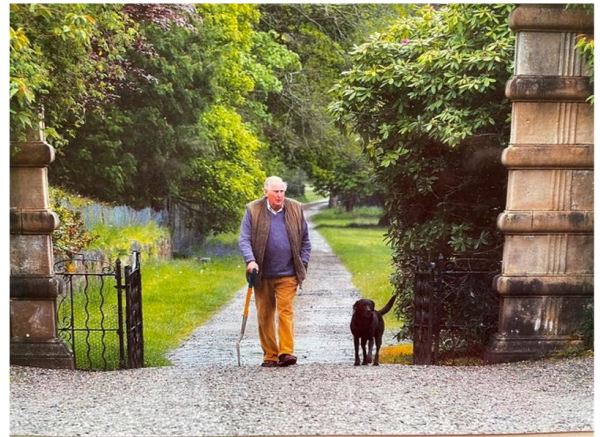


BLANE VALLEY BULLETIN

The Strathblane Community Council News Sheet September 2026 No 108

Sir Archibald Edmonstone of Duntreath

It is hard to avoid the phrase “end of an era” with reference to the passing on 29 August of Sir Archibald Edmonstone. He was 92, having run the Duntreath Estate for 70 years. (As long as the reign of Queen Elizabeth II !) Aged 19, he inherited the title in 1954, following the deaths of his grandfather and father within weeks. Sir Archie, as he was known universally, returned to run Duntreath in 1956 after being commissioned in the Royal Scots Greys and training with the Arab Legion on Centurion Tanks in Jordan. Archie was a countryman at heart, happier in the Blane Valley than high society. Sharp to the very end, he was fretting about some strayed sheep shortly before his death. He was the father of five children, three with his first wife Jane Colville and two with his second, Juliet Deakin (Both wives daughters of Major-Generals). He gave Lady Julie a free hand to transform the garden, creating an artificial lake and extensive plantings.



Faced with double death duties in the 1950s, he sensibly decided to downsize Duntreath, removing most of the Victorian additions, leaving the freestanding medieval tower and converting the remaining wing into a family home.

Archibald Bruce Charles Edmonstone was born on 3 August 1934 in London, amidst great rejoicing at Duntreath. (There were refreshments for tenants and dancing round a bonfire on Dumgoyack Hill.) At boarding school he enjoyed games more than books and snared rabbit to sell to a local butcher. A good steeplechaser in his youth, his real passions were shooting and fishing. He once shot 152 grouse in one day and at one time hauled decent-sized salmon and sea trout out of the Endrick.

Archie Edmonstone was larger than life in both physique and character. He looked like the laird he was and had a strong sense of being part of a great dynasty. (His ancestor William de Edmonstone had been gifted Duntreath in 1434.) Archie always thought of himself as part of the local area and enjoyed talking to local people. In May he was very much the star of the show at the party to celebrate the centenary of the Edmonstone Hall. And despite increasing frailty, he never missed attending the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

Eldest son Edward succeeds to the baronetcy, but a family trust will take over the house and estate.

His Name Liveth for Evermore

Like many other war memorials, the one in Strathblane carries the quotation from the Book of Ecclesiastes: “Their name liveth for evermore”. But in 2025, when members of Strathblane Heritage decided to research the lives of the local men who died in the Second World War, there was a problem. The memorial is inscribed with the names of six men whose lives were claimed by that conflict. After 1945 they were added to the 27 Strathblane servicemen who had perished in the First World War. But there was a seventh man, who had a Commonwealth War Grave in Strathblane cemetery but did not appear on the memorial.

Daniel Roy Ferguson Davidson was born in 1922 and lived in Blanefield, where his father worked on the Duntreath Estate but when Daniel was ten years old both his parents died of influenza and he was taken in by a spinster aunt. In 1942 this by now tall lanky lad enlisted in the RAF and became a leading aircraftman. He was sent to West Africa where the British were assembling aircraft and flying them up a secret route to Egypt to take part in the battle for North Africa. The humidity and tropical diseases associated with service in West Africa took their toll on those who served there and tragically Daniel developed pulmonary tuberculosis. Though he returned to Scotland after the war, he became a patient at Hairmyres Sanatorium near the then village of East Kilbride. He died there in March 1946, still technically classed as “on active service” because he had never been demobbed.

Strathblane Heritage secretary Jude Gregor took on the task of researching Daniel’s life and war record. Jude said: “Sadly Daniel seemed to have been a lost child. Orphaned aged ten, he was only 24 when he died. Though his life was claimed by tuberculosis and he did not pass away until 1946, he is just as much a victim of the Second World War as the other six men on the memorial.”

Jude was determined to add Daniel’s name to the memorial, despite a severe shortage of monumental sculptors qualified to do the work, following the Covid pandemic. But she persisted and in May this year, 70 years after Daniel’s death, a stone mason from Thomas Allan of Stirling finally added Daniel’s name to the memorial. And Jude had the satisfaction of informing Daniel’s niece Fiona (his only known descendant) that his name will indeed live on. Jude said: “I’m extremely satisfied finally to see his name where it belongs.”



Strathblane Community Council June 2026 Update

From Chair Julie Hutchison

JH welcomed CC members and introduced Brian Roberts CEO of Stirling Council and Charlie Haggerty, Interim Chief Governance Officer. She also acknowledged the sad death of Councillor Paul Henke during the summer. There will be a by-election in October.

Brian Roberts

Brian Roberts introduced himself and said that he is going round all the CCs to reconnect with the communities. He said that SC doesn't always get things right but he believes that the council officers are doing their best. Matters discussed were communication with

SC and the apparent lack of communication between SC and EDC; roads; the closing of the recycling centre to allow a new one to be built and the boundary issues with transport.

We hope to Co-opt two new members to the CC as our numbers are at risk.

We hope to purchase an outdoor table tennis table to add to our equipment in the play park.

The next Community Council meeting will be on October 12th.

Strathblane Open Mic Night. Wed 23/9, 21/10 & 18/11 7.30pm Strathblane Bowling Club

Fancy singing a song or playing your instrument?

Come along to Strathblane Open Mic night

£3 entry for non members

ALL WELCOME Contact.

George, gethom@me.com or

Martin,

martin.Shields200mm@gmail.com



GET IN TOUCH

SCC Email at contact@strathblanecc.org.uk or via our website at www.strathblanecc.org.uk

Your Community Councillors

Julie Hutchison 770791, Andrew Thompson 770838, Ian Boardley 0141 956 6681 770757, Rob Davies 771921, Pamela Lee 07801 417655, Grace Edmonds 770800, John Gray 771031, Kate Ramsden 07801 372588

Additional Sources — Community website: www.strathblanecc.org.uk

Library; Noticeboards; Shops; Local weekly press; & the Facebook Strathblane Field Page.

Strathblane Community Development Trust

Email: scdt@strathblanecc.org.uk

Website: www.strathblanecc.org.uk

We deliver projects with grant funding to enhance the village. Please consider joining if you aren't already a member.

Enquiries and Bookings Contacts

Edmonstone hall

Kim Jones via info@edmonstonehall.co.uk

The Village Club

Check schedule at www.villageclub1911.org or email strathblanevc@gmail.com

The community Council needs more members!

We urgently need to co-opt new members to the Community Council. We currently have two vacancies to fill. If you would like to find out more about the work we do or volunteer to join us, please contact us

on contact@strathblanecc.org.uk **The closing date for this application is 28th September 2026**

Remember to vote

There is a local council by-election on Thursday October 1st owing to the death of Councillor Paul Henke.

Please remember to use your vote.

2nd Annual Village Whist Drive

Friday 09 October, 7 pm prompt, at The Village Club.

As last year, young people over 10 are particularly welcome, though 10 to 14 year-old must be with an adult.

A fun, social evening with tea, cake, a raffle and no screens. Donations of baking and raffle prizes will be greatly appreciated. No booking needed. £5.00 entry, payable at the door. Juniors free.

If you would love to take part but not sure about Whist, then come to our coaching session on Tuesday 29th September at 7.00 pm in the Bowling Club. We are looking for local helpers to help with the Whist Drive, tea and coffees, and the raffle. If you can help please contact us. For more information contact the organisers : Jenny Oswald (jenny.oswald@googlemail.com) and Carol Craig (carolcraig@me.com)

All proceeds will go to the Village Club maintenance fund.

Blane Writers:

We are a creative writers group who meet fortnightly on Thursday mornings from 10:15 - 11:45

All welcome!

Thomas Graham Community Library Strathblane

Hugh Fraser Room

Dates for your 2026 diary:

3 September

17 September

1 October

15 October

29 October

12 November

6 November

10 December

We pay £3 per session

We are a friendly self-funded community group.

Contact Lucy on 07711404848 or lfrasergunn@gmail.com



Lynne James

In July, Lynne James our much-loved librarian retired from her post. She gave a lovely retirement speech and we are reproducing a part of it here for those residents who were unable to attend her presentation in the library.



Out there in the world, the world is becoming more expensive, In here the world is more expansive, Out there the world is judgemental, In here NO-ONE judges you, out there are closed borders and closed minds, here there are open minds and open books. Cherish your libraries, THEY ARE AMAZING for SO many reasons, they are for EVERYONE

Every single person has a book that is just right for them

I may not be here to put the right book in your hand but my goodness I will be leaving people who will DEFINITELY find you the right book. If they don't find it for you. You keep on reading until you find it. For every book is a window, a sliding door. The window so that you can look through it to see other worlds. Sliding doors so that you can open that door and go out into those worlds and experience them and it's a mirror. It can be a mirror of the best person you can be.

So please read and expand your mind and if you do that my job will be done.

Lynne has also asked us to share a thank you letter.

To everyone in this wonderful community.

Thank you so much for your generous gifts, kind words and excellent singing (!) on the occasion of my retiral from the Thomas Graham Library this Summer. I was genuinely overwhelmed by so much kindness and am so grateful to everyone for all you have said or written to me.

I can honestly say that I have loved every moment of my years in the library, I have felt so privileged to have been a small part of people's lives as the local "lady with the books and stories". There is no other job that I can imagine giving me so much pleasure, and you have all been at the heart of it for me every day that I walked into the library building.

I am looking forward to an evening at the Royal Concert Hall with dinner,(thank you for that!) and have also used some of your gift to go to London for a "Literary Day" with a lovely company called Slightly Foxed.

Delightfully, their unique selling point for the day was that it ends with "cake and a glass of madeira"! How charmingly quirky that sounds, just right for a "recently retired lady of leisure" ! (Anyone else think there is the beginning of a cosy murder mystery novel in that scenario?!)

Finally, please keep using, and enjoying, the tremendous free resource that is your local library, it is a treasure house of ideas, information and kindness, and remains a beacon of enlightened thought in a world that may seem to be a little less well illuminated these days.

Thank you all again,
Lynne "Mrs" James

Wanted: Himalayan Balsam spotters!

Himalayan Balsam is an invasive non-native species, which harms native habitats, overwhelming other plants, shading them out and stopping them growing. The plant explodes seeds outwards so they spread readily and are often carried on watercourses. The plants disappear completely in winter, leaving the soil bare and subject to erosion, filling watercourses with soil and harming river habitat.

Our village has increasing amounts of Himalayan Balsam, which is especially notable in the Summer in the woods around the Station Road end of the Gary Wright Way path, and the link path to Station Road.

A group of local volunteers has been set up to reduce the balsam and limit its impact on the local environment. Our first step is to map the location of the balsam in the Strathblane Community Council area. At the moment it's easy to see because of the purple flowers, which should be visible for a few more weeks.



The plant is an annual therefore can be removed if we prevent re-seeding, plus as we are located at the top of the Blane catchment, we should not be re-infested from areas upstream and our actions can benefit areas downstream.

Once the mapping is complete, and we have taken expert advice, we aim to start a programme next year involving safe removal, ongoing monitoring, and the planting of native species instead. It is important we find all of it to prevent re-infestation therefore we are looking for Himalayan Balsam spotters in the community to help us track it down!

If you can help, please send the location (a street name, location point on your phone, a grid reference or a 'what.three.words' reference) plus a photo showing the balsam coverage to: mapbalsam@strathblanecdt.org Any questions can also be sent via the email. Thank you.

Keep Our Children Safe

The library car park is very small and restricted. Children walking to and from school from the west of the village using the Gary Wright Way and other off road paths pass through the car park. Children walking to and from Edenkiln and Dumbrock cross the library vehicle entrance.

In the interest of road safety, stopping and parking outside the school is prohibited.

The designated safe route to school for those who need to park is the Kirkhouse car park.

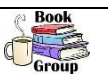
The library car park is NOT a public space. It is owned by Thomas Graham Library Ltd (TGLL) and there are signs clearly stating that it is available for users of the library and the community rooms only.

TGLL as owner of the library and its car park have NOT given permission for use of the car park by people not using the library or community rooms. There are people traveling from out with the village to attend courses in the community rooms helping to make courses viable and they must be able to park.

Priority for blue badge parking is for library and community room users. Discussion will take place with Stirling Council re extra provision.

Please help to keep everyone safe. Be considerate and do not use the library carpark for school drop off and pick up.

Regular Library Events – Please Check at Library

Thomas Graham Library, Strathblane. 01360 770737, strathblanelibrary@stirling.gov.uk		
Games Club For Grown Ups		Chess, Scrabble, Jigsaws etc fee and chat.
Needles and Natter		Knitting, embroidery, sewing, stitching, Tea/coffee & chat
Film Discussion Club		Come and watch, or chat about films Contact the Library for details
Book Group		Come and talk about a book! Contact the library for details
IT/Computer help by Library Volunteers		Help with computer/ iPad issues and help with e-books etc.
BookBug		Babies and toddlers. Rhymes and stories with wee ones. No need to book, just drop in
		Fortnightly Thursdays 1-3pm Appointments only, contact CAB directly to book: 07498925159 peter.higgins@StirlingCAB.casonline.org.uk
		Fortnightly Thursdays 1-3pm by appointment only through CAB.

Village Club Cleaner Required

The Village Club's diligent cleaner of many years has decided to step away from her cleaning roles and so we are looking for a new cleaner. Could you spare 13.5 hours per month with occasional flexibility (eg if we have a wedding on)? On a self-employed basis. All equipment and materials provided.

If interested, please email us on strathblanevc@gmail.com or call 0797 321 7256

Available now at the Allotments

Blane Valley Allotment Association have 2 plots available. If you join us now it is free until the end of this year and you will have time to prepare the plot for next year's main growing season. There will be a returnable £100 deposit contingent on the plot being returned in good order. We are also creating starter beds. These will be large, raised beds and allow a taste of allotment life without the responsibility of a plot. They will be ready for the 2027 growing season and there will be no annual rent - just a £25 deposit.

So, if you are interested in improving your health, getting out in the fresh air, and in growing vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruit or all of these, then please download an application form from <https://blanevalleyallotments.com/home/contact/> or contact our Secretary Ann at annmc57@aol.com

Traffic Contol Solution in Sight

As a result of a long campaign by the Community Council backed by the results of the Local Place Plan consultation, we received the following information about proposed traffic calming measures on the A81. This morning we have received permission to share this with residents to gather comments on behalf of Stirling Council. If you have any comments about these proposals please send them to the Community Council email address - contact@strathblanec.org.uk - by **25/9/26**

Proposed Road Safety Improvements – A81 Blanefield & Strathblane

Stirling Council has a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to prepare and carry out programmes to promote road safety, study local traffic collisions and take steps to prevent them. Under this duty a programme of traffic surveys was undertaken in late 2025 across all village locations subject to a 20mph speed limit within the Stirling Council area. This traffic survey information was analysed and weighted for traffic volumes and speeds, before being combined with the five -year collision data to the end of 2025 which was weighted for collision and casualty severity as well as the involvement of vulnerable road users. The analysis of this data produced a score and ranking for each village location, providing a priority list for the consideration of traffic calming measures. Due to budget restrictions, only those villages at the top of the priority list can be considered in the 2026/27 financial year, Blaenfield and Strathblane being one such location. To reduce vehicle speeds on the A81 through Blanefield and Strathblane, particularly at potential conflict points, several raised table junctions are proposed. These will be located at the following junctions on the A81:

- Milngavie Road with Dumbrock Road.
- Milngavie Road with Campsie Road and Glasgow Road, mini roundabout to be retained.
- Glasgow Road with Kirkhouse Road, mini roundabout to be retained.
- Glasgow Road with Campsie Dene Road.
- Glasgow Road with Netherblane.
- Glasgow Road with Ballewan Crescent.

In addition to the raised table junctions, the existing pedestrian crossing point to the west of the junction with Wester Leddigreen Road will also be placed onto a raised table maintaining the existing priority system arrangement.

Each raised table will include the following features:

- Table will be raised 75mm above existing carriageway level.
- Ramps to be installed on all approaches at 1.5m wide providing a gradient of 1 in 20.
- Kerb upstand through raised table to be 25mm apart from at the tactile paving crossing points which will be maximum of 6mm upstand.
- All existing junction 'Give Way' and mini roundabout markings will be reinstated on new raised tables.
- All gullies will be adjusted to new carriageway levels.

The existing 20mph speed limit from a point approximately 20 metres north-west of the junction of the A81 and Netherblane to the existing 20mph speed limit extents approximately 75 metres to the south of the junction between the A81 and Dumbrock Road will be converted to a 20mph zone thereby allowing the installation of 'Traffic calmed area' signs to be erected at each entry point. A series of drawings showing the proposed raised table junctions, is enclosed for your information.



