

THE DARVEL BULLETIN

Corner Blast Off

Darvelo

Walkfest

DMC at 25



WWW.DISCOVERDARVEL.COM

We've been told to tell ye this summer...



This is the 30th edition of the Darvel Bulletin. Way back when we identified the need to have some form of community magazine, we could not have anticipated that the Bulletin would have grown in the way it has. From a one man operation, we now have a team of five volunteers ensuring that our Bulletin is an exceptional local community publication. The continuation also depends on ideas for articles and items to be provided by the Darvel community, so give us your thoughts.

2026 is proving to be a very busy year for the town. The excellent work of Darvel FC both on the field and in the community has been capped with promotion to the West of Scotland Premier League.

So far we have been enjoying monthly Corner markets with a large numbers of traders offering a wide range of goods. A Kidzone held during the spring holidays and of course in May the annual Darvélo festival with its mix of cycling, kid's entertainment and live music proved once again to be a major community event. Walkfest was again successful this year, blessed with excellent weather. Watch out for the Darval Gala Day coming up soon on Saturday 20th June.

The 150th anniversary of the introduction of power looms to the Valley by Alexander Morton will be celebrated by a valley wide festival from 7-10 October. It's being planned by a team of representatives from each of the three Valley towns. In April we had a taster session with the excellent "Born in Kyle" evening with Billy Kay recounting local stories of Pansy San and others.

Our summer bulletin celebrates the work of Hugh Maxwell, our own award winning photographer. There is also recognition of the 25 years of live music presented by the Darvel Musical Company. The DMC has made a major contribution to the life of the town and the Bulletin is very pleased to mark this milestone.

There is another piece of historical investigation by Agnes Wilson into one of Darvel's forgotten heroes - John Morton Boyd - a pioneer in nature conservation. This Bulletin features the first part in this great man's history.

At a recent East Ayrshire Council meeting one of our local councillors, Sally Cogley, presented a motion recognising the huge contribution made by Sir Alexander Fleming to medicine, highlighting that 2028 marks the centenary of his discovery of penicillin. The motion was wholeheartedly supported by elected members and has given a timely boost to the planning of celebrations of this anniversary. The autumn bulletin will include an article that will lay out pathways on the planning and the emerging possibilities of what will be yet another huge milestone for Darvel.

*for further information on anything within the Bulletin just email:
info@discoverdarvel.com*

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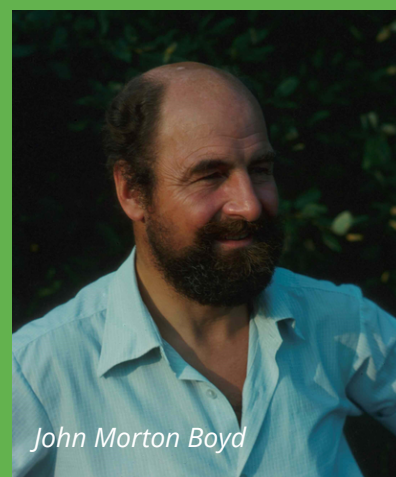
Loads of stuff

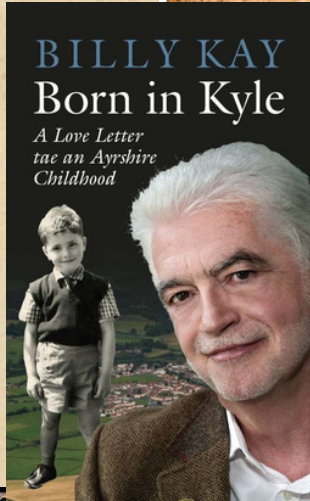
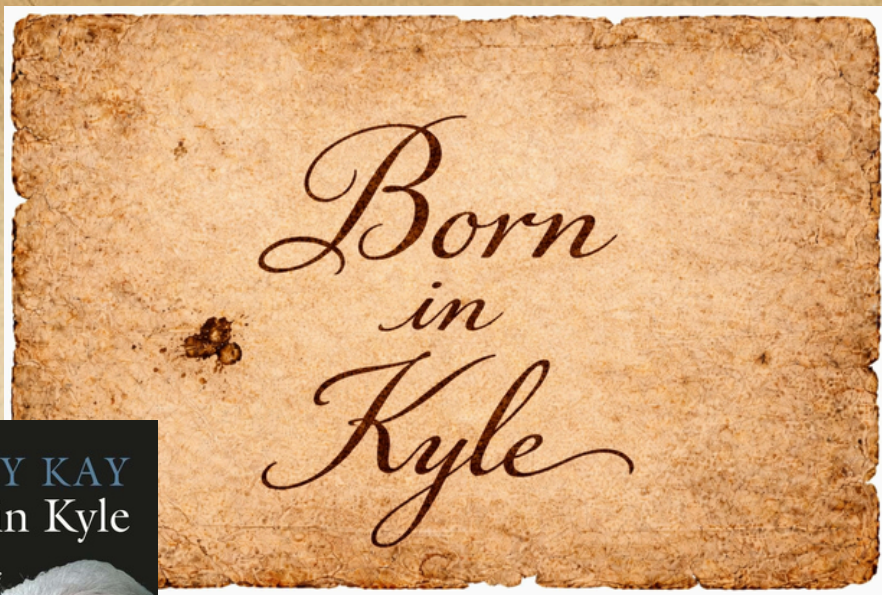
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Community Calendar

What's on this year

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As part of this year's 150th anniversary of the introduction of power looms to the Irvine Valley by Alexander Morton, we kicked off on Friday 24 April in Darvel Town Hall with that well known raconteur and TV presenter Billy Kay. Billy regaled us with a series of local amusing stories in the Scots tongue, together with the excellent Robyn Stapleton, a traditional Scottish singer. The finale was a rendition of the Derval Dam, led by Billy's sister Mary.

The crowd unanimously agreed that the evening had been first class, even if not all of us understood fully the Scots tongue. Here is a wee test for you...can you translate this paragraph from the frontispiece to Billy Kay's book "Born in Kyle"

Naebody has duin mair than Billy Kay tae mak fowk awaur o the pouer an beauty o their guid Scots tongue, an tae gie it its richtfu place at the hert o the national culture.



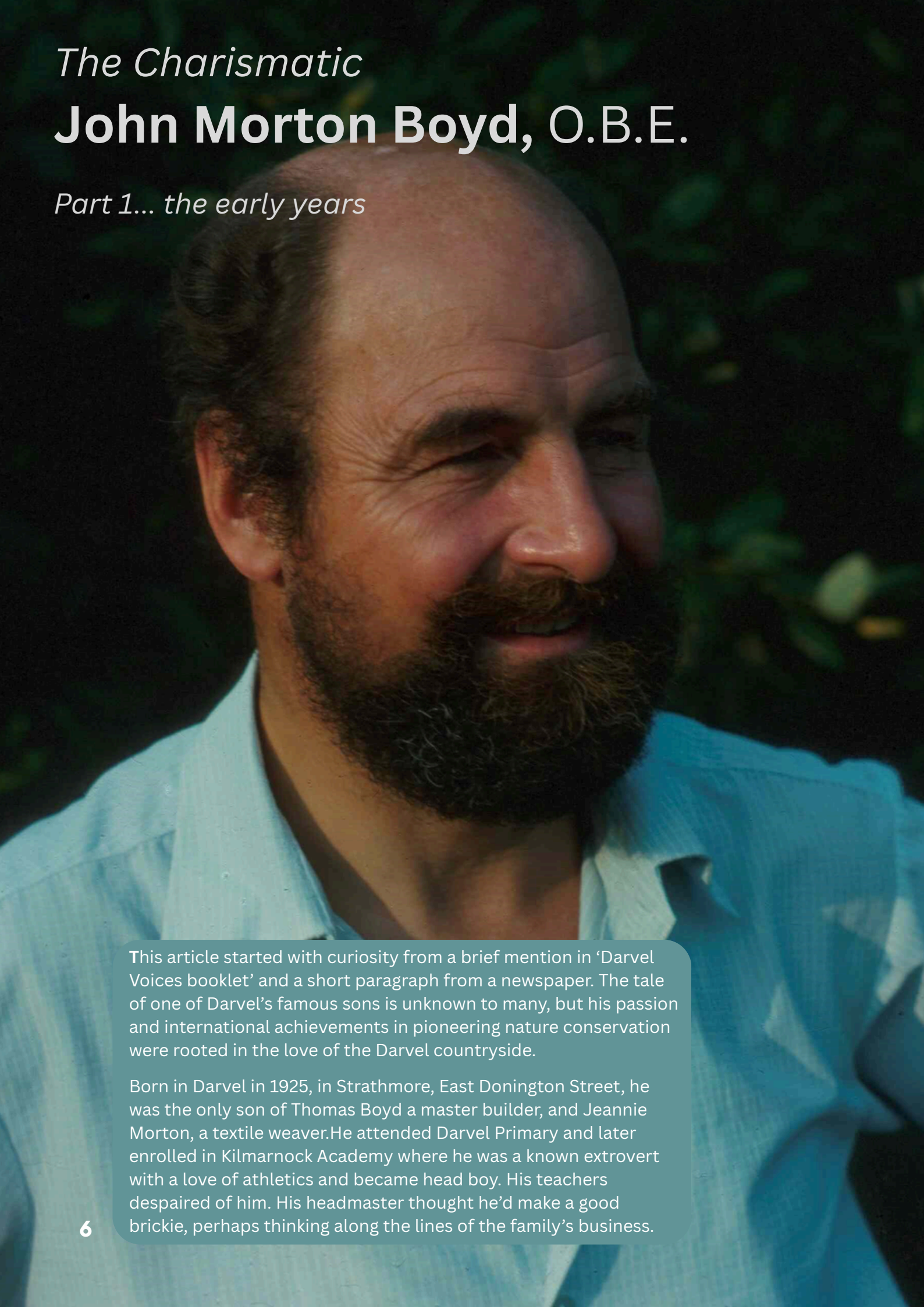
Saturday 25th April dawned warm and sunny, ideal conditions for the market. Volunteers began setting up gazebos, tables and chairs from 8am, traders arrived at 9am and the market opened at 10.30am. This gave everyone enough time to have the stalls and music equipment ready for the start. Our first musical extravaganza of the year followed, with a crowd of 300 enjoying performances from three acts. Debbie Campbell, accompanied on guitar by Scott Nicholl, opened the evening, followed by the Pistol Daisies and, by popular demand, the 77 Affair. It was a memorable night, and once again the music and organisation received many positive comments.



A quick word about the work involved in putting these events together. DART is hugely proud of the events we bring to the community, but these big days rely on a lot of help behind the scenes. When events are close together, we need support with setting up, taking down, lifting, carrying and all the other practical jobs that keep everything running smoothly. The good news is that it is anything but dull. There is always a great atmosphere, plenty of laughter and a real sense of teamwork. It is a fantastic way to get involved and be part of something special, just like the brilliant night we had at Blast Off. We would love to hear from anyone who can spare a couple of hours on event days, either at the start or the end. Volunteering is enjoyable, rewarding and a great way to support your community.



Send us a message if you would like to get involved.
info@discoverdarvel.com



The Charismatic **John Morton Boyd, O.B.E.**

Part 1... the early years

This article started with curiosity from a brief mention in 'Darvel Voices booklet' and a short paragraph from a newspaper. The tale of one of Darvel's famous sons is unknown to many, but his passion and international achievements in pioneering nature conservation were rooted in the love of the Darvel countryside.

Born in Darvel in 1925, in Strathmore, East Donington Street, he was the only son of Thomas Boyd a master builder, and Jeannie Morton, a textile weaver. He attended Darvel Primary and later enrolled in Kilmarnock Academy where he was a known extrovert with a love of athletics and became head boy. His teachers despaired of him. His headmaster thought he'd make a good brickie, perhaps thinking along the lines of the family's business.



Armour Terrace

It was however his great grandfather, John Boyd, a civil engineer, who was his initial inspiration. His business, Boyd & Forrest, was in partnership with his son in law, Robert Forrest, husband of his eldest daughter Janet. They were contracted to the Glasgow South Western Railway, and were involved in construction the railway line which went through Darvel. They were also involved in building Ayr Station Hotel.

Although the railway is now gone, remnants of it can still be seen throughout Darvel. Another legacy of the firm are blocks of four red sandstone flats. In 1897, the Trustees of Charles Fredrick, Baron Donington registered a piece of land on the south side of the railway to Boyd & Forrest to build housing on the proviso that the street be named, Donnington Street. Locally these flats were known as Armour Terrace, a name which still can be seen on the front of one of the buildings, probably after John Boyd's wife Janet Armour. In the early days John had a fascination for engineering. He also loved the countryside and would often walk in the surrounding moors, camping out when he could. He took an interest in the details of plants and animals. Although encouraged by two of his teachers at Kilmarnock Academy to study nature, he felt engineering was a bit more masculine as he considered subjects of nature were more suited to girls.

He scraped through with enough qualifications to study engineering at Glasgow University when he left school 1943. World War II, meant he could attend straight away and he found himself amongst 100 RAF cadets at St Andrews University. Disappointed that he wasn't to be trained as a pilot, but instead studied a navigation course in Manitoba. After the war he became a Station Adjutant of a large RAF base at Moreton-in-Marsh in Gloucestershire. At the age of 21, he marshalled the King's birthday parade of 1200 airmen and airwomen. He later served in the RAF as Flight Lieutenant, air navigator and station adjutant.



After demobilisation, he eventually attended Glasgow University. In his second year of studies, he decided to switch to Zoology. He became influenced by the books of the English ecologist Frank Fraser Darling on man's responsibility to care for the natural environment. He had been working on a summer job on the Loch Sloy hydro-electric scheme as an apprentice civil engineer, seeing the pipelines scarring the hills and the devastation of the trees, he realised the engineering he loved was also destroying nature that he loved. He decided to change course and was delighted that his engineering passes could be used against a course in zoology.

At university he still pursued his love of sports, but this changed abruptly after a head injury. During this time, he returned to Darvel, travelling 3 hours per day to attend his classes. Whilst at university he was employed as an Assistant Lecturer and taught courses in "Wild Life and Agriculture". He continued to find solace from hardship in the surrounding countryside. He went on to complete a PhD on the earthworms of Tiree in 1957. He also attended expedition courses to St Kilda.

It was during this time at University he met his wife, Winifred whom he married in 1954. She was also an enthusiastic student of nature with a shared passion. She was always there to keep him grounded when he "got carried away by one of his enthusiasms". He wanted to spend as much time in the highlands and islands studying the wildlife there as he could, where later he and his family spent many happy days.

the Corner

The Corner is a true community asset. Since its establishment 4 years ago, individuals, groups, clubs, organisations and public servants have all made use of this open and welcoming space in central Darvel. It is home to our monthly markets, musical performances, KidZone activities and the annual Darvélo cycling festival. DART is committed to helping The Corner reach its full potential for the people of Darvel.

There is plenty to look forward to at The Corner, including plans for a Country & Western musical evening - yeeha! We are also exploring how Ayrshire360 might make use of the space. The future of The Corner is full of promise. The renowned Alexander Fleming mural by Rogue One stands proud overlooking The Corner, making it a great photo opportunity.

In 2024 The Corner won Scotland's prestigious My Place Award from the Scottish Civic Trust.

This is a national awards scheme which celebrates outstanding community-led placemaking across the whole of Scotland.

The Corner is something our town can be truly proud of, and its development has made a genuine and lasting difference to community spirit in Darvel.



Market Days

June 27th 10:30 - 2pm

August 22nd 10:30 - 2pm

September 26th 10:30 - 2pm

October 30th Halloween Special, Friday evening

November 27th Christmas Special, Friday evening spectacular



What an absolutely massive 22nd Valley WalkFest!

The team try to provide something for everyone, for every capability. From historical climbs to high-tech navigation, we've been all over the valley.

348 people attended the walks this year over the 4 days, with 106 people attended the events that were taking place, so overall 454 people were in attendance.

Whether you were breaking a sweat or just soaking up the local history, you all crushed it!

Events kicked off on Friday morning with Gillian's Walks Nordic Taster session. Nordic Friday moved from Dean Castle Park for one week only to Newmilns & Lanfine Estate. St Sophia's pupils enjoyed a nature trail with Ranger Howie.

Sam from Newmilns's Heritage Group led the Town Trail.

There was Health Walks & Checks from the CHATeam.

The Pharmacy Girls had a lovely evening stroll along the Gower Water & over The Bankers.

Sports Darvel hosted their Youth Clubs.

Friday evening Festival Bike Ride took cyclists to Hurlford & back.

Then at dusk it was time for the Bat Walker to go and explore.

Check out everything tackled on a long hot Saturday:

History Hike Up Jacob's Ladder: 13 miles of strenuous (but stunning!) views.

Irvine Valley Trail 5: A whopping 13 miles—shoutout to the long-distance legends!

Darvel Heritage Walk: 3 miles of discovery through our local roots with Steve Gillies of DART

Intro to Digital Navigation: Getting tech-savvy with Gillian's Walks

Another big crowd this year for the Loudoun Castle Walk: 6 miles of woodland beauty.

Ladyton Loch Loop: A perfect 4-mile finish to the afternoon with EnRich Outdoors.

CHAT Health Checks: Big thanks to the team for keeping us in tip-top shape!

Walkers finished their afternoon with tunes from Sasquatch at the Black Bull beer garden.

The Lace Trail



Sunday's lineup for the Valleywalkfest had a little something for everyone—from high-intensity treks to snowy sports and relaxing family strolls.

The full Sunday role call:

The 10-Mile Titans: Shout out to the groups who tackled the Cairnsaigh & Long Cairn with Stevie & Archeologist Marcia, and Take the High Road to Galston. 20 combined miles of strenuous hiking! Who knew you could hit the slopes in May? Ski Taster and Tubing sessions at Peak Park, Newmilns, were a total blast!

The Loudoun Hill Walk with TWALK gave those iconic valley views and picnic & stop over at Loudounhill Larder made it all worthwhile!

Pedal Power: Our E-Bike Ride with CycleStation covered over 35 miles.

Love Newmilns Town & Trail: We loved seeing people exploring with the Love Newmilns App Trail.

Family First: A beautiful, mindful end to the day with the Family Footsteps with Gavin #MindFuel.

Monday, May 11th, starting at The Corner a large group led by Katie Allan, great-granddaughter of a Lace Designer stepped back in time to explore 150 years of lace-making heritage right here in the Valley, walking the same paths as the weavers and innovators who put our home town on the world map. The walk also visited notable sites in Newmilns & included a tour of MYB Textiles factory then a final cafe stop at the Humble Table, another former lace mill. Whether you're a local history buff or just looking for a beautiful way to kick off your week, this first Monday walk was one to remember!

Did you join in? Which walks were your favourite? Or share your photos on our Facebook page ValleyWalkFest or email the WalkFest Team ValleyWalkFest@gmail.com



What do the following artistes have in common?

Paul Carrack, Eric Bibb, Love and Money, Hue and Cry, Richmond Fontaine, Hamish Stuart, Glenn Tilbrook, Larry Carlton, Big Dish, The Silencers, China Crisis, The Christians, Kassidy, Martin Taylor, The La Fontaines, Justin Currie, James Grant, Nigel Clark, Phil Cunningham, Aly Bain, Capercaillie, Skerryvore, Ruby Turner, Maggie Bell, Eddi Reader, JJ Gilmour, Roddy Hart, Red Sky July, Karine Polwart, Gary Louris, Mark Olsen, Larry McCray Band, The Phantom Band, Koshka, Hamilton Loomis, The Bluetones, Endrick Brothers, Iain Morrison, King King, The Blues Band, Steve Ferrone, Molly Duncan, Kokomo, Peatbog Faeries, The Mull Historical Society, The Coal Porters, Tidelines and many many more....

Guy Barker

Darvel Music Festival – ‘Celebrating 25 years’

The Darvel Music Festival first took place in 2002. The festival was initiated as part of the town’s 250th anniversary celebrations, and has since grown into a recognised live-music event. Originally the festival featured a concentrated set of concerts (for example in 2009 the “Homecoming” edition featured seven concerts and 25 national/international performers). Over time it evolved and by the 2010’s the festival morphed into a broader concert series while retaining its commitment to high-quality live music.

The festival and related concerts, run by local volunteers, have helped to put Darvel on the map as a “music town” – building the town’s cultural identity around live performance and attracting visitors from Scotland, the UK and internationally.

Highlights and Achievements

- The festival has featured international and national artists, some giving Scotland or UK-only dates in Darvel, making it distinct in the Scottish live-music scene.
- It is lauded for its “Darvel Experience”: high-calibre sound and lighting, friendly and committed volunteer crew, and intimate venue – leading to a unique live-music atmosphere.
- The festival has played a significant role in the cultural regeneration of Darvel: by attracting visitors, encouraging local business, and providing community-driven events that engage locals and tourists alike.
- In its first decade, the festival was estimated to generate approximately £200,000 of revenue (local area income) for the town.
- The festival’s reputation has earned positive quotes from artists and observers: e.g., “A very brave, exciting line-up – this has really put Darvel on the cultural map of Britain” - Phil Cunningham.

Economic Impact & Local Value

The festival is more than just concerts: it plays a part in local regeneration and tourism. According to a case study from the SCOTO Community Tourism Network: “...the festival steadily built up a solid reputation within the Scottish music scene and has received plaudits and favourable reviews from various media sources. Music fans from across Scotland, the rest of the U.K, Canada, the USA and Japan have attended shows and in turn, this influx of visitors has helped boost the local economy.”

Financially, the festival’s impact in the first ten years was described as “approximately £200,000 of revenue and income into the local area and community.” This figure is now approximately £500,000 from 2002 until 2025.

Local community documentation (East Ayrshire Council’s “Darvel & District Community Action Plan”) points out: “The establishment of the Darvel Music Company has seen the town become established as a national and indeed internationally recognised music venue. The music festival ... has proved very valuable to our community ... with some bands choosing to make the festival their only Scottish date.”

Positive Artist Feedback

Here are some selected mentions which illustrate the festival’s standing and audience experience:

“Great community spirit and serious listening crowd. Great night” – Capercaillie.

“Lovely Festival and very nice people. Looking forward to coming back.” – Martin Taylor

“A wonderful festival experience” – The Bluetones.

These kinds of endorsements reflect the festival’s ability to deliver memorable music nights in a friendly, well-run small town setting.



Eddi Reader



Paul Carrack



Glenn Tilbrook



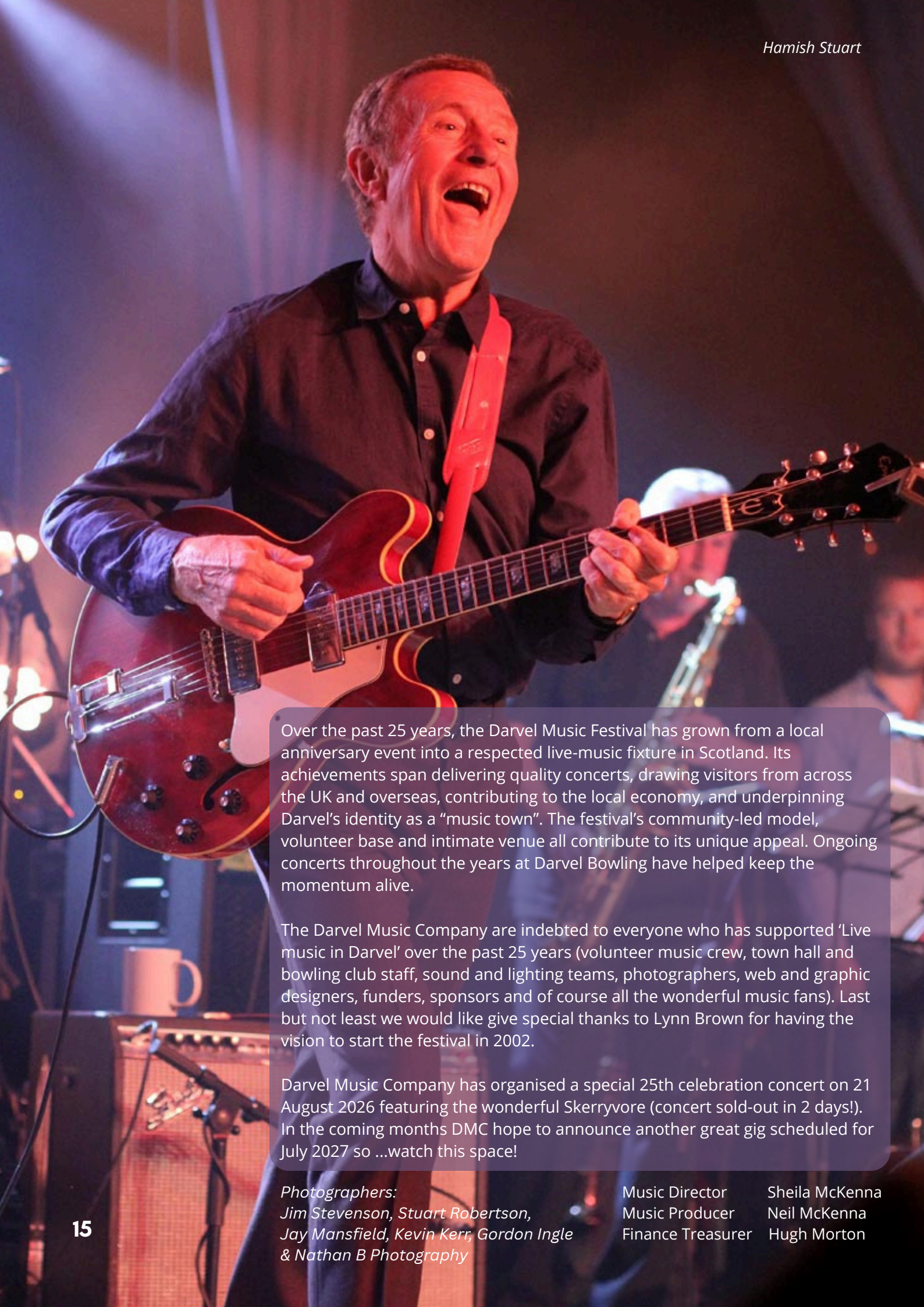
Red Sky July



Larry Carlton



Eric Bibb



Over the past 25 years, the Darvel Music Festival has grown from a local anniversary event into a respected live-music fixture in Scotland. Its achievements span delivering quality concerts, drawing visitors from across the UK and overseas, contributing to the local economy, and underpinning Darvel's identity as a "music town". The festival's community-led model, volunteer base and intimate venue all contribute to its unique appeal. Ongoing concerts throughout the years at Darvel Bowling have helped keep the momentum alive.

The Darvel Music Company are indebted to everyone who has supported 'Live music in Darvel' over the past 25 years (volunteer music crew, town hall and bowling club staff, sound and lighting teams, photographers, web and graphic designers, funders, sponsors and of course all the wonderful music fans). Last but not least we would like give special thanks to Lynn Brown for having the vision to start the festival in 2002.

Darvel Music Company has organised a special 25th celebration concert on 21 August 2026 featuring the wonderful Skerryvore (concert sold-out in 2 days!). In the coming months DMC hope to announce another great gig scheduled for July 2027 so ...watch this space!

Photographers:
Jim Stevenson, Stuart Robertson,
Jay Mansfield, Kevin Kerr, Gordon Ingle
& Nathan B Photography

Music Director	Sheila McKenna
Music Producer	Neil McKenna
Finance Treasurer	Hugh Morton



Hugh Maxwell
Photographer

Class will out.

Darvel continues to throw up talent. Hugh Maxwell has recently featured in a four page spread in the Amateur Photography Magazine, exhibiting some of his finest photographs and explaining how he captured them. This followed his entry for the first time into a national competition, the Scottish Landscape Photographer of the Year, in 2024 where his image of Lowran Burn at Loch Ken earned a Commendation in the Landscape Category and was published in the official winners book. Further success saw the publishing of a photograph in the Portfolio Yearbook 2024 along with a short biography. Those with a knowledge of photography will appreciate how difficult it is to earn such recognition in such a competitive field. Hugh now has a large following on Facebook. Some of his favourite photos are included here.

A story to tell - success was a slow burner.

Hugh was born in Darvel and with the exception of a few years in his very early childhood when his family moved to Aberdeen in search of employment, he has lived here ever since - 35 years in his present house. As a teenager, he and his friends regularly explored the Ayrshire countryside on bikes and by foot and the seed of interest in nature and exceptional views was planted. A friend of Hugh's was given an old camera from his Dad and Hugh followed suit with a plastic, bright red compact camera which his parents "bought" for him by collecting cigarette packet vouchers! When he managed to upgrade to a bashed second hand SLR Pentax, his passion for photography took off and he devoured photography books and magazines on and off for years. His only formal photography education came when he was at Kilmarnock college where he did a course in media and communication which included modules in art work, photography and developing film.

Writing career.

Hugh will be better known to some people as a writer as he wrote some 13 books about local history during college years and his working life. He also wrote for Scots Magazine, the Kilmarnock Standard and others, often doing "then and now" books and covering most of Ayrshire. This involved a limited amount of photography.

Game changers.

Despite his love of the camera, work and family commitments began to take precedence and whilst Hugh embraced the digital revolution in 2007, he was for many years restricted to fairly casual and sporadic photography, though he continued to read books and magazines to keep up to date. He focussed mainly on his writing during this period but this was set to change radically. When nearing his 50th birthday, Hugh had the first but most important of several life changing "eureka" moments:

EUREKA 1: He quit his banking job of 21 years! Enough of the daily grind, with its stresses and strains. It was autumn 2022 - time to "take a beat". Not many of us are that brave!

EUREKA 2: Hugh dropped the hugely time consuming writing work as he began to experience a compelling resurgence in his love of photography. This may have been forming in his mind for a while as he had already upgraded his camera and computer to a standard necessary for serious photography.

EUREKA 3: The realisation that the best photos of landscapes are to be had at dawn (and maybe dusk). It clicked that the photos he had taken over the years during daylight hours were good but not in the same league as those that could be achieved around dawn. When he first went out before dawn, Hugh was stunned by the colours, the wildlife, the tranquility and just thought "Oh my god, what have I been doing all these years...the penny dropped and all the bits of photography that had been separate for all these years seemed to come together in my mind."

Hugh can be up at 4am chasing such things as the elusive "Blue Hour" just before dawn when the shorter blue wavelengths of light from the sun (still below the horizon) scatter through the atmosphere, creating a beautiful blue light.

“It don’t come easy -you know it don’t come easy”

Whilst Hugh’s passion for photography energises him, it is striking that he puts a huge amount of work into his pursuit. Apart from ridiculously early rises, it is not easy getting to remote spots in the dark over perhaps rough, boggy ground, with a very heavy backpack and just a head torch to guide you. Add to that hours of research or trial and error to find the ideal spot for that perfect shot with the right light or tide or cloud cover. Hugh has built up a knowledge bank over some 20 years, of the many variables that may apply to any particular scene. Now he looks back at old photos and sees them as a long way short of where he is now. Sometimes, he keeps going back to the same spot as he can see the potential for improving the same shot. If it still doesn’t work out, Hugh reckons: “Do you know what, I’ll just come back another time!” This enthusiasm is infectious! When asked if he ever got bored when out with the camera, the response was a loud and resounding “NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!”

More life changes.

Since quitting his job, Hugh’s situation changed again as he is now having to care on a full time basis for his mother who has developed dementia and severe physical restrictions. This is of course hugely demanding and he has had to adjust his lifestyle accordingly. Fortunately, he is still able to make his dawn excursions to fit in with his caring duties and indeed he appreciates that his photography is very helpful for his mental health in a situation which can be so demanding. The experience of driving pre-dawn along virtually empty roads, seeing no-one other than the odd dog walker or jogger and a scene of total tranquility at his destination helps him “get into the zone, having fun”.

For the techies.

Hugh is keen to capture as faithfully as possible what he actually witnesses. When he explains some of the intricacies of photography, it becomes clear that this is far from simple. For a start, one person’s view of a scene may differ from that of another. Then Hugh explains that one brand of camera/lenses will produce a different depiction of exactly the same scene. Then upload the photographs to a computer where the sky is the limit with potential processing. (Don’t even mention AI). Then Hugh volunteers that a camera can pick up a scene quite clearly when to the human eye, it is pitch dark. So what is reality here? As far as Hugh is concerned, he has been trying in recent years to create photographs “in camera” with the minimum use of processing tools. He uses Photoshop to edit but his aim is to try to reproduce a scene as he saw it and remembers it. To do that, he has to be “creative, individual and artistic” as he puts it on his website.

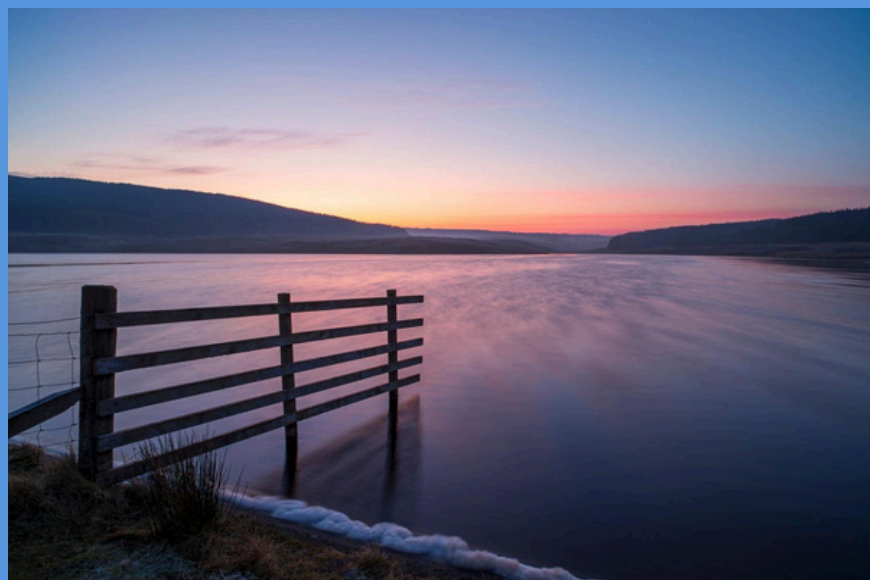
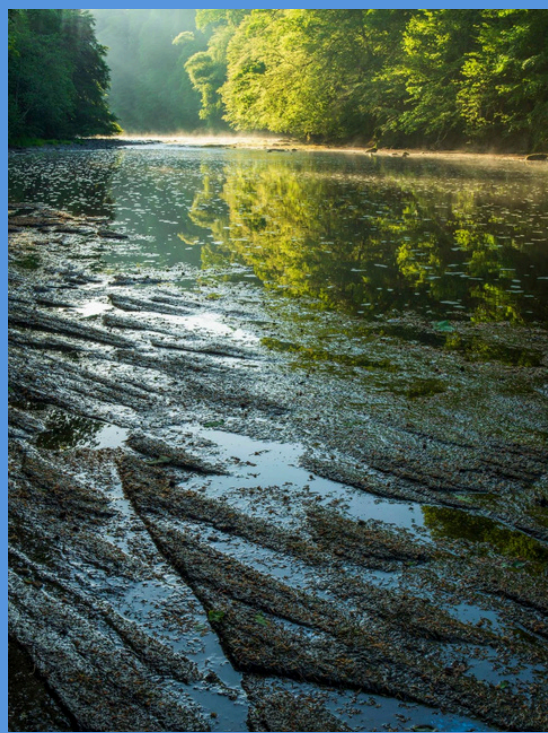
The Future

Hugh is modest and wise enough to acknowledge that his success as a photographer is partly down to hard work, patience and a natural talent but also to a certain amount of luck at being in the right place at the right time. Having observed his own development in this field over the past few years in particular, he feels there is “a lot more to come” and he is only “half the photographer” he is going to become. He hopes to go further afield in future and also to expand his interest in printing photographs.

As Hugh put it, “A photograph captures a unique moment in time”. This seems worth remembering even if all you ever use is your phone camera.

If you are interested in learning more about Hugh and his work, visit his website (which he created by himself) at hughmaxwell.co.uk or follow him on facebook.

Interview by Ken Mair





Saturday morning, 16th May dawned brightly promising a fine day ahead, and we were not disappointed.

Darvélo, our annual cycling festival was a blast!

East Ayrshire's Provost Claire Leitch opened the day, praising Darvel for this amazing cycling festival, now in its fourth year, together with the range of other exciting community events that the town hosts. This year there were four cycle rides - the classic Sportive, the Social, the Off-Road and Family rides.

The Classic Sportive

This was a 90km open ride through quiet country roads close to Auldhouse, Strathaven, Muirkirk, Sorn, Galston returning to Darvel. The ride was started by cycling enthusiast, Councillor Sally Cogley. Just under 100 cyclists took part ranging from 19 to 80 years old! There were some challenging hills (starting with Burn Road) and over 1100 metres of climb but a feed station at Nether Lethame Farm café was a welcoming sight before tackling the Dungavel moors. Some cyclists were in a hurry, others took their time enjoying the stunning scenery. This wasn't a race. Times ranged from 3 - 6 hours. First home were Euan Main, James Watson and Alistair Mair. Apparently Euan averaged 30.5km/hr, burning 2,400 calories with an average heart rate of 159bpm...so Strava tells us. First ladies home were Katie Vallance, Cara Baillie and Anne Davie. Congratulations to everyone who took part and collected their shiny medals. A big thank you to Loudoun Road Club for organising the route, John Faulds and Raynet who provided the communication links throughout the sportive, Paul Reid for drone footage and Kenny Girvan for some amazing photography.

The Social Ride

Our Social ride was a nice gentle 40km guided ride through some fine Ayrshire countryside. The ride was started by our local MP, Lillian Jones who gave 24 riders a rousing send off. For riders a welcomed coffee stop on the way back from Strathaven re-energised the group who all arrived back with big smiles.

The Trail Ride

New for this year was an off-road introduction to mountainbiking which took you through the beautiful woods of Lanfine Estate. A small but enthusiastic group of riders enjoyed an exciting taster session. Many thanks to Lillian Jones MP, for starting the ride and to the Sasse family for granting us permission to access Lanfine.

The Family Ride

As ever this fun ride for children and parents was a popular success. Guided by Cycle Station staff, the route followed the River Irvine down the back road to Galston, returning to The Corner for sweets and an ice cream. This ride was cheered off by Councillor Kevin McGregor.

A big thank you to Jimmy Struthers, our resplendent piper who piped off all four rides.

Laughter and Music

Let's not forget the entertainment at The Corner which started early with the superb Loudoun Dance Group. Midday saw the return of children's favourite Uncle Billy. A big thanks to Hannah Farley and Dorothy Baird for organising a range of kids entertainment. Yoga and Health Checks were running at the Town Hall and fun runs feature at the Morton Park.

In the afternoon three great bands performed to an enthusiastic crowd exceeding 200. The Aborigines, The 77 Affair and then finishing off with the headline band - The Oasis Story, who brought the festival to a rousing close in the early evening.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make Darvélo '26 a real success. Your efforts are much appreciated.

See you next year for Darvélo '27!



Provost Claire Leitch



Lillian Jones MP



Councillor Sally Cogley



Councillor Kevin McGregor







**THE IRVINE
VALLEY LACE
FESTIVAL
07-10 OCT '26**

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

In 1876, Alexander Morton introduced the power loom, transforming Darvel, Newmilns, and Galston into a hub of textile excellence. Today, we celebrate 150 years of resilience, art, and innovation from an industry that once had 40 factories and continues with our two remaining mills.

WED. 07 – SAT. 10 OCT

THE LACE EXHIBITIONS – DARVEL TOWN HALL, NEWMILNS MORTON HALL, GALSTON TOWN HALL
Explore historical artifacts, exquisite lace collections, and a breathtaking scrim painting commissioned by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

THU. 08 OCT

BEHIND THE SCENES – MYB TEXTILES
A rare opportunity to see the world-renowned surviving looms in action. Pre-booking is essential.

FRI. 09 OCT

BEHIND THE SCENES – HADDOW, AIRD & CRERAR
Discover the craftsmanship inside one of our two remaining lace factories. Pre-booking is essential.

SAT. 10TH OCT, 10.30 AM

THE LACE TRAIL WALK

A guided journey through the valley landscape, winding from Darvel to Galston.

SAT. 10 OCT, 7.30 PM

THE WARP & THE WEFT – AN EVENING OF CONVERSATION

Join broadcaster Billy Kay at Darvel Town Hall for a poignant night of stories on the human legacy of the looms.

BEYOND THE LOOMS

Download the Newmilns Heritage App to explore our Lace Murals and the Alexander Fleming (famously discovered penicillin in 1928) mural in Darvel and the incredible global links of our valley lace workers including how they helped found football clubs in Gothenburg and Barcelona.

TICKETS & INFO

Don't miss this once-in-a-century milestone. Make a day of it and enjoy a warm welcome at our local coffee shops and pubs.

DARVEL

www.discoverdarvel.com
info@discoverdarvel.com

NEWMILNS

www.lovenewmilns.org
hello@lovenewmilns.org

GALSTON

www.galstontrust.co.uk
info@galstontrust.co.uk



SPORTS DARVEL

Our campaign to save the Gavin Hamilton Sports Centre (GHSC) from closure/demolition began way back in October 2013 and it is now almost 9 years since the Trust took over the running of the Centre from East Ayrshire Council on 30 June 2017.

Since that date we have rebranded the Centre as SportsDarvel and have sought and raised funding to continually improve the Centre building, the facilities, equipment and services in the Centre and also the outdoor facilities.

With our latest improvements and plans we are transforming the old run-down Centre (opened in 1978) into a modern , bright and welcoming multi-activity Community Hub for all members of the Community to enjoy.

These improvements include new roofs with the lower level flat roofs being engineered out to prevent the perennial leaks which happened in the past. The Centre has been reclad in a deeper shade of blue and the Portakabin at the entrance has also been reclad.

Inside the Centre the transformation has continued with the Mezzanine being fully developed to create increased gym and studio spaces.





One of the biggest improvements which we believe Customers will see are the new floors in the main hall and underneath the Mezzanine which provide a bright, modern and more comfortable playing surface.

We have also had a lift installed to allow less mobile members of the Community to access all areas of the Centre.

The improvements will not stop there as we aim to complete the painting of the hall shortly; fully develop our Digital Learning Centre and Community Café and renew all the fire/exit doors at the Centre.

In addition we will be taking ownership of the cleared factory site on Jamieson Road from East Ayrshire Council and are developing plans to help secure the long term sustainability of the Centre including replacing the current grass football pitch with a new 5G one and securing our future energy needs through solar/wind power – all subject to obtaining the required Planning Permissions.

As readers will have noted all of these developments take time, effort and money to deliver.



Clearance of the factories on Jamieson Road has been a priority in each of the three community action plans. It is good news that demolition is now almost completed and plans for its redevelopment can be taken forward.

The Trustees and employees remain committed to continue in our efforts in order to make Your Community Hub a bright and welcoming building with multiple spaces where all members of the Community can gain many health and wellbeing benefits and enjoyment from the facilities, equipment and classes at the Centre.

We Thank You for your patience while these improvements have been taking place and as ever welcome your support.

Darvel Community Trust/SportsDarvel.

Universal

Chinese Carry Out
Chinese & European Meals To Take Away

2 Jamieson Road, Darvel

Opening Hours

Wednesday - Sunday: 4.30pm - 10.30pm

Closed Monday & Tuesday
Except Bank Holidays

環球樓



FREE Small Prawn Crackers with Orders Over £15
FREE Large Prawn Crackers with Orders Over £22
FREE Mini Veg Spring Rolls with Orders Over £25
(Only 1 Offer Applies per Order)

Home Delivery Available

Telephone: 01560 322 895

All Prices Include V.A.T

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS IN THE DARVEL BULLETIN



The Darvel bulletin is an A4 booklet, published quarterly with information on upcoming events, historical information, features on local people, and many more interesting articles about Darvel and surrounding areas.

It has circulation on 5 separate Facebook pages -

The Corner - Discover Darvel - DDCC - Dawn to Dusk - Darvel Chat

There are also 120 paper copies distributed via local shops for those who don't have internet access.

1 off advertising costs for
1 issue are as follows -

Annual advertising costs for
4 issues are as follows -

1/4 page - £25

1/4 page - £80

1/2 page - £40

1/2 page - £128

Full page - £75

Full page - £240

If this is of interest to you, please contact Alistair Crosbie

alic297@gmail.com

07485 111666

01560 322229

Articles for the Bulletin

If you have any articles or items that you would like published in the Darvel Bulletin then please contact georgegardner50@googlemail.com
Continuation of The Bulletin depends on community input.

Wag A Lot

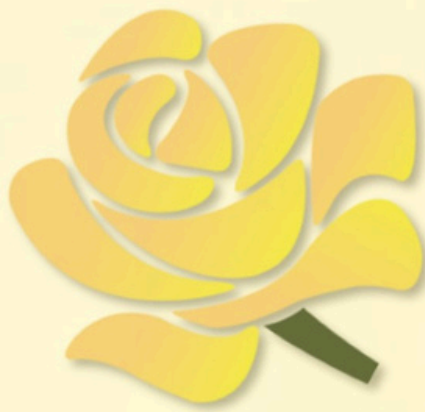
Dog Groomers

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Darvel, KA17 0AQ

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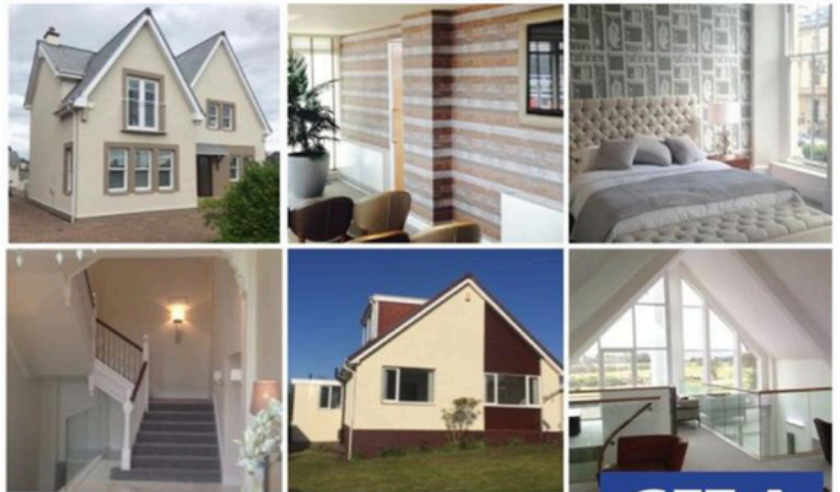


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Dexter Beef has it's own unique delicious flavour and very tender - "It's the best I have ever tasted."



Our own home bred, grass fed, Dexter cattle butchered and sold in our own on farm shop.

SHOP OPENING HOURS

Wednesday 9am - 5pm

Thursday 9am - 6.30pm

Friday 9am - 5pm

Saturday 9am - 5pm

Outwith these times, by
telephone appointment.

South Quarter, KA17 0ND

(First right after Darvel Cemetery)



We also sell our own lamb and local pork.



Gluten Free range - burgers, links and slice

E: sales@meattoyou.co.uk

T: 07901 002173

Darvel Snippets...



19TH JUNE

JOIN US FOR A FAMILY PARADE WHERE WE WARM UP FOR GALA WITH A STOMP

DINOSAUR STOMP

With **Special Guest** **Dino Trail**

KIDS REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED | MUSIC & BAR FOR ADULTS

WALK BEGINS FROM VETS CAR PARK AT 6.30 AND MUSIC FROM 7PM AT THE CORNER

EVENT ENDS 9PM

ROAR DART

DARVEL GALA DAY

FAMILY FUN

TOWN GALA DAY!

**Saturday
20th June**

*Parade - 11am
*Crowning - 11.45
@ The Corner
*Party at the Park
12 noon

INCLUDING

- PARADE
- CROWNING OF THE QUEEN
- ACTIVITIES
- STALLS
- FOOD
- GAMES
- BAR

***SURPRISE GUESTS AND MORE!**

CONGRATULATIONS On another fine season

Supporters can look forward to a few Ayrshire needle matches in season 2026/27 since there are no fewer than 7 Ayrshire teams in the West of Scotland Premier League:

- Darvel
- Ardrossan Winton Rovers
- Glenafton United
- Hurlford Juniors
- Irvine Meadow
- Kilbirnie Ladeside
- Muirkirk Juniors

DARVEL FC

PROMOTED!

WE'RE GOING UP!

DARVEL FC ARE

PROMOTED TO THE WEST OF SCOTLAND PREMIERE LEAGUE

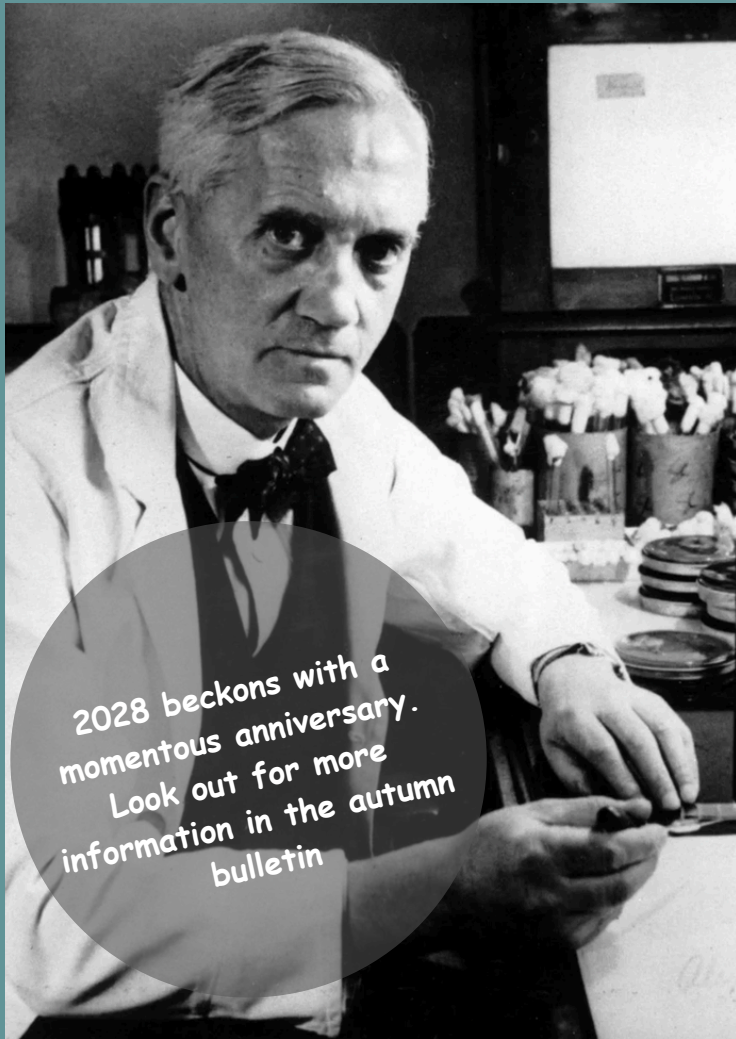
DARVEL FOOTBALL CLUB

ONE CLUB. ONE TOWN. ONE GOAL.

WE ARE DARVEL!

#WEAREDARVEL #UPTHEDARVEE #NEXTCHAPTER

Darvel Snippets...



2028 beckons with a momentous anniversary. Look out for more information in the autumn bulletin

DARVEL MUSIC COMPANY
Celebrating 25 Years of Live Music

Darvel Town Hall
10-12 West Main Street, Darvel, KA17 0AQ

FRIDAY 21 AUGUST 2026
TICKETS £35 DOORS 7PM

SKERRYVORE

Sold Out!

Kevin Kerr

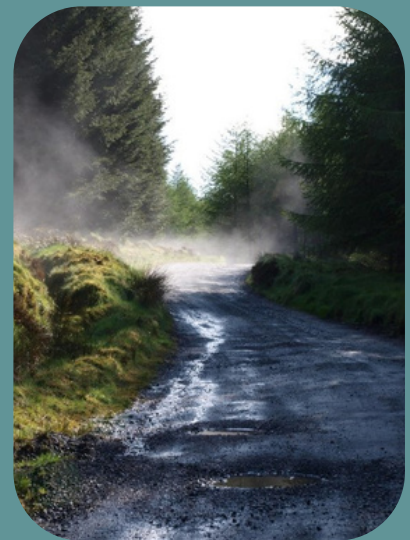
www.darvelmusiccompany.com
for ticket sales outlets



The grey heron returns
A very nice photo from local photographer John Molloy



Here is the refurbished paved area and new access to the bench at the East Main Street end of the Waterlip.
Funding provided by Walking Scotland



For walkers and cyclists the famous **Weavers' Trail** from Darvel to Eaglesham presents a real challenge

Darvel Snippets...



When I said "On Yer Bike"...



In May, local cycling enthusiast John McCracken* aka *The Lone Biker* had this crazy notion of doing something a little bit different. He decided to try to cycle every street in Darvel...in one go!
It turned out more of a challenge than John anticipated - our wee town which is just over one mile long, contains around 15 miles of streets, avenues and roads!

Just to prove that he had accomplished this challenge, John made a short video of his efforts.

You can see this on his YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/Jm68CM7c3ew?si=6OwGl9DilvM-YK8j>

**John is a member of the Darvélo Planning Team and a member of Loudoun Road Club.*



Fancy an Evening of Campfire Songs?

Well,,,Come along to The Corner on Tuesday June 23rd from 6:30 PM to 8:30PM for a "Campfire Singalong Night" for the 1st Darvel Guides, Brownies, and Rainbows.

We are reliably informed there will be no actual campfires!!

What's on in Darvel this year...



Friday 6 February	Valentine Quiz Night, 7-9pm	DIG
Friday 20 March	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club
Sunday 29 March	Easter Egg Hunt	Lanfine, DIG
Wednesday 8 April	Kidzone, 11-2pm	The Corner
Saturday 18 April	Simple Minds/Deacon Blue Tribute	Town Hall, DMC
Friday 24 April	"Born in Kyle" with Billy Kay	Town Hall, DART
Saturday 25 April	Corner Market, 10-2pm	The Corner, DART
Saturday 25 April	Blast Off - Live Music 6-9pm	The Corner, DART
Friday 8 - Monday 11 May	Walkfest	Valley Walkfest
Saturday 16 May	Darvélo Cycling Festival	The Corner
Saturday 23 May	Corner Market, 10-2pm	The Corner, DART
Saturday 13 June	Café Day in the Square	DIG
Wednesday 17 June	Matt Richmond Annual Outing	Phone 07500 963231
Saturday 20 June	Darvel Gala	DART
Saturday 27 June	Corner Market, 10-2pm	DART
Saturday 22 August	Corner Market, 10-2pm	DART
Friday 28 August	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club
Friday 4 September	Flower Show	Darvel Horticultural Society
Friday 25 September	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club
Saturday 26 September	Corner Market, 10-2pm	DART
Friday 2 October	Country & Western Evening	The Corner, DART
Wednesday 7 - Saturday 10 October	Lace Festival Exhibition	Town Hall, DART
Saturday 10 October	The Warp & the Weft "Conversation"	Town Hall, DART
Wednesday 14 October	Kidzone, 11-2pm	The Corner
Friday 23 October	Halloween Market, 4-8pm	The Corner, DART
Friday 30 October	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club
Saturday 14 November	Christmas Fayre	Town Hall, DIG
Friday 27 November	Corner Christmas Market, 5-9pm	The Corner, DART
Saturday 28 November	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club
Friday 11 December	Music & Cake, 2-4pm	Bowling Club

Discover Darvel Community Calendar



Cattle Show ...photo by Kenny Girvan



WWW.DISCOVERDARVEL.COM