



WELCOME



As ever, the year seems to have flown by, and we're back into the winter woolies. As we approach the end of 2022, and for many another turbulent year, we can but hope that next year will be more peaceful.

Of course, there are lots of things to be grateful for - family and friends, the kindness of others, and the many small pleasures that make up the fabric of our everyday lives. We hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.



THE TWELVE MONTHS OF MCHLN



Well, we don't have any French hens, turtle doves or partridges in pear trees - but we do have some festive numbers of our own:

In 2022:

Our brilliant volunteers gave more than 3,000 hours of their time - that's over 83 working weeks, or one and a half years! What an amazing bunch - and what a great effort. For the community, by the community!

Our dedicated drivers drove 24,000 miles - that's a percent or two short of going right round the world! The majority of these runs were for healthcare appointments - but we also took people shopping, helped them visit family or attend social groups.

Speaking of which, we facilitated over 500 groups, classes and activities including walking groups, gardening groups, exercise classes, digital-skills classes, lunch clubs - the list goes on.

Every week we engaged with around 200 people.

All in all, an amazing achievement!

This year, we also celebrated our 20th birthday - two decades of listening to, working with and supporting older people in our community. From its fledgling days, our organisation has grown immensely, and continues to grow in response to the changing and increasing needs of older people around Kincardine & Mearns.



Volunteers, supporters and partners plus the MCHLN team and Board at our 20th birthday celebration meal.

We are eternally grateful to our volunteers who make what we do possible, and our funders, and would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank you” and wish one and all a Merry Christmas!

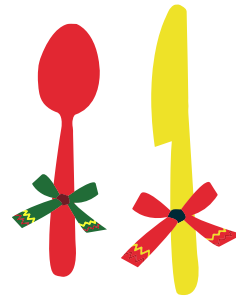


SANDY'S CLASSIC WHITE LOAF

Sandy Alexander has been a supporter of the Stonehaven Lunch and Social Club from the get-go in July 2022. He is a keen bread maker and has shared one of his recipes for us along with a mouth-watering picture of today's 'straight out of the oven' loaf. Members have also had the pleasure of tasting other creations from Sandy that includes courgette, pineapple and pumpkin loaf, as well as tasty muffins.

Ingredients

1. 500g Strong White Bread Flour
2. 1 Tsp Salt
3. 7g Yeast
4. 2 Tbsp Cold Pressed Rapeseed Oil
5. 300ml Warm Water



Method

1. Mix together in a bowl the flour, salt and yeast. Add the oil and water and mix to a dough (either by hand or by using a food mixer with a dough hook).

2. Knead for 10 minutes until smooth.
3. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with cling film or a tea towel and leave in a warm place for about an hour until doubled in size.
4. Preheat the oven to 220C, gas mark 7.
5. Knock back the dough removing any air and roll into a ball.
6. Shape the dough into a log or ball and place on a greased baking tray or into a greased baking tin.
7. Cover and leave for 30 minutes.
8. Place in the centre of the oven and bake for 30 minutes.
9. Remove from the oven and place on a wire rack to cool.

LILY'S GINGER BISCUITS

A delicious recipe from volunteer Lily, perfect for enjoying with a cuppy!



6oz SR flour
3oz sugar
1/2 tsp bicarb
1 tsp ground ginger
4oz marg
1 tbsp syrup



Melt marg & syrup, cool slightly and add bicarb. Add other dry ingredients. Form into small balls and bake in the oven for 10-15 mins (170 fan).

HOW THE PINE BECAME EVERGREEN

It was cold. Eventide. A strengthening gale held the tang of snow. After crossing moorland, she had reached the birch woods. Exhausted, she asked the ladies of the woods for the gift of their shelter. Their branches moved away from her.

She glanced away from the ladies. Across the river and through the darkling twilight she saw the outline of a solitary Scots Pine. Desperate for protection from the gathering snowstorm she reached it and asked for the gift of its shelter. The Scots Pine branches embraced her.

By dawn the snowstorm had passed. The clouds cleared and frost settled onto the snow as the morning twilight thawed into daylight. When the sunlight reached the russet bark, frost tipped pine cones with golden edges sparkled amongst the branches of her guardian.

Deep in her shelter, the little goldcrest stirred. Gently, she preened and smoothed her feathers. Once she was ready, she flew around the Scots Pine who had kept her safe through the fierce snowstorm. Grateful for her guardian's sheltering branches, the goldcrest gave to all Scots Pines the gift to be ever green, for ever more.

Words and image © Sandra Davison

*Based on a recording of Duncan Williamson (1976)
How the pine came to be evergreen. Available at:
<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/36715>*



A DIFFERENT REALITY!

Cherry Lawson from Kincardine & Deeside Befriending had a try out with a Virtual Reality headset, as part of our project Health of the Sublime in the Mearns. Here's what she thought of it!



"I have loved trying out this new (for me) experience. The first time I tried the headset on and stepped into VR was mind-blowing, immersive and exhilarating, completely lifting my spirits. As project leader Carrie has shown me how to use more of the apps and to create my own artwork, I am astounded that I have so much creativity in me – I really didn't think I was going to be able to create anything out of shapes, never mind a piece of art! We have now incorporated new and different ways of working within the headset and each time I put the headset on, I forget my woes and anxieties and immerse myself in what I am doing. My self-confidence is much improved as is my mood. I would highly recommend giving this a go! You don't have to spend a lot of time in one go in the headset and VR – much better to do a little today, a little tomorrow etc. Give it a try and express yourself!"

If you'd like to become part of the project and try this for yourself in 2023, please get in touch.



FIND THE CHRISTMAS WORDS



X	V	M	S	R	E	K	C	A	R	C	L	K	R	C	R	B
H	O	L	B	U	S	L	L	E	B	E	L	G	N	I	J	D
O	M	H	O	X	W	V	T	I	N	S	E	L	R	U	T	N
F	B	S	R	V	B	R	E	A	D	S	A	U	C	E	P	S
H	V	C	T	S	M	U	L	L	E	D	W	I	N	E	T	M
H	Y	D	N	A	E	K	H	O	L	L	Y	C	O	T	A	S
M	A	R	R	L	R	W	V	M	T	C	Y	V	I	Q	T	T
H	D	U	S	Y	H	R	R	Y	M	A	L	H	T	U	Q	F
L	G	M	Z	K	Y	L	Y	N	H	R	B	T	O	U	B	Y
S	N	M	E	C	T	U	X	N	P	O	Z	R	G	O	E	B
H	I	E	L	S	R	T	I	A	L	L	P	O	T	J	T	O
E	X	R	V	H	Q	R	X	T	O	S	M	J	S	F	H	R
P	O	B	E	Z	R	T	L	I	D	Z	D	B	L	T	L	X
H	B	O	S	P	U	I	C	V	U	U	U	B	R	F	E	H
E	O	Y	P	K	H	X	R	I	R	F	F	L	W	A	H	U
R	W	D	O	M	B	Q	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G	E	F
D	O	Y	C	M	H	O	J	Y	H	I	Y	X	H	Q	M	H

MULLED WINE
 RUDOLPH
 CAROLS
 SHEPHERD
 STAR
 CRACKERS

BETHLEHEM
 HOLLY
 MYRRH
 TINSEL
 NATIVITY
 STOCKING

BOXING DAY
 BREAD SAUCE
 DRUMMER BOY
 ELVES
 SPROUTS
 JINGLE BELLS



CHRISTMAS JOKES!



Who is Santa's favourite singer?
Elvis Presley.

Why did it take pirates so long to learn the alphabet?
They got stuck at C!

What do elves learn at school?
The elf-abet.

Why is it so cold at Christmas?
Because its Decembrrrrrr!

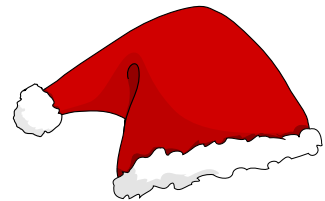


What does Santa say at the start of a race?
Ready, steady, ho ho ho.

What do you call an obnoxious reindeer?
Rude-olph!

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
Frosted flakes.

Who is Santa's coolest friend?
Jack Frost.



With thanks to the pupils at Laurencekirk Primary School

LEARNING DIGITAL SKILLS

In an increasingly digitally dependent world, we are seeing the benefits of being online. Key services such as shopping, banking or making medical appointments are frequently done online. Communication platforms help people stay connected. This year we have run three successful courses that have introduced the basics of using digital devices.

We have covered many topics including:

- Getting to know your way around internet connections (Wi-Fi and cellular)
- What an app is, how to search for and install an app
- Sending and receiving emails - including attachments
- Online safety, looking at how to spot anything 'dodgy'
- Searching online, making best use of search engines
- Exploring assistive technology, speech to text etc.

2023 will see more courses being run around Kincardine & Mearns.



CO-OP FUNDRAISING



We are part of the Co-op UK Local Community Fund, which helps charities generate money when Co-op members nominate them as their cause, then shop instore. The Co-op donates 1p for every pound spent. To select us as your cause, ask at your local store, or do it online at <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/66405>. You can become a member for just £1.

The great thing is that any Co-op you shop at, we will benefit. So if you have friends and family who also shop at the Co-op please pass on this information - the more people that select us as a cause, the more funding we'll generate to help us keep providing our groups and services!

A CHRISTMAS POEM

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



CHRISTMAS CLOSING DATES

Our office will be closed from midday on Thursday 22nd Dec, and will reopen at 9.30am on Wednesday 4th Jan.



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