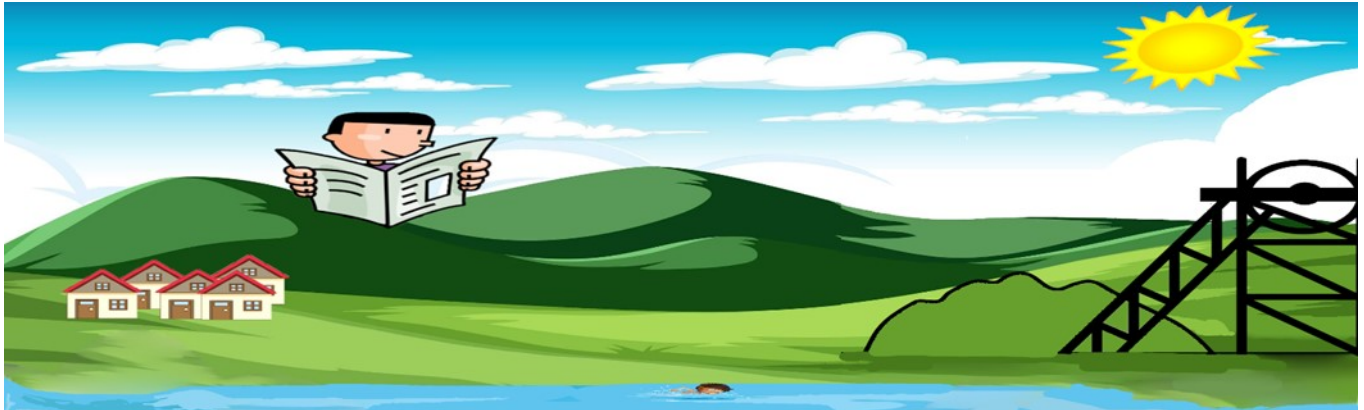


THE BENARTY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 4: Autumn 2023



Flooding in Benarty – Planned Action



Navitie Park, Ballingry

There was a good turnout at the Community Council meeting on 1st February to hear Officers from Fife Council set out their proposals to deal with the on-going flooding problems in Ballingry.

To say that it was a lively meeting would be an understatement, but this is understandable, given the length of time that residents have had to put up with the flooding. The Council Officers were left in no doubt about the strength of feeling in Benarty about the issue.

It was a productive meeting though, and the Council Officers learned that the flooding doesn't just affect a couple of streets. They also heard, first-hand, about the damage to properties with flood water rising up through floorboards in some houses. *(Continued on page 3)*

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Flooding in Benarty – Planned Action *(continued from page 1)*

By the end of the discussion, the following actions were agreed:

- ♦ The Community Council would provide a comprehensive list of the streets & areas worst affected by flooding.
- ♦ Council Officers will meet with residents in the worst affected areas & do a walk round to see exactly where the problems are & how badly affected the houses get. This will be the first time that officers will have come out to see it with their own eyes, rather than relying on maps & verbal/written reports by contractors and others. Thank you to those residents who gave their contact details. This will help to identify the root of what needs to be covered in a plan to stop the problems long-term.
- ♦ Fife Council will contract-out a Catchment Survey to identify technical solutions & the work that needs to be done. The results of that survey won't be available until Spring 2025 at the earliest.
- ♦ A mitigation plan will be developed to deal with the flooding in the short-term; until a longer-term solution is identified & implemented.

Also, the Community Council has applied for funding to provide the worst affected residents with barriers to try to prevent/alleviate some of the damage in the short-term.

None of the short-term actions will fix anything, everyone knows that, but we need to do something to get us all through to a long-term fix - and that's going to take a while & will probably cost £millions. We won't even know the full extent of the work that needs to be done until the results of the Catchment Survey are received.

All our Local Councillors (Labour & SNP) were also at the meeting & they gave assurances that they will keep pressure on to make sure that the work gets done. The Community Council will likewise keep the pressure on & we will likely have public progress meetings so that Council Officers can keep everyone informed of developments.

Since the meeting, the Community Council has been in touch with the Officers to organise the walkabout. Given the amount of diaries that need to be co-ordinated, it's looking like mid-May before the walkabout will happen. We'll keep you posted on developments.



Kirkton Park

The Miners' Strike 1984-85

On 1st March 1984, the closure of Cortonwood Colliery in Yorkshire was announced. This sparked a local strike, which was backed by the National Union of Mineworkers and a national strike was called. The national strike started in earnest on 12th March and by 14th March 1984, all of Scotland's pits were at a standstill.

The strike lasted for a full year, with the union ending the strike on 5th March 1985 with an organised return to work.

The strike was always about trying to preserve jobs and the mining communities that had been built up around the pits. In the early 1980s, leading up to the strike, 7 pits in Scotland had already been closed.

The miners were right, because in just a few years following the strike, a further 11 pits were closed, bringing the coal industry in Scotland to an end.

Thousands of people lost their jobs, which in turn had a dramatic effect on the local communities which surrounded the pits. Many of these communities, including Benarty, have struggled to recover and are still amongst the areas of highest deprivation in the UK.

Pit Closures

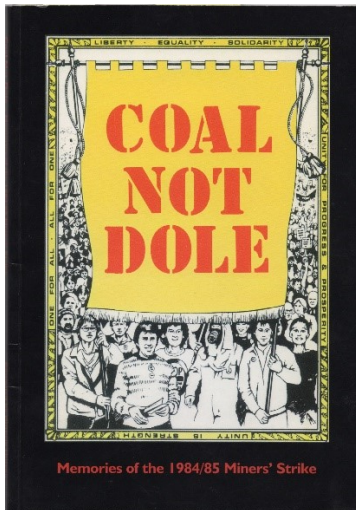
Pre-Strike

1981	Bedlay
1981	Lady Victoria
1982	Kinnell
1983	Cardowan
1983	Highhouse
1983	Sorn
1984	Polmaise No. 1

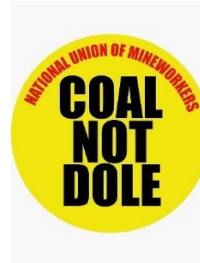
Post-Strike

1986	Polkemmet
1986	Comrie
1986	Bogside
1987	Killoch
1987	Polmaise No. 2
1988	Seafield
1989	Barony
1989	Bilston Glen
1994	Frances
1997	Monktonhall (Privatised 1989)
2002	Castlebridge Shaft (Longannet)

From the Mouth of the Miners



This issue of the Newsletter contains quotes from people from Fife who contributed to the book “Coal Not Dole” that was compiled by Guthrie Hutton and published in 2005 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1984-85 Miners’ Strike. The quotes have been reproduced with the kind permission of Stenlake Publishing Ltd. The book is still available to purchase for £6.99 [ISBN 1 84033 329 4].



“Countdown to Conflict

“It was all to do with Thatcher getting rid of trade unions... if you can hammer the NUM, no-body else will stand up to you.” (David McArthur, Fife)

“We used to go picketing at Kincardine, and if you were out early in the morning you always stopped at Oakley on the way back to get your breakfast – you could get breakfast up to a certain time of day.” (Andrew Stark, Fife)

“Jimmy and Tam ran the strike centre in Oakley Welfare. They would be there with the breakfasts at 4 o’clock or 5 o’clock in the morning after we’d been somewhere like the Frances, then at 9 o’clock for everybody that was picketing locally. At 2 o’clock or 3 o’clock in the afternoon, dinner was there for everybody.” (Bobby Clelland, Fife)”

Planning Proposals

Over the past three months, no new planning applications have been registered, or decisions taken on existing planning applications, that affect our Community.

Caravan Site at Lochleven Road – Update

The Community Council has continued to follow-up on the situation in Lochleven Road, where the planning application to site caravans was rejected by Fife Council Planning Department. Following the required period to allow for an appeal, an Enforcement Notice was duly served.

We were informed on 23 February 2024 that the owner of the site claimed that he had not received the original Enforcement Notice, so an extension of time has been granted until the end of May 2024 for all caravans to be removed from the site. The Planning Officer involved has informed us that he has requested that the removal is done gradually over the next three months, and that he will be visiting the site, and pressuring the owner if it appears that nothing is happening.



INTERVIEW WITH COUNCILLOR LINDA ERSKINE

How long have you been a Cllr?

I have been a Local Councillor for 12½ years.

What made you decide to get into politics?

It was by accident really. I had recently retired as a technician at Lochgelly High School around the time that a serving Local Councillor stood down. I had been involved as a Trade Union representative, firstly for

NUPE and then UNISON and had been active during the miners' strike of 1984-85; that was probably why I was approached to ask if I would stand as a new Local Councillor.

Why did you choose the Labour Party as the party you wanted to join?

I had a lot of support from Gordon Brown MP and others within the Labour Party particularly when I was active during the miners' strike. It was clear that the Tories were trying to starve miners out to force them back to work, and the local labour council were one of the few councils who paid social support to the miners. Also, there was no real input from other parties at that time.

In your time as a Cllr, what are the things you've enjoyed most?

In a word – people. As a Local Councillor you get to meet people from all walks of life and I find that interesting and rewarding. Also, when you get a solution to a problem that's been affecting someone, it gives a sense of achievement.

During your time as a Cllr, how has your ward benefited from having you as Cllr?

There's been quite a few projects that I have led that I believe have made a real difference to people's lives within Ward 8. For example, Café Inc, which provides food for children and their families during the school holidays. That initiative started with a pilot in Lochgelly. On the first day, we had around 20 people, the next day 40 turned up, then it quickly grew to 100 people per day and kept growing. The pilot clearly identified a need and Fife Council agreed to expand the scheme to the whole of Fife, putting £1½ million into Café Inc initially. The cost is higher now but that's where it started. Sadly, Ward 8 has the highest level of use for Café Inc, which reflects the levels of poverty in our Ward.

I also championed the Cowdenbeath Shoe Box initiative, which provides free shoes for school children. The aim is to make sure that all kids in our community have access to new shoes. I was fortunate enough to get all councillors to agree £105,000 of support to this fund. It is all about children's health & wellbeing and it removes the stigma from families who frankly, could not afford to buy new shoes. It's an expensive purchase for families, particularly where there are several children in a family. This scheme has expanded, and, in partnership with Lo'gelly Lunches, over 2,000 pairs of shoes have been provided to adults and families in the last year from the Big Hoose project.

Then there's Lo'gelly Lunches, which I have been involved in from the start. The numbers attending now highlight the desperate need for good quality, wholesome food that can be beyond many people's budget.

The same is true of the Auchterderran Drop-in, which started on behalf of an individual in desperate need and grew from a couple of people to a very successful social isolation café, very much like the very successful Companions' Club in Benarty.

The final example I'll give is the Tots to Teens Togs that I helped to set up 8 years ago. The concept is simple, like most good ideas, in that it is a clothing bank where people can bring good quality clothes as their children grow out of them and choose other clothes that fit. Not only does it save everyone a fortune, but it's good for the environment too. Strong friendships have been developed, between the mothers that came along, to the extent that some of them formed their own Mothers' and Toddlers' Group. Tots to Teens Togs is still going strong.

What are/is the downside(s) to being a Cllr?

Unfortunately there has been a rise in bullying over the years, both within politics and from some constituents. This can be verbal but there is an increase in keyboard warriors who post things on social media that are inaccurate and can be damaging – damaging not only to reputations, but also to mental health when you know that the posts are simply not true.

There are also cases where people have unrealistic expectations of what a Local Councillor can do or achieve. We do our utmost to resolve issues, but we do not have as much power as some people seem to think we do.

What would you say are the biggest misconceptions the public has about what you and your fellow councillors do?

There are some, by no means all, people who seem to think that we sit in ivory towers and make decisions without consulting anyone else; or that we're somehow on the make; or just lazy and in it for the money. Nothing could be further from the truth. I'm not saying that we get it right every time, but a huge amount of effort goes into consulting various groups and residents about the things that matter to them; and I think it's getting better. In my own case, I do not claim any expenses from the Council. I think I'm in a very fortunate position, compared to many of my constituents, and, even when I was working, I donate a percentage of my income privately to local causes.

What changes would you like to see for the country in the near future and in the longer term?

I would like to see a genuine reduction in poverty; and give real hope to people. I'd like to see an education and skills system that isn't failing. I think we should listen to teachers more. They know what they're doing and are best placed to see what needs to be done. I'd like them to have the freedom to teach and not spend so much time on form-filling and constant, on-going tests for pupils. If I had the power, I would also take steps to bring significant improvements to the NHS, and I would begin by getting rid of some of the management tiers that have sprung up over the past few decades. The money saved could be ploughed back into frontline delivery services. Constituents are constantly complaining, rightly, that they cannot get an appointment to see their GP. Lochgelly has been waiting 14 years for a new health centre; and it has just been announced that there will be no capital spending on health centres for the next 2 or 3 years. Something has to drastically change!

What ways can councillors help the community that the community might not be aware of?

Over and above our normal duties of representing our constituents and dealing with personal cases, Local Councillors can be great sign-posters to other services that we don't deal with directly, for example pointing people to the benefits checker and welfare services. It's about making sure that people can get the help they need from the right people.

What advice would you give to any readers who are interested in a career in politics?

I think the main thing, is that a person needs to want to truly make a difference, to try to improve people's lives; and I would say that anyone coming into politics for a career is the wrong person for the job. It isn't an easy job, and your readers need to be aware that Local Councillors are subject to a very high standard of conduct governed by the Standards Commission, which is absolutely correct. It is difficult to express this as I know it may be unpopular but, if we truly want a cross-section of our society to represent us, we need to enable anyone who wants to take care of their community the best chance of being successful – whether a member of a political party, or an individual.

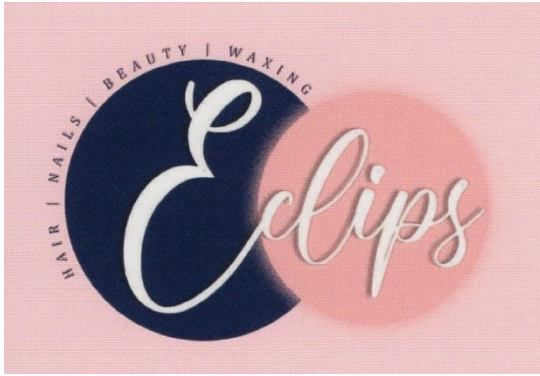
“Women Mobilise

“The Cowdenbeath women’s committee consisted of miners’ wives, but there were daughters and a couple of young, unemployed women and they played a tremendous role in the daily graft of providing for people. You would get either a main meal, or soup and pudding daily. It wasn’t as busy at the weekends as through the week. The men didn’t leave all the cooking and washing up to the women, they mucked in as well because frankly if they hadn’t, they would have been told – that’s just the nature of the community really.” (Cath Cunningham, Fife)

“The women wanted to organise a fund-raising do in Cowdenbeath strike centre. One of them knew Christian, the singer, and the men’s committee were saying “you’ll never do it, he’ll never come, nobody will come to see him, it will be a disaster.” However he did come and the concert was a great success – and that was a great thing at a local level that a celebrity would do something like that for nothing, and it vindicated the girls’ enthusiasm.” (Cath Cunningham, Fife)”



BENARTY'S BUSINESS...



I spent a lovely hour with Margaret Bruce, and her team, in the Eclips Hair Salon in Ballingry, getting to know her a bit better and discovering what took her into the world of highlights, perms and styling.

By the time I left the bright, welcoming salon, I had a clear sense that Margaret has never been afraid of hard work in her time, which is probably why the salon has been such a success and is one of the

mainstays of the shops in Benarty Square, Ballingry.

The salon is a real family affair as Margaret's niece, Callie; her daughter, Marni; and her daughter-in-law, Caitlin all work there too.

What made you want to become a hairdresser?

I didn't! I really wanted to go into child nursing or childcare.

However, when it came to choosing a career in school, we were told to pick two options. I put child nursing first, and, as an afterthought, I put hairdressing for my second option. I was interviewed for both – the hairdressing one in Perth and then the childcare/nursing one in Dunfermline.

I was offered the hairdresser job and accepted. A few days later, I was offered childcare/nursing training – but because I had already accepted the first offer, I turned the second one down.

How long have you been a hairdresser? 30 years.

Where did you train?

Perth. When I was training, I actually had four jobs at the same time. I worked in the Kinross Market canteen; did babysitting and worked in the ice cream shop in Milnathort as well as my trainee hairdresser job. In those days, having extra jobs was frowned upon, so I used to go an extra stop on the bus to avoid my boss from the hairdressing salon, so she wouldn't see me sneaking into any of my other jobs.

Is this your first salon?

Yes. I worked for 8 years in Milnathort before moving to the salon in Ballingry when Mrs Mellish had the business. I was working self-employed during the time that I started my family and also did a stint in Lochore, in what is now Kutz.

How long have you had this salon; and why Ballingry?

I've owned the salon for 22 years now. The opportunity came up and it was close to where I live, so I took the chance and haven't looked back.

What's your most popular cuts or styles?

The lived-in look has become our most popular request. [Ed: For the older ones amongst us – and I include me, because I hadn't a clue – lived-in hair is a new colour/highlighting and cutting technique that allows the hair to grow out in a natural way, rather than leaving visible roots (with the associated line across the head between the dark roots and lighter hair) that require touch-ups. It's a softer grow-out of colour and looks more natural. The lived-in hair look can last up to 6 months.]

We also still have regular customers and requests for perms, gent's trims and gent's perms, which seem to be making a come-back.



Have you ever had a customer come in with a photo of a style/cut they want, but you know that it will never work on them or their hair type?

All the time!

How do you handle that?

We take the time to explain to them why it won't work on their particular hair type or colour and we also offer alternatives that will work. Most of our customers will trust our judgement – which of course is based on years of training and experience – and they often say to us “do what you think is best”.

If a customer insists on the cut or style or colour in their photo, we will do it for them, but only after we've explained or warned what the outcome could be.

What's your most favourite style/cut that you like to do?

I don't have a personal favourite. I love my job and I love working on all hair types, long and short. The joy is in seeing someone with their fresh, new hairdo and leaving the salon happy.



Do you ever go to people's homes to do their hair?

No, we don't offer a mobile service. Our customers enjoy coming into the salon and having a pamper, a wee blether and time to themselves for the time it takes to do their hair.

What other services do you offer as well as hair styles?

We also provide the following services to our customers:

- Waxing
- Spray Tans
- Eyelash/Eyebrow Tints
- Lash Lift (Lash Perm)
- Ear Piercing

How many staff work here, excluding you?

There are three others working here at the moment. My niece Callie has worked in the salon for 15 years. My daughter Marni has worked here for 4 years fulltime now; and my daughter-in-law Caitlin has worked here for 5 years.



(L-R: Caitlin Mulligan, Callie Bruce; Margaret Bruce; Marni Bruce)



The interior of the salon

What's the shop's opening hours and phone number?

The salon's hours are:

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9am to 5pm
Wednesday	9am to 1pm
Thursday	9am to 6pm
Friday	9am to 6pm
Saturday	9am to 1pm
Sunday	Closed

Appointments can be booked at any time during our opening hours on **01592 860001**. Customers can also drop into the shop in Benarty Square to make an appointment, and, depending on how busy we are, we can try to squeeze them in that day.

Margaret lives locally, with her husband Ian Bruce who owns Vermicon. Neither of them would publicise it, but they have both made a huge contribution to our wee corner of the world, not just through providing employment opportunities over the years, but also through donations of labour, material and funds to various groups in Benarty.





Easter Bonnet Competition / Easter Egg Giveaway

Sunday 24th March

Noon to 2pm

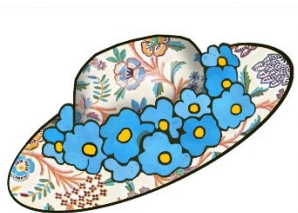
Fairy Wood

The Meedies

The competition is open to all children up to 12 years old.

Get busy creating your masterpiece of a bonnet / hat.

Prizes will be awarded to the best creations.



“Raising Funds

“A huge effort was put into fund-raising because people needed to subsist. Women went around the bakers and asked for any bread that was left over and donations of all sorts.” (Cath Cunningham, Fife)

Fund-raising was co-ordinated from Fishcross – they would call Kelty and say “could you send 12 boys through to Glasgow” – one of the favourite places was Central Station.” (Andrew Stark, Fife)”





**Latest News from the
Westfield Wind Farm -
BENARTY Community Fund**



This year the Benarty Panel are calling on support from the Benarty community to assist them in deciding how available funds are spent. On **Saturday 11th May** you are all warmly invited to the Benarty Community Centre to vote for the groups you wish to see supported.

Groups wishing to apply for an award can do so in the usual way via <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/apply-for-funding/funding-available/westfield-benarty>

The **closing date for applications is 22nd April**. The Foundation Scotland team will check that your application fulfils the usual eligibility criteria and then summarise your proposed project and costs. Information about all the applications will then be shared publicly ahead of the voting event on the 11th May.

For this event only, the Panel has increased the **maximum award size to £4,000** although it is not expected that all groups will apply for projects or activity that need this level of support.

Please come along to the Coffee Morning at the Benarty Centre on Saturday 9th March, 11am to find out more.

For further information go to the website above or contact Felicity at Foundation Scotland on 0141 280 8695/0131 524 0300 or felicity@foundationscotland.org.uk





WESTFIELD WIND FARM BENARTY COMMUNITY FUND

COFFEE MORNING

**Saturday 9 March 11am
Benarty Centre**

Come and hear about how the Fund
is being used and plans for a
Participatory Grantmaking event on
Saturday 11 May which your group
can apply to!

*** EVERYONE WELCOME ***

For further information contact:

Felicity@foundationscotland.org.uk or

Diane.Cassidy@fife.gov.uk

foundationscotland.org.uk



Wind Farm Grants

Learn what they cover & how to apply:

Saturday 9th March, 11am, Benarty Centre

Closing date for applications:

Monday 22nd April

Public vote on which projects to fund:

Saturday 11th May, Benarty Centre (Time to be confirmed)

Microgrants Awarded

Over the past three months, the following microgrant applications were approved by the Benarty Community Council.

Group	Reason	Amount Awarded
Fairy Wood	Contribution to the cost of Santa's visit to the Fairy Wood (Sweets).	£ 250
Benarty Arts Club	Contribution to the running costs of the club, incl a planned exhibition.	200*
Aspire to Achieve Group Benarty Primary School	Games Equipment.	250
Jodi Skivington	Contribution to cost of expenses for sporting competitions.	250

- ◆ A further £50 was paid from the Community Council's grant from Fife Council to make the donation to the Benarty Arts Club up to £250.

Anyone, or Group, can apply for a microgrant provided that they live in Benarty and/or the grant will fund a project in Benarty. The maximum microgrant amount is £250.



The funds for these grants come from the Wind Farm Panel; are administered by Foundation Scotland; with decisions taken by the Benarty Community Council.



Application forms are available from the Benarty Centre or from the Benarty Community Council website. www.benartycc.org.uk There is no deadline for applications. The Community Council consider applications at each of their normal monthly meetings throughout the year.

Ballingry Rovers – 44th Anniversary

Scottish Amateur Football Association Cup Final 3rd May 1980

I had the absolute pleasure of meeting up with some of the boys from the famous Ballingry Rovers team that made it to Hampden in 1980 to play in the Scottish Amateur Football Association Cup Final.

We had a guid laugh, over a coffee in the Ore Bank Café in Lochore, about some of their exploits, and the great camaraderie that existed within Ballingry Rovers during their playing and managing days. All I'm saying is that darts and the Craigie Bar (before and after matches) got more than one mention! You can draw your own conclusions!

There's no doubt though, that these boys were highly successful in their day, winning several trophies in their careers.

I asked them who their best player had been; and the reply was unanimous – Brian Rodgers, who scored a magnificent 96 goals in one season. George Walkingshaw was quick to point out, good-humouredly, that he had scored over 100 goals, but the boys were quick to put his gas at a peep by reminding him that his tally was over two seasons.



L-R: Brian Rodgers, Tam Doyle (sitting), Dennis Currie, George Walkingshaw, Tam Brown, Tam Sneddon.

Tam Sneddon took over as Manager of the club, from Drew Crawford, in the 1979-80 season, so he gets most of the credit for getting the team to the Cup Final. At that time, Ballingry Rovers was the team that everyone wanted to play for; the team were successful and the club was well run. The general feeling was that any team that was up against Ballingry Rovers knew that they would have a real game on their hands!

Tam continued as the Manager until 2005, and unfortunately, the club closed down not too many years afterwards.



Former Committee Members

L-R:

Drew Crawford (Manager)

Jim Watson (Treasurer)

Tam Sneddon

Alan Shields

Jim McLean (Secretary)

The boys are planning a reunion for everybody that has ever been involved with Ballingry Rovers over the years; and would love to see former players (all eras), former Committee Members, and anyone who was involved with the club at the event. It is due to be held in the first week of June 2024, with the exact date, time and venue still to be confirmed. Anyone who would like more details should contact **Tam Sneddon** on **01592 860342**.

The Cup Final Team



Back Row L-R:

Berry, McGuire, Saunders, Graham, Garvie, Rodgers, Wilson, Shields, J McLean (Secretary)

Front Row L-R:

Watson, Donnelly, Whitehead, Walkingshaw, T Sneddon (Manager), Sneddon, Morris, Pratt, Blackwood, A Crawford (Trainer)

Ballingry Rovers (Tangerine)

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. David Garvie | 2. John Saunders | 3. John Sneddon |
| 4. Duncan Pratt | 5. Adam Graham | 6. Owen McGuire |
| 7. George Wilson | 8. Brian Rodgers | 9. David Blackwood |
| 10. John Berry | 11. George Walkingshaw | 12. William Donnelly |
| 13. Andrew Whitehead | 14. Patrick Morris | 15. John Gibson |
| 16. Thomas Sneddon | 17. Richard Campbell | |

Manager: Thomas Sneddon

Trainer: Andrew Crawford

Referee: E J Coutts (Aberdeen)

Linesmen: J Seton (Kilmarnock)

W Barclay (Leven)



From the Programme

“Ballingry Rovers are making their first appearance in the Final. Unlike Newarthill Hearts AFC, they have not yet won a major trophy in the Association, although they did finish runners-up to Star Hearts, the team they just pipped in the semi final at Kirkcaldy, in the Fife Amateur Cup last season.

They won the Division ‘A’ Championship in the Kirkcaldy & District AFA, in which they played in 1976-77 and won the Tennent Cup in the same year. They finished runners-up in the Tennent Cup in 1977-78.

They are in with a very good chance of winning Division ‘A’ Championship again this year and are still involved in all the domestic cup competitions in the Kirkcaldy & District AFA.

A most pleasing point is that John Sneddon was elected the Sporting Player of the year in the Kirkcaldy & District AFA last season.

Ballingry Rovers have scored 28 goals on the way to the Final, losing 10. Their scorers have been Walkingshaw (9), Morris (6), McGuire (4), Whitehead (3), Rodger (2), Wilson (1), Pratt (1), Blackwood (1), Graham (1).”

How They Reached the Final...

1 st Round	Bye			
2 nd Round	Walk over against YMCA			
3 rd Round	Ballingry Rovers	6	Windygates	1
4 th Round	Doune Castle	1	Ballingry Rovers	1
5 th Round	Ballingry Rovers	4	Shotts YMCA	2
6 th Round	Ballingry Rovers	2	Glenavon	1
7 th Round	Knockentiber	1	Ballingry Rovers	3
8 th Round	Ballingry Rovers	5	Cleland Miners' Welfare	1
Semi-Final	Ballingry Rovers	3	Star Hearts	2
	After Extra Time at Stark's Park, Kirkcaldy			

The boys were up against Newarthill Hearts in the Final and unfortunately were beaten 4-2. There were allegations that Newarthill had brought in a couple of ringers especially for this game (ex-professional players from Celtic and from Motherwell), which may explain the disappointing result.



Ballingry Rovers Teams from the 1970s



Back Row L-R:

Billy Baxter, Jock Saunders, Jub Wilson, Billy Menzies, Dennis Currie, Jim Allan, Tom Winters, Dick Campbell, Tam Brown, Harry Rodgers

Front Row L-R:

George Walkingshaw, Rab Hannah, John Sneddon (Captain), Dick Menzies, George Rodgers, Tam Sneddon



Back Row L-R:

Joe Campbell, Drew Crawford (Manager), Joe Greenlees, Jock Saunders, Brian Marr, David Martin, Dick Campbell, Jim Watson, Alan Shields, Jim McLean

Continued on page 38

Front Row L-R:

Jim Harrower, Kenny Murphy, George Walkingshaw, John Sneddon, Johnny Gibson, George Rodgers, Tam Sneddon, Tam Brown

Some Mining-Related Dates of Interest

This area was the centre of the West Fife Mining Industry and was home to seven pits.

In the 1870s, large coal seams were discovered, and deep shafts were created at:

1873	Lindsay Pit
1880	Nellie Pit
1895	Aitken Pit
1896	Lumphinnans Pit
1896	Glencraig Pit
1904	Mary Pit
1945	Benarty Mine

The above pits were closed between 1959 and 1966.

In 1967 Fife Council acquired land from the Coal Board for reclamation and the beautiful Lochore Meadows Country Park was created.

Benarty Mine

Work began in September 1944 and the first coal was drawn the following March. Within a year, 350 tons a week was being produced, at a rate per man per shift three times higher than the Scottish average.

Blairnathie Colliery 1895

West of Kelty, this pit closed during the year of the miners' strike of 1926.

Lindsay Colliery

The sinking of the Kelty Nos 4 and 5 shafts, began in 1874. The colliery was later renamed the Lindsay Colliery.

On 14th December 1957, nine men were killed and eleven injured by an explosion.

Aitken Colliery

On 24th March 1893, the first sod was cut at a spot about 1,000 yards north east of the Lindsay Colliery. The Aitken Pit, for a time, was the largest pit in Scotland at over 200 fathoms deep and employing nearly 1,500 men.

Lumphinnans No 1 Colliery

This shaft was sunk in 1852 as an Ironstone Pit. The pit was closed in 1957.

Lumphinnans No 11 Colliery

This was south-west of Kelty and known locally as the Peesweep (or peewee) – a Scot's word for the lapwing. The shaft was opened in 1896 and was closed in 1966.

Brian Menzies

Glencraig

What's On In Benarty This Quarter

ActivEats

Every Friday	3.45pm	Benarty Centre	Fife Council in partnership with Active Schools. Requires a referral.
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Army Cadets

Every Tuesday & Thursday	7-9pm	Cadet Hall, Navitie Park	High School Children, aged 12 & over
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Arts Club

Every Monday	1-3pm	Benarty Centre	There is currently a waiting list.
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Bookbug Sessions

Every Thursday	10.30-11am	Benarty Library	Babies, Toddlers, Pre-School Children & their families.
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Climate Adaptation Workshop

Tuesday 12th March	7-9pm	Benarty Centre	Actions to address climate change in Benarty. All welcome.
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Community Council

First Thursday of every month	7-9pm	Benarty Centre	All welcome.
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Companions' Club

Every Friday	11am-2pm	Benarty Centre	Aimed at older members of the community, but all are welcome to attend.
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Crochet Group

Every 2 nd Thursday	11am-12.30pm	The Pantry Hall, BRAG	All welcome.
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Cycling

Fife Cycle Track, Glenraig. Details on how to book can be found at:

Drumming & Singing Women Circle

Wednesday 6th March	1-2.30pm	Benarty Centre	Bookings: Benartycentre@fife.gov.uk
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Easter Bonet Competition / Easter Egg Giveaway

Sunday 24th March	Noon-2pm	The Fairy Wood, The Meedies	Competition for children up to 12 years old.
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Entertainment

The pubs and clubs in Benarty have entertainment nearly every weekend. Please watch out for advertisements on the various Benarty social media sites, as well as on the pubs'/clubs' own sites.

The Cleikum Inn (Ballingry); The Craigie Bar (Ballingry); Lochore Welfare Football Club (Crosshill); The Masonic Hall (Glenraig); The Miners' Welfare Institute (Lochore); The Red Goth (Lochore).

Tuesday 26th March 1.30-2.30pm Benarty Centre Free hot drinks, juices & fresh fruit. Toys will be provided.

Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday	4-6pm	BRAG, Crosshill	Needs a referral from an appropriate body. Donations welcome direct to the Foodbank (15 mins before each session), or at the Community Shop, The Nail Lassie or Lochore Co-op.
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Lochore Welfare JFC Matches this quarter are:

Saturday 2nd March	League Cup 1st Round	2.30pm
Saturday 16th March	Away to Vale of Leithen	2.30pm
Saturday 6th April	Home to Preston Athletic	2.30pm
Saturday 13th April	Away to Whitburn	2.30pm
Saturday 4th May	HOME TO Heriot Watt University	2.30pm
Saturday 11th May	Home to Leith Athletic	2.30pm
Saturday 18th May	Home to St Andrews United	2.30pm

Every Tuesday	3.15—4pm and 4-4.45pm	Benarty Centre	Organised by Fife Council in partnership with the Coalfields Regeneration Trust.
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Courses throughout April Outdoor Education Centre, Information & booking: 01592 583388 /
Lochore Meadows Country Park info.outdoored@fife.gov.uk

Every Monday	1.30pm-3.30pm	Benarty Centre	New members welcome
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Every Wednesday 5.30pm-8.30pm Benarty Centre

Every Wednesday 6.30-9pm Benarty Centre Looking for new members.

Every Tuesday 11am Benarty Centre

Every Wednesday	10-11am	Benarty Primary School
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Every Wednesday 2.15-4.15pm Benarty Centre

What's On In Benarty This Quarter (continued)

Messy Church

Every Thursday 6-7pm St Serf's Church, Ballingry Children's play group.

Mothers & Toddlers' Group

Every Monday 10am-Noon St Serf's Church, Ballingry

The Pantry

Every Thursday 1-3pm BRAG, Crosshill There is currently a waiting list.

Religious Services

Benarty has three main places of worship, with services held every Saturday/Sunday. The Church and Chapel alternate services between Benarty and Lochgelly.

The Gospel Hall (Crosshill); Ss Kenneth's & Bernards's Chapel (Ballingry); St Serf's Church (Ballingry).

Running Club

Every Monday & Wednesday 6pm The Boathouse, Lochore Meadows Country Park

Scouts

Every Monday Night	The Café, Willie Clarke Centre,	Beavers (Age 6-8)
Every Tuesday Night	Lochore Meadows Country Park	Cubs (Age 8-10 ^{1/2})

Sewing Class

Every Thursday 6.30-8.45pm Benarty Centre

Sunday School

Every Sunday 4pm Gospel Hall, Crosshill

Taekwondo

Every Monday	6.30pm-8pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 8yrs+ & Adults
Every Tuesday	6.15pm-7pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 3-8 yrs
Every Thursday	7-8pm	Benarty Centre	Kids 8yrs+ & Adults

Tartan Talkers Club

Every Friday 7-9pm St Serf's Church, Ballingry

Water Sports

A range of water sports is available at the Outdoor Education Centre at Lochore Meadows Country Park. For more information on what the centre can offer, please visit: outdooreducation.fife.scot/; or contact them by phone on 01592 583388.

What's On In Benarty This Quarter (continued)

Wind Farm Grants

Saturday 9 th March	11am	Benarty Centre	Learn what they cover & how to apply.
Monday 22 nd April	-	-	Closing date for applications
Saturday 11 th May	tbc	Benarty Centre	Vote for your favourite projects in Benarty.

Women's Walk

Monday 4 th March	11.30am	Willie Clark Centre, The Meedies	Refreshments & a flower for every woman who participates.
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Youth Clubs

Junior

Mondays & Tuesdays	5.30-7pm	Benarty Centre	Primary School Aged 8+
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Senior

Tuesdays	7.30-9pm	Benarty Centre	High School Ages
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brag enterprises

Enterprising People, Sustaining Communities

Food For Thought

The three-year program began at B.R.A.G in April 2023. Funded by Investing in Communities, the program is focused on mental health and wellbeing, to strengthen communities.

Food for Thought has also helped combat isolation after COVID, with several of the attendees citing that it has helped them leave the house, and it is something they look forward to each week.

Ann Moodie, the Food for Thought co-ordinator, said the project was about giving back to the community but that they have, in turn, received a lot back from the community and the attendees help them as well as each other.

Making use of the fully refurbished kitchen in the heart of B.R.A.G Crosshill's building, there have been several classes enveloping food health, nutrition, food skills and combatting food waste - the latter tying in nicely with the Pantry @ B.R.A.G.

Currently children from P6 at Benarty Primary School have been working with Food For Thought as part of the school's Healthy Eating program. As well as teaching the kids about the core values of Food for Thought, the school's program also helps improve maths, literacy and social skills – a win for both projects.

One of Ann's favourite things so far was finding out that a mother and daughter who attended one of the program's family cooking sessions now regularly cook together, and it has brought the pair closer.

As well as the varied cooking initiatives, the program has held many classes from chair yoga to wreath making - one of the classes has even turned into a regular Friday morning event, Knitting and Crochet.

Upcoming classes are:

8th March Flower Arranging 11:00-13:00

13th March Recycled Bottle Craft 11:00-13:00

13th March Easter Family Night 17:00-18:30

20th March Easter Tree Activity 17:00-19:00

27th March Flower Arranging 11:00-13:00

29th March Dreamcatcher Making 11:00-13:00

17th May Flower Arranging 11:00-13:00

More classes still to be confirmed, but if you'd like a place on any of them contact Ann: 01592 7860296 or AMOODIE@BRAG.CO.UK

KIDZ CORNER

SPOT the DIFFERENCE

Can you find the 11 differences in our pictures?





DESIGN YOUR OWN EASTER EGG

WIN A £20 AMAZON GIFT CARD

****Hand in winning entries to Benarty Centre, marked for the attention of:
Debbie Doyle, Benarty Community Council ****



PETS CORNER

We were inundated with pictures of Benarty's beautiful pets!

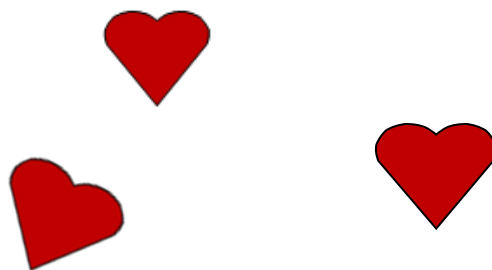
Thank you to all who sent in pictures, it was a very hard choice but here are our featured pets for our Spring 2024 issue.



Georgie, Buster and Gracie

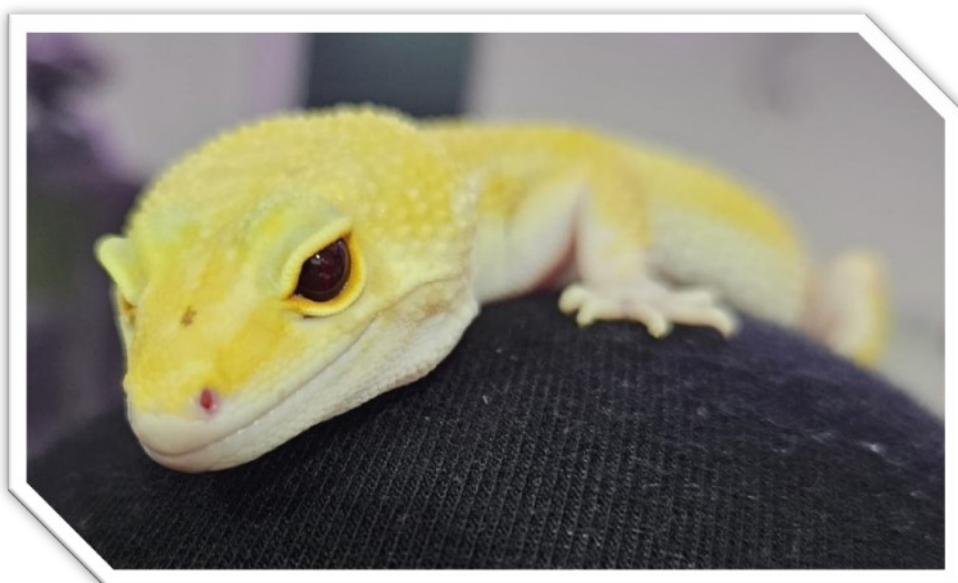
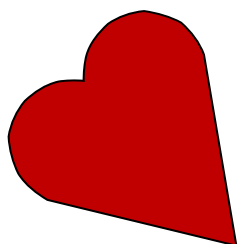
(L-R)

Liam Nardone's pugtastic pawsome trio!



Magnum

Lorraine Robertson's lovely Leopard Gecko.





(L-R) Shirley, Jerry, Tom and Molly

Shona Hynd's beautiful babies.



(L-R) Kylo, Luna and Norrie

Stephen Michie's stunning trio.

So many fabby pics were sent in so please keep your eyes peeled for your pet in future issues!

Many thanks, we loved seeing all your precious pets!

Debs & Cha



“Community Support

“The funding came from a lot of local suppliers and the likes of Steven’s the bakers, the local butcher, they donated things every week.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

The shopkeepers wanted to support the miners’ strike, but they knew that if they didn’t help them at that time, then, when things got back to normal, people would remember that and maybe not go back to that shop.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“Not everyone supported the aims of the strike, but they empathised with the hardship that families went through, so some donations came conditionally... to be used for children or women, or for food for families.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*”

“Support from Brothers and Others

“I know that Rosyth Dockyard was particularly good, finance came in from there and the Fire Brigades Union.” *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“An 80 year old woman went into a shop in Ballingry, bought a tin of soup, walked out and lamped it right through a Yuill & Dodds’ lorry window!” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“We got tremendous support from Dundee. We went up and spoke to other trade unionists and explained to them what the strike was about, and why it was important to support it, and people went back into their workplaces and organised collections.”

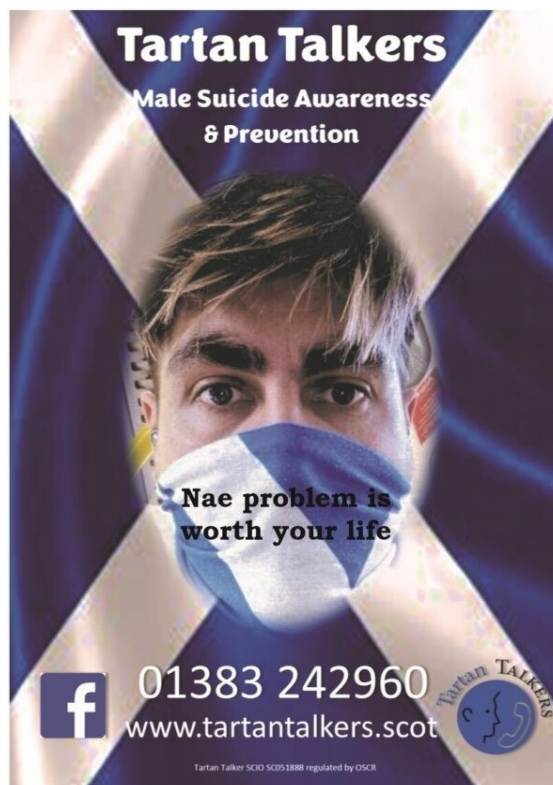
(Cath Cunningham, Fife)”

“Carrots, Peas and Serbian Bean Soup

“Food parcels came from Russia – day to day things like sugar, it was different from the sugar we get. The toilet rolls were not the best quality!” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“We got provisions sent from East German miners, and the Soviet Union sent what they could... strange cabbagy things that probably, nowadays – funny old world – you’d probably pay a fortune for in a delicatessen, but it was amazing how we could use these things. It maybe widened our horizons instead of eating Norrie’s pies all the time! *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“You felt ungrateful because these were workers in other countries, whose standard of living was probably ten times worse than ours, giving up something to send to us, so on the one hand it was really humbling... but on the other hand, for example, there were boots that were like pit boots and none of our kids would have worn them!” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*”



Tartan Talkers are a group of ordinary people who want to help those who need a wee bit of support.

We all struggle with mental health but sometimes men feel they have to hide their feelings and be strong for others. They suffer from anxiety, fear, and depression but some see it as a weakness and others soldier on despite the demons they are fighting.

We want to raise awareness and provide support into mental health, so we have a group that meets every Friday evening from 7- 9pm in St Serfs Church, Hill Road Ballingry. All men are welcome and it's just a safe place to have a blather with other guys.

We also have a hub in Dunfermline that opened on 29th February, at Abel Place, Dunfermline 12-2.30 p.m. and we will provide face-to-face support to those that need it.

We have a huge online presence and can be contacted on Facebook, email or by telephone. Our helpline is open from 6pm until midnight, 365 days per year. All calls are confidential, and the face-to-face meetings are in a safe environment where you can speak freely and without judgement.

We signpost to local organisations that will help on their journey to recovery, and we also provide a buddy system where a person will get a call every day until support is in place. We also sometimes just listen to the person because they need to offload and talk about issues that are bothering them.

We are trained in peer to peer and mental health, but we are human beings speaking to another human who is hurting or in crisis. It's all about connecting on a human level and acting with compassion and empathy.

We do not want anyone to suffer the cruel brutality suicide inflicts on families because it not only robs the person of their life, but it casts a dark shadow over the family for life.

Raising awareness is crucial but equally, men must do their bit and reach out for the help, so, never be afraid to have a conversation with someone and never be afraid to ask them if they are suicidal because that one conversation could be the door that saves their life.

Tartan Talkers are always looking out for dynamic volunteers who can help us drive the charity forward, so if you have business skills, social media skills, or admin skills, we would like you to get in touch.

You can contact us on www.tartantalkers.scot.

www.tartantalkers.scot

St. Margaret Church Office

Abel Place

Dunfermline

Tel:01383 242960

SCO51888

“Picketing

“There were times, when the adrenaline was running, it was really exciting. Sometimes when you were picketing, there was lots of pushing and shoving going on – when it stopped I could feel my body shaking!” *(Pat Ratrrary, Fife)*

“We went to London to lobby parliament.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“I had a theory about police horses – read it somewhere, or heard it on the telly, maybe in a cowboy film – if you kneel down, the horse will instinctively jump over you, so I did that when the police charged us at Hunterston and the next thing I woke up with blood everywhere and my nose burst – so that was that theory out the window.” *(Bobby Clelland, Fife)*

“An opencast on the road between Cardenden and Lochgelly was seen as a cushy picket because cars used to give a peep of encouragement or stop and give the pickets fags, juice, and pies, so everybody wanted to do that one!” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*”

“Orgreave: A Defining Moment

“People wanted to go down and show solidarity... at the same time they knew they were going to get a hammering... but the bus was full – there were people clambering to get on. After they went away the mood in the strike centre was very low.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“There were thousands of police; we were getting lured into a war, it was like a battle. It was a blisteringly hot day, there were boys up the top sitting about in T-shirts or stripped to the waist, just sunning themselves... it was too quiet so the police sent the horses in, charged us, and smashed miners over the head with their truncheons when they retreated.” *(Pat Ratrray, Fife)*

“I landed down the bottom of a bank... and when I came to I heard this snarl – the police had dogs on run-out leads there.” *(Pat Ratrray, Fife)*

“The police gave no quarter, just got laid into them. A boy, who wasn’t involved in the strike, came out of a house and a policeman came up behind and rattled him with his baton.” *(Pat Ratrray, Fife)*

“A boy ran through a woman’s house, out the back door and right through her greenhouse; right through the glass.” *(David McArthur, Fife)*

“They took a tanking that day and it made you reflect quite a lot about where we were going with this strike, and realise what we were up against in terms of the force, the resources and finance that the government was prepared to put in to ensure that the outcome would be in their favour.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*”

Police

“Boats were coming in to Perth with coal from Poland... it got a bit rough. On the way back I got to the end of the Inches and a policeman stopped me and said “where are you going?” – I said “home”. “Where have you come from?” I said “the docks”, and he asked where did I get the car and was it paid for – he wouldn’t let me pass – so I got out of the car, locked it, left it sitting in the middle of the road and sat on the grass – and stopped the traffic until he apologised and he’s snarling through his teeth “I’m sorry”. *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“We tested suspicions of phone tapping one day at the Frances pit. There must have been 500 or 600 pickets and a lot more police, bussed in from Dundee. They were expecting big trouble, but we had set them up because when the scab buses went in we all walked off. A baffled policeman says “you can’t leave, I’ve got all these men here.” *(Andrew Stark and Pat Rattay, Fife)*

“If you were active during the strike most of the local police got a bead on you... they would follow you, or stop you and say “where are you going?” *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“Not Everything Went According To Plan

“The comical thing about Perth... everybody was busy watching a boat because a woman came off it with practically nothing on. We were all staring at this – next thing we heard engines started and the lorries were fleeing out the dock and we’re all still looking at the bird!” *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“The strike centres bartered with each other – Kelty had mince and Oakley had chickens, but when we went through with the mince we found that the chickens were still alive, and we had to catch them first!” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“We had a big skip outside one of the shops that was derelict and people were going shopping and putting tins in – as a collection for the striking miners – and a couple of old women who went past didn’t get the point, and took tins out. *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“We had a boy who packed a suitcase and went away for three months during the strike and these guys, I think in Great Yarmouth, grabbed him and locked him in a cupboard. “Do you know this man?”, “aye, we know him”, “what strike centres are attached to Kelty and what’s the area strike centre?”, “Fishcross, why, what’s happening?”, and they reply “we’ve got hold of this boy, he’s been around about everywhere, we thought he was a police spy!” *(Andrew Stark and Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“Two policemen were sitting in their jeep one day at Solsgirth, blocking the gate. We crowded round it and were chatting, and they asked how we were doing, and how many were coming today, and while they were doing that the boys at the back were letting the air out of the tyres, so the cops had to push the jeep down the road.”

(Bobby Clelland, Fife)”

Benarty & Lochgelly Credit Union
11 Benarty Square
Ballingry. KY5-8NR
Tel: 01592 868800



The Opening Hours are:

Monday	9.15am to 12.45pm
Tuesday	9.15am to 11.45am
Thursday	6.15pm to 8pm
Friday	4.15pm to 6.45pm

The Credit Union also operates from the Lochgelly Centre on a Monday morning from 9.30am to 10.20am.

Lochore Miners Welfare
Society & Social Club

MEMBERSHIPS NOW DUE

Where: THE TUTE
When: STARTING FRIDAY 1ST MARCH 2024
FRI 4.30 PM TILL 7PM.
FRI/SAT/SUN CONSECUTIVELY FOLLOWING WEEKENDS
MONEY AND MEMBERSHIP BOOK CAN BE
LEFT AT THE BAR IF REQUIRED

UNDER 65—£15 OVER 65—£10
New members welcome
SUPPORT THE TUTE FOR THE COMMUNITY

"The Long Hot Summer"

"A lot of people said it was the best summer they ever had, because it was roasting hot. We organised trips, picnics and activities for kids; it didn't have to be anywhere spectacular, some folk got to Butlin's – other families went to East Germany on holidays given by the workers over there. It was decided at local level who went, names in a hat, that kind of thing." (Cath Cunningham, Fife)

"Kids came on demonstrations, and to them it would appear like a day out because you would all go together in the bus and have your sandwiches all made up. They would go for the walk on the demonstration which would culminate in a town square or park, and there was always nice things to do in the park." (Cath Cunningham, Fife)"

SENIOR YOUTH WORK

High School Age 16+
Tuesdays
7:30pm - 9:00pm

Arts & Craft
Sports
Baking
Team games
Make friends
Trips
Youth Achievement
Awards

Find us: benarty_centre@fife.gov.uk

JUNIOR YOUTH WORK

Age group 8 - 17
Mon - Tue
5.30 - 7.30

Arts & Craft
Sports
Baking
Team games
Make friends
Trips
Youth Achievement
Awards

Find us: benarty_centre@fife.gov.uk

Benarty

Climate Adaptation Workshop

Tuesday 12th
March, 7-9pm

Benarty Centre

We would like to invite you to a workshop which explores the relationship between climate change and place, focusing on Benarty. The workshop will be a chance to have a conversation about how our climate is changing, what this means for our places and what different actions could be taken collectively to address this including different tools that can be used to foster ideas.

	Climate			Coalfields
Architecture &	Action	Powered by	Fife	Regeneration
Design Scotland	Fife	Levelling Up	Council	Trust

“The Personal Struggle

“We had a year-long strike and I saw grown men cry during that year because of their debts and their worries... people did have it difficult, it broke families, it broke marriages, things like that.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“The strike committee had to make sure that people had advice about benefits because the government changed the rules in that you could normally claim for everybody in the family, but because the miners were striking voluntarily... there was less money coming in than if you were on income support – it was a punitive measure to warn people that they could not

“Christmas 1984

“It was the best and worst Christmas; it was the worst build-up to Christmas because people were so worried... however, material things aside, it was the best Christmas for a lot of families because of all the activity that went on, there were parties – we were up late nights wrapping presents for kids – we got really unusual toys from East Germany... and when kids opened it, it was “Oh! This is unusual I bet none of my pals have got this.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“We all got chickens at Christmas from Chunky Chickens.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)”*

UNISON Fife represents employees of the council and workers in voluntary organisations in and around Fife.

We negotiate for better pay and conditions, help individuals in trouble and campaign for a safer, fairer society.

**To join UNISON go to
<https://joining.unison.org.uk/join-unison-today>**

**Follow us on Facebook
Unisonfifebranch**



**UNISON Fife Branch Web Site
<https://www.Unisonfife.org.uk>**

**Follow us on Instagram
Unison_Fife_Branch**



Advertisement

“Drift-back

“When the first scabs went back in Oakley, we didn’t just picket the pit, we picketed their houses as well.” *(Bobby Clelland, Fife)*

“The scab buses had mesh on them, so the boys used to get eggs, blow them, put oil in them, and break them against the windscreen so, when they wiped the windscreen, the oil was smeared all over it.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“Somebody said to me that... there was a time after Christmas when people were not drifting back to work, they were haemorrhaging back.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

**“There were different categories of scabs... super scabs were the ones who were organising people to go back to work and were quite blatant and aggressive about it... wagging their pay packet in front of the people who were out on strike.”
*(Cath Cunningham, Fife)***

“At the start of the strike you were stopping coal coming in... at the end of the strike you were stopping miners going back.” *(David McArthur, Fife)*”

“The End of the Strike

“Ok it was an organised return to work, but it was still a defeat; you could parcel it up any way you want, but it was a defeat, and people were totally crushed by it. The women’s committee went to the gate of Seafield... the men came round the corner in the bus and their body language was just as if they had been burst and every bit of life had been squeezed out of them. It was heartbreaking to see that, and when they saw our banner everybody was up at the windows banging on them. I think they really appreciated the fact that we were there to encourage them.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*”

A wee focus on...



Re-Employ is a social enterprise based in Crosshill Fife, established in June 2015 after the closure of Remploy the UK’s largest employer of disabled people. Re-Employ supports disabled and disadvantaged people through employment, training and work experience. Individuals are referred through Job Centre Plus and other pre-employment support agencies.

They have over 2,500 products and can source whatever you're looking for while giving you a personal and quality service, be it workwear, branding or that special gift.

Their friendly and professional in-house customer service team are on hand to guarantee the best service and take your designs forward to exactly what you envisage - from conception to completion.

Re-Employ are also taking forward classes with 11–21-year-old young adults with disadvantages, working with primary and high schools in the local area, to give them an experience of "live" working and making a memento of their visit after choosing an item, being able to see and help with it being lasered and then taking it home with them.

In the last issue we had a feature on one of the volunteers at Re-Employ, Aaron. We are delighted to announce that he was awarded silver in the Fife Business Diversity Awards - well done Aaron!

Victimised Miners

The Benarty Six

Tam Brown

Ronnie Campbell

Sean Lee

George McShane

Ian Walker

Andrew Watson

“After the Strike

“When I went into the pit the tradesmen took you under their wing and told you the right and wrong ways to do things; they took time to help you – that doesn’t happen in industry now.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“I think that even though it’s a dirty industry, we should have kept the mines open so that we could develop clean coal technology – the mines are closed in Scotland, where’s all the experience? What happens in twenty to thirty years time when they want to start mining coal again – and I think at some time or other they will – it’s going to cost more money and maybe even lives because we’re losing the experience. Look at where they’re buying coal now – Colombia where they use eight year old kids, so of course it’s going to be cheaper. Poland, Russia – what wages do they pay? Australia – how can it be cheaper unless it’s subsidised? You cannot compete against that – we’ve got to abide by laws, and health and safety regulations that other countries don’t have.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*

“We’ve lost a lot through it, the government knew quite well what would happen, it’s almost as if they have rubbed out a whole way of life.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

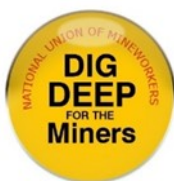
“In some ways the year after the strike was harder. It was a national strike, so hire purchase or mortgage payments could often be deferred, as long as you paid something – mind you we got a television repossessed by the Co-op! – but as soon as you went back to work, everybody wanted a piece of your wages.” *(Cath Cunningham, Fife)*

“Kelty is a growing commuter town now; we’re twenty minutes from Edinburgh, twenty minutes from Perth the other way – there’s no industry, no pits, no mill, even the Co-op is away – and that was a big thing in mining villages. I think the strike changed us; we’re more politically minded now.” *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“I don’t know if it was worth it, because we lost. Would I do it again? Aye I would do it again. Would I do it differently? I would certainly do it differently.” *(Bobby Clelland, Fife)*

“I would go through it again, I would say it was the best year of my life – there was some heartache in it, but looking back it was one of the best years of my life.” *(Pat Rattray, Fife)*

“It was worth it in the sense that we went out and fought for something we believed in.” *(Andrew Stark, Fife)*”



“There’s naethin’ sae sad, forlorn, without hope,
As a colliery wheel, without ony rope.”

BENARTY NOW AND THEN...

Glencraig: 17 February 1926:

Provision of Water Closets and Water Supply at South Glencraig

In a report to his committee, Mr Riddel (District Inspector) recalls that a meeting two years ago in Glencraig Colliery Office that Mr McMeekin (General Manager of the Wilson & Clyde Coal Company) undertook to have 110 houses at South Glencraig provided with water closets [ie toilets] and inside water supply during that year, the same number last year, and complete the whole work by the month of June 1926. At the end of 1924, 126 closets and sinks had been provided and work started on the other 20 houses. These 20 water closets and sinks were completed early last year and contracts let for providing these conveniences to the 96 two-storey houses.

In October last, Mr Riddel reminded the company of their promise and that 92 houses were due to be provided with so much by June.

The Sanitary Inspector also reported that he had drawn the attention of the General Manager of the company to the state of the roads adjoining their houses at both north and south Glencraig.

The Cowdenbeath & Lochgelly Times & Advertiser

Wednesday February 17th 1926



Youngsters today might struggle to understand the above article and the excitement it caused, because it's inconceivable that houses could be built today that don't include inside toilets and running water! Most new builds these days include two toilets, a main bathroom upstairs and a toilet and wash-hand basin downstairs. We've come a long way since the above article was written. Thank goodness!



Brian Menzies

Glencraig

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26th March

1.30 pm - 2.30 pm

Benarty Centre

Toys will be provided

Delivered by Tara Khoury and Lesley Kirk

Have Your Say

If you have any opinions, that you'd like to share on this Newsletter, or if there are any announcements, articles or photos you'd like to contribute, please email them to:

charlotte.howe@benartycc.org.uk; or you can hand them in, or post them to,

Benarty Community Council

The Benarty Community Council meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7pm in the Benarty Centre, Ballingry. You can write to the Secretary of the Community Council, Benarty Centre, Flockhouse Avenue, Ballingry. KY5-8JH; or email the Secretary at: john.purdie@benartycc.org.uk. The papers for meetings are also available online at: www.benartycc.org.uk and in the local library in Benarty Centre.

Local Councillors Contact Details

Benarty is part of Ward 8, within Fife Council's boundaries, which also includes Cardenden, Lochgelly & Lumphinnans. There are 4 Local Councillors who cover the Ward, so each of the four represent Benarty as part of their remit. If you have any issues, about areas for which Fife Council is responsible, you can contact any of the Local Councillors direct. The details are shown below.

		Telephone	Email
Linda Erskine	Labour	Mobile: 07930 607403 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442455	cldr.linda.erskine@fife.gov.uk
Rosemary Liewald	SNP	Mobile: 07725 223776 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.rosemary.liewald@fife.gov.uk
Mary Lockhart	Labour	Mobile: 07515 289982 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.mary.lockhart@fife.gov.uk
Lea McLelland	SNP	Mobile: 07596 727308 Fife House: 03451 555555 Ext 442320	cldr.lea.mclelland@fife.gov.uk

You can also write to any of the four Local Councillors at: c/o Members Services, Fife House, Glenrothes, Fife. KY7-5LT

Member of Scottish Parliament: Annabelle Ewing MSP (Office) 01383 611067; (Parliament) 0131 3485066

annabelle.ewing.msp@parliament.scot

Advertising

If you'd like to advertise your business in this Newsletter, please contact Debbie Doyle at debbie.doyle@benartycc.org.uk; or leave a note with your