu.be/2HgkK4V-eJ4>

Mollie Hughes

<https://youtu.be/NZt8kbwPh0Q>

Jim Crumley

<https://youtu.be/pweOaUu8FSM>

Ricky Ross

<https://youtu.be/GNfqA8di7R0>

David Pratt

<https://youtu.be/fDZxIbORvoc>

MOIRA DOES IT HER WAY!

Nobody who came along to hear Alan Bissett's Moira Monologues a few years back is likely to forget his portrayal of "Falkirk's hardest woman."

A woman never knowingly deleting an expletive, she took the Edinburgh Fringe and sundry other places by storm.

Now Bissett is back with MOIRA IN LOCKDOWN an equally irreverent look at how she coped with being copped up.

Alan staged it at the Netherbow Centre during the 2022 Edinburgh Festival Fringe and it sold out every night. Not bad going when there's literally another thousand options for fringe fanatics.

Tickets for Alan are £12.50 and will be available shortly on the Cove Burgh Hall website.

The show itself is on the 18th of February.

THE RED PIANO MAN LIT UP DECEMBER

OK so Elton John doesn't actually hail from Gourock, but the Red Piano Man who specialises in tribute nights to the diminutive rocker does, and he gave it laldu to a huge audience just before Christmas.

Lots of EJ groupies turned up in appropriate gear and bopped the night away so enthusiastically that the bar nearly ran out of essential refreshments! At one point there were a hundred folk on the floor all of whom appeared to be word perfect in the back catalogue and much else.

He came back after the interval with another set of pop and rock favourites, so the joint continued to jump for another hour. A great way to get the festive season under way.



A NICHT WI' THE BARD

Billy Kay, the legendary Scots writer, broadcaster, and author of Scots: The Mither Tongue leads the cast for Cove Burgh Hall's Rabbie Burns Tribute Night on the 20th of the month.

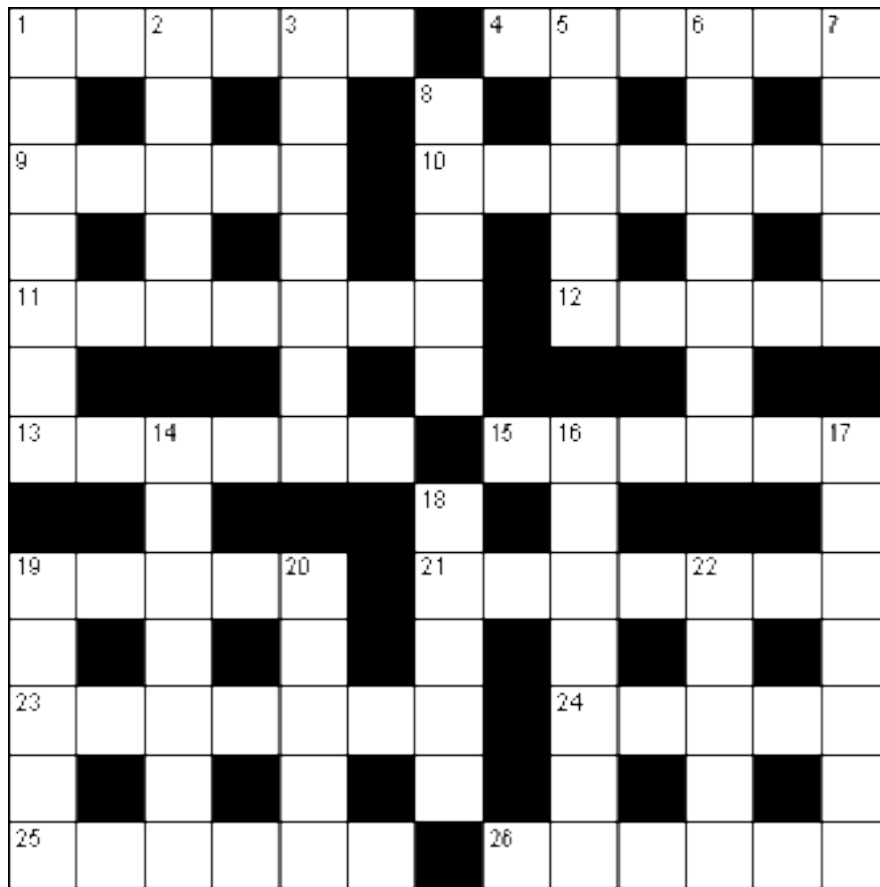
As Billy also co-authored Knee Deep in Claret (with Cailean Maclean) the audience will enjoy a glass of Bordeaux' finest with some cheese and biscuits to remind them of what was once called "the bloodstream of the Auld Alliance".

With Billy on the 20th will be the consummate traditional singer Robyn Stapleton who so entranced the audience at last year's Grand Burns Supper. This year Robyn will have her customary accompanist Neil Sutcliffe who plays both piano and accordion.

The programme with song and verse, tales of Burns global impact and of the Scottish worldwide diaspora will be a fine tribute to Rabbie.

Tickets as usual available on the coveburghhall.org.uk website. The £15 cover charge includes the glass of claret, biscuits and cheese.

Crossword



ACROSS

- 1. Counting device (6)
- 4. A forceful consequence (6)
- 9. Deport (5)
- 10. Relished (7)
- 11. Act of deliberate betrayal (7)
- 12. Movable staircases (5)
- 13. Easily handled or managed (6)
- 15. Lithic (6)
- 19. Device in a brass wind instrument (5)
- 21. Oval (7)
- 23. Slowly moving ice mass (7)
- 24. Large artery (5)
- 25. Throws out (6)
- 26. Sternutation (6)

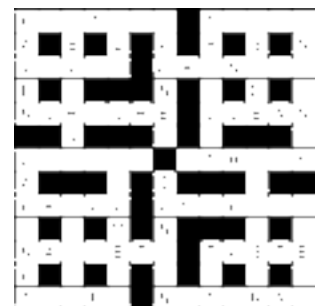
DOWN

- 1. Turned away or aside (7)
- 2. Similar (5)
- 3. Kitchen implement (7)
- 5. Commissioned military officer (5)
- 6. Unfathomable (7)
- 7. Periodic rise and fall of sea level (5)
- 8. Deceive by mock action (5)
- 14. Assemble in proper sequence (7)
- 16. Scoundrel (7)
- 17. Promote (7)
- 18. Prolonged period of time (5)
- 19. Undefined (5)
- 20. Live (5)
- 22. Sum of money offered as a prize (5)

For all you crossword buffs out there we hope you enjoy doing the crossword again. You can print just this page at home or ask in Kilcreggan Post Office and they will print it for you.

There will be no prize on offer at this time.

Last Month's
solution



Ministerial Musings

With the Rev Christine Murdoch

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and auld lang syne?

Attributed to Robert Burns

I suspect that there will be many gatherings in Hogmanay at which Auld Lang Syne will be sung gustily this year. The first time in two years awe can gather without restrictions. Thinking back on the past two years has reminded me the month of January takes its name from the Roman god Janus – the god of new beginnings and transitions. He is also the god of gates and doorways and is usually shown as having two faces – one which looks to the future and the other to the past.

As we move from one year to the next, we often look back on the year, sometimes relieved that a difficult year is over, or perhaps grateful for having lived through a good year. I am quite sure we are all delighted to have left COVID restrictions behind us. We also inevitably look forward to the new year, often hoping that it will be filled with good fortune and good health. Yet looking back and looking forward, can be something of a curse.



Sometimes we can be so caught up in the past, or so desperate for the future to arrive, that we forget to live in the present, in the here and now. Like Janus, with one eye fixed on the past and the other fixed on the future we have no eye left for the present and yet that is the only moment in which we are able to live.

Don't get me wrong, I think it is important to remember the past, for as we know, if we do not learn from the mistakes of history, we are condemned to repeat them and if we do not prepare for the future,

disaster may await. Yet, there is much to be said for enjoying this moment, for being fully alive to the present and all that it holds. As someone whose life is dictated by deadlines, from time to time, it is wonderful to just be.

One of the gifts of a New Year is that the past is gone; there is nothing we can do to change it; we cannot relive it; we have to learn to be content to let it go and to forgive ourselves for any mistakes we may have made. My New Year wish and prayer for you all this year is that you can find the time to live in the moment and enjoy the gift of the present.

Happy new year, may 2023 be filled with health and contentment.

God bless,

Christine x

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KILCREGGAN

TEXT CODE 39

GOUROCK - KILCREGGAN (GOU - KIL)

Table 1A

								
DAY	Glasgow Central Depart	Gourock Arrive	Gourock Depart	Kilcreggan Arrive	Kilcreggan Depart	Gourock Arrive	Gourock Depart	Glasgow Central Arrive
MON - FRI	0554	0635	0641	0654	0704	0717	0728	0818
	0625	0711	0727	0740	0750	0803	0811	0850
	0722	0809	0820	0833	0843	0856	0908	0959
	0827	0906	0916	0929	0953	1006	1038	1131
	0925	1004	1016	1029	1053	1106	1138	1229
	1008	1058	1116	1129	1139	1152	1208	1259
	1155	1235	1256	1309	1319	1332	1338	1429
	1236	1326	1342	1355	1405	1418	1424	1503
	1306	1359	1428	1441	1455	1508	1524	1607
	1407	1458	1518	1531	1555	1608	1638	1729
	1506	1559	1618	1631	1702	1715	1724	1804
	1617	1709	1725	1738	1748	1801	1824	1902
1727	1806	1813 A	1826	1836 A	1849	1908	1959	
SAT	0707	0758	0804	0817	0827	0840	0907	0959
	0740	0830	0850	0903	0914	0927	0939	1029
	0828	0906	0936	0949	0959	1012	1038	1129
	0925	1004	1022	1035	1053	1106	1138	1228
	1006	1058	1116	1129	1139	1152	1208	1259
	1138	1228	1256	1309	1319	1332	1354	1433
	1255	1333	1343	1356	1406	1419	1438	1529
	1306	1359	1429	1442	1455	1508	1524	1606
	1408	1459	1518	1531	1555	1608	1627	1708
	1506	1559	1618	1631	1702	1715	1724	1803
	1618	1709	1725	1738	1748	1801	1824	1903
	1727	1806	1813 A	1826	1836 A	1849	1908	1959

CODE

A	On the 1813 hours journey from Gourock, should the train be late in arriving, the ferry will wait a maximum of 12 minutes until 1825 hours
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NOTE

Passengers must present themselves at the ferry gangway at least 2 minutes before departure time
No Sunday service
Train connections are not guaranteed as some trains arrive/depart with less than the necessary transfer time. Please visit www.scotrail.co.uk for the latest info before travelling
Train times displayed are valid until 14 May 2022
Due to the constraints of the pier infrastructure and vessel, this service may not be suitable for wheelchair users or passengers with reduced mobility. Passengers must board the vessel via stairs and to access the sheltered seating area and accessible toilet on the lower level

FARES

GOUROCK - KILCREGGAN	Single	Return
Adult	£3.80	£7.40
Child 5-15 (Infant under 5 free, must have a valid ticket)	£1.90	£3.70
Pedal cycles (restricted numbers)	Free	Free

Transport Timetables

Service 340 Helensburgh – Vale of Leven Hospital – Royal Alexandra Hospital

Operated by McColl's Travel Limited on behalf of SPT



Route Service 340: from **Helensburgh Rail Station** via Princes Street East, Sinclair Street, Luss Road, A818, Crosskeys Roundabout, A818 Arden Roundabout, A82, A811, Luss Road, North Main Street, Vale of Leven Hospital access road (clockwise), North Main Street, Bank Street, B857, Main Street, Lennox Street, Renton Road, Glasgow Road, High Street, Church Street, Glasgow Road, Dumbarton Road, Great Western Road, A898, Erskine Bridge, M898, M8, St James Interchange, A726, Greenock Road, Caledonia Street, Underwood Road, B7050, Maxwellton Street, Corsebar Road, access road to **Paisley, Royal Alexandra Hospital**.

Journeys via Rosshead operate from Vale of Leven Hospital access road, Heather Avenue, Colquhoun Drive, Halkett Crescent Colquhoun Drive, Heather Avenue, North Main Street then normal route to Royal Alexandra Hospital

Return from Paisley, Royal Alexandra Hospital via access road, Corsebar Road, Maxwellton Street, B7050, Underwood Road, Caledonia Street, Greenock Road, A726, St James Interchange, M8, M898, Erskine Bridge, A898, Great Western Road, Dumbarton Road, Glasgow Road, Church Street, High Street, Riverside Lane, High Street, Glasgow Road, Renton Road, Lennox Street, Main Street, B857, Bank Street, Main Street, North Main Street, Vale of Leven Hospital access road (clockwise), North Main Street, Luss Rd, A811, A82, Arden Roundabout, A818, Crosskeys Roundabout, A818, Luss Road, Sinclair Street to Princes Street East, **Helensburgh Rail Station**.

Journeys via Rosshead operate from North Main Street, Heather Avenue, Colquhoun Drive, Halkett Crescent, Colquhoun Drive, Heather Avenue, Vale of Leven Hospital access road then normal route to Helensburgh Rail Station

Monday to Friday

Helensburgh Railway Stn	0710	....	....	....	....
Arden, Duck Bay Marina	0721	....	....	....	....
Vale of Leven Hospital	0730	0922	1115	1355	1810
Rosshead, Halkett Cres	....	....	....	....	....
Alexandria Railway Stn	0735	0927	1120	1400	1815
Renton, at Station St	0738	0930	1123	1403	1818
Dalreoch Railway Stn	0742	0934	1127	1407	1822
Dumbarton, Church St	0746	0938	1131	1411	1826
Dumbarton East Railway Stn	0750	0942	1135	1415	1830
Milton	0753	0945	1138	1418	1833
Paisley, at St James Park	0810	0958	1151	1431	1846
Royal Alexandra Hospital	0822	1007	1200	1440	1855

Saturday & Sunday

1340	1745
1351	1756
1400	1805
1405	1810
1410	1815
1413	1818
1417	1822
1421	1826
1425	1830
1428	1833
1441	1846
1450	1855

This service is jointly funded by NHS and SPT. The service provides direct links between Helensburgh, Vale of Leven Hospital, and the Royal Alexandra Hospital. The service is available to everyone and is operated with a low-floor wheelchair accessible vehicle

Royal Alexandra Hospital	0827	1015	1215	1620	2008
Paisley, at St James Park	0839	1024	1224	1632	2017
Milton	0854	1037	1237	1647	2030
Dumbarton East Railway Stn	0857	1040	1240	1650	2033
Dumbarton, Church St	0901	1044	1244	1654	2037
Dalreoch Railway Stn	0905	1048	1248	1658	2041
Renton, at Station St	0909	1052	1252	1702	2045
Alexandria Railway Stn	0912	1055	1255	1705	2048
Rosshead, Halkett Cres	....	....	....	....	....
Vale of Leven Hospital	0917	1100	1300	1710	2053
Arden, Youth Hostel	....	....	....	....	2101
Helensburgh Railway Stn	....	....	....	....	2111

....	1610	2008
....	1619	2017
....	1632	2030
....	1635	2033
....	1639	2037
....	1643	2041
....	1647	2045
1305	1650	2048
1310	1655	....
1315	1700	2053
1324	1709	2101
1335	1720	2111

Interchange is possible where the rail sign is shown. Interchange is also possible with service 306 at Vale of Leven Hospital, and with First Glasgow Service 1B in Dumbarton Town Centre

Fare table service 340

Adult single fares £

Paisley Royal Alexandra Hospital	1.05	Maxwellton Street	1.30	1.05	Caledonia Street	1.90	1.65	1.05	St James Interchange	3.05	3.05	3.00	2.85	Milton	3.20	3.05	3.05	3.05	1.50	Dumbarton East	3.20	3.20	3.05	3.05	1.90	1.05	Dumbarton Town Centre	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.05	1.90	1.30	0.85	Dalreoch	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.20	2.10	1.90	1.90	1.65	Renton	3.85	3.85	3.45	3.45	2.15	2.10	1.95	1.90	1.30	Alexandria	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.45	2.40	2.15	2.10	1.95	1.90	1.05	Rosshead	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.45	2.40	2.15	2.10	1.95	1.90	1.30	1.05	Vale of Leven Hospital	4.10	3.85	3.85	3.85	2.75	2.15	2.15	2.10	1.90	1.65	1.30	1.05	Tullichewan	4.45	4.10	4.10	3.85	3.00	2.75	2.40	2.40	2.10	1.95	1.95	1.90	1.65	Youth Hostel	4.45	4.45	4.10	4.10	3.05	2.85	2.75	2.75	2.15	2.15	2.10	1.95	1.90	1.30	Arden	4.90	4.90	4.45	4.45	3.05	3.05	3.00	2.85	2.75	2.40	2.15	2.15	2.10	1.90	1.30	Cross Keys	5.45	5.45	4.90	4.90	3.45	3.20	3.20	3.05	3.00	3.00	2.85	2.75	2.75	2.15	2.10	1.90	Sinclair Street	5.60	5.45	5.45	4.90	3.45	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.05	3.05	3.00	2.85	2.75	2.40	2.15	1.95	1.05	Helensburgh
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Return Fares for Journeys to and from Royal Alexandra Hospital

Helensburgh and Youth Hostel - £7.75 Adult £3.90 Child
Tullichewan and Renton - £6.25 Adult £3.15 Child
Dalreoch and Milton - £5.75 Adult £2.90 Child

Child Single Fares (from 5th to 16th birthday)

Children under school age travel free
Childs single fares at half the adult single fare rounded up to the next 5 pence

FARES ARE CORRECT AT JULY 2018 - MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



The 24 hour clock is used throughout this guide to avoid confusion between am and pm times.

For example:
9.00am is shown as 0900
2.15pm is shown as 1415
10.25pm is shown as 2225

This service will not operate on 25 December and 1 January. On other bank, public or local holidays the service will be operated as specified subject to traffic requirements when the service may be either amended or withdrawn by agreement with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

RBS Mobile Bank Timetable

Tuesday	Garelochhead	9.35 – 10.00	Tuesday	Kilcreggan	11.10 – 11.30
"	Clynder	10.15 – 10.30	"	Cove	11.40 – 12.00
"	Rosneath	10.35 – 10.55			



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