FREE

eyemouthliving

Your local community magazine

March 2025

https://www.eyemouth.org/magazine

welcome

Welcome to our March issue of *Eyemouth Living* as we all welcome Spring. It is lovely to be enjoying the better weather and as the days grow longer it is the ideal time to try something new, like having a go at a haiku poem (see page 28–9).

Maybe this year is also the time to get out of your comfort zone and try something different, so check out our list of activities available in Eyemouth and the surrounding area (p.16–17) and if you know one that is not on our list please drop us a line! We would love to hear from you if you have just taken up a new activity or formed a new club and want to tell everyone else about it.

Spring also marks the start of Lent and that means Mothering Sunday is approaching too: if you don't know the link between the two have a look at the article all about it on page 7. There is also plenty of our usual contributions to check out like the Wildlife Notes from the St. Abb's Rangers, Gardening Notes from Ayton Gardening Society, two articles on local history, Abi & Kathy talking about Spring and snowdrops and updates from the Rotary, Sea the Change, Gunsgreen, U3A and the High School.

Andy Haddow
Chair, Eyemouth Development Trust

contents

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Abundant Borders is proud to be a registered Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) Training Centre, offering a range of accredited courses in food hygiene, cooking skills and nutrition. Our training programs are designed to empower individuals and communities with essential knowledge and practical skills to promote food safety, enhance culinary confidence, and support sustainable, healthy living. With a commitment to quality, accessibility and real-world application, we ensure that every participant is equipped to make a positive impact in their homes, workplaces and communities.

Our Wednesday Cook Fresh sessions, held in the EU Church in Eyemouth, helped many people gain confidence in the kitchen and improve their eating habits using healthy, affordable and tasty recipes.

We have started New Year cooking with the new Good Mood recipes that support mental health well-being (available on the Abundant Borders website under the Wellness section). According to research, around 90% of serotonin – the feel good hormone – is produced in our gut and what we eat directly affects our mood. Good nutrition can improve brain function and feelings of depression and anxiety, as well as benefiting our physical health.

Using that knowledge, we have been making lots of flavourful foods like brownies, probiotic-rich Kimchi, tasty protein-rich salads and quick and easy energy balls (*recipe on opposite page*), just to name a few. Over the next few weeks we will be focusing on type 2 diabetes – its prevention and management. Participants will learn many recipes that help regulate blood sugar levels, which is important for both healthy and diabetic individuals.

Our workshops are delivered in a fun and friendly

way and are a great way to meet new people. Sessions take place every Wednesday morning (10.30am–12.30pm) and are open to everyone on a 'pay as you feel' basis.

Please contact sabina@abundantborders.org.uk for more information and to book a place.

Energy Balls

Makes ~25 balls

Ingredients:

- 250g peanut butter
- 60g honey
- 60g oats
- 20g desiccated coconut
- 50g almond meal (or protein powder/milled seeds)
- 30g desiccated coconut, for rolling
- 2tbsp cocoa powder (optional)

Method:

1. In a bowl mix together peanut butter and honey
2. Add oats, coconut, almond meal (or a substitute) and cocoa powder (if using)
3. Mix well
4. Take one tablespoon of mixture at a time and roll into balls
5. Roll each ball in desiccated coconut
6. Put in the fridge to firm up

Abundant Borders (SC049008)
web : abundantborders.org.uk & facebook.com/abundantborderscookfresh
contact: robin@abundantborders.org.uk

abi & kathy

Abi and Kathy Discuss Spring and the First Snowdrops

February was a cold month and Abi and Kathy have not met outside much recently. There was however a break in the weather and the two of them were to be found sitting on their favourite bench on the Bantry.

Abi: It's been a bit rough these last few weeks hasn't it Kathy?

Kathy: Yes but a least this time we missed that big storm. Seems like it hit worst out west. Look at poor Helensburgh with the roof blown off their new leisure centre.

Abi: Yes it reminded me of all the damage Arwen did to our wee town. That was scary. With all those warnings I was really worried. And that alarm going off on my phone, did you get that?

Kathy: It took me a minute to work out what it was. Made the dog nervous. Mind you the signs of spring are amongst us now. The first snowdrops are out.

Abi: I have seen them. I always like the daffodils as they look happy flowers when they come all bright and yellow.

Kathy: They are nice are but the snowdrop is often considered the first flower to bloom after winter. It's a symbol of hope, new beginnings, and the promise of warmer days to come. Did you know that the Romans brought it to us? They believed it was associated with the goddess Persephone, the queen of the underworld. According to Greek mythology, snowdrops were said to have bloomed from the tears of Persephone when she was released from the underworld.

Abi: I didn't know that. Didn't realise that it's not native to us. Mind you I suppose with it being the first one to flower it must be a source of food for bees and butterflies.

[*Ed*: Abi, Kathy, go check out Wildlife Notes this month!]

Kathy: Did you see that report about the Lynx being released to rewild the Highlands? Let's not go there as it just makes no sense to me.

With that their attention turned to more comfortable topics such as where to go for tea and cake.

mothering sunday

Mothering Sunday – 30 March 2025

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church, the church in which they received the sacrament of baptism, once a year and every year in the middle of Lent. It is believed that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. In some churches there is a tradition of children being invited to give their mother a posy of spring wildflowers.

Historically, the day was also known as Laetare Sunday, Rose Sunday or the Sunday of the Five Loaves. Both Old and New Testament lessons on mid-lent Sunday mention food and the Gospel reading from the New Testament told the story of how Jesus fed five thousand people with only five small barley loaves and two small fish.

The fourth Sunday of Lent was also known as Refreshment Sunday because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day and Simnel cake has a strong affiliation to Mothering Sunday as it is usually associated with spring and Easter. A Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with 11 balls of marzipan icing on top representing the 11 disciples. (Judas is not included.) Traditionally, sugar violets would be used to decorate the top.

wildlife notes

"The first blooms of Spring always make my heart sing"

S. Brown

It's nearly here – Spring is on its way and with it the awakening of life around our gardens, woodlands, sea cliffs and community spaces. It's the opportunity to embrace our region with all the nature it has to offer from boxing hares in the fields, to returning seabirds and those emerging wildflowers. We have already been blessed with wonderful shows of Winter Aconite (*above right*) and Snowdrops, bursting out to let us know that spring will soon be here. But for me, it's that first sound of returning Chiffchaffs, with their seesaw song, or the majestic company of gannets heading along our coastline that fills the heart with the spring glow.

A question that was asked recently in a school activity session was "why are spring flowers often white or yellow?"

It's actually quite a simple answer – it's about attraction. The early spring flowers such as Lesser Celandine (*left*) and Primrose need to stand out against background foliage to attract pollinators.

"But there are no bees or butterflies around at this time to help with pollination?"

This is very true; there will be some early Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells (*right*) out if there are warmer, sunnier conditions. However, this is where other insects come in to help – the flies. They don't have colour perception in their sights but look for contrast instead to find suitable flowers – the yellower or whiter the flower, the more chance it has of finding them against a darker background.

wildlife notes

The flower has to protect its own resources as well and trying to grow in the cooler months can be hard work. Producing white or yellow pigment is less of a drain on the rest of the plant. When spring gets into top gear and temperatures rise, other flowers with different coloured petals such as Red Campion and Bluebells will start to emerge.

Early spring is a wonderful time for birds. The usual suspects will be making their voices heard as Robins, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes defend territories and look for mates. As migrants arrive such as Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler, our wildlife corridors become havens as the daylight hours get longer. Mistle Thrushes (*right*) get overlooked at this time, but these wonderful birds are a joy to behold with their 'machine gun' warning cries startling everything. The last of the winter berries will be defended to the end by these birds.

Anywhere along our coastal paths, there's an opportunity to see the returning seabirds who will grace our cliffs with their presence until the end of summer. The cliffs at St. Abbs NNR will come alive in April but look out for groups returning before then. Sometimes thousands of Guillemots (*right*) will return for a few days, driven in by strong winds and stormy seas and then disappear without a trace, back out to open water to feed again.

There is so much to enjoy – wildlife is back again to delight, entertain and help our happy minds throughout 2025.

David Lewis, NTS Ranger Team, St. Abb's Head NNR

All Photo Credits David Lewis

Spring cleaning your garden

Plants are already bursting into bud and we need to prepare for the year ahead. Hopefully you left plenty of ornamental grasses, leafy perennials and seed heads for the wildlife over winter. These now need cleaning up but be aware of small animals still sheltering. Birds will be building their nests and should not be disturbed. We can help them by providing suitable nesting sites and nesting materials. If you brush your dog or cat then place the hair out in the garden where birds can collect it. A good idea is to put it on top of your open compost along with twigs and the leaves you have removed from the ornamental grasses.

Its too late now to clean out your nest boxes. Leave them until next autumn. But set up some new ones or plant some climbers along a wall where birds can nest and shelter.

Remember that many of our 18 UK bat species benefit from hedges and shrubs to provide places to roost and they also use such features to navigate and to move through the countryside. They provide protection from predators as well as navigational landmarks when they are finding their way using echolocation. If you want to cut down on those irritating, biting insects then think about encouraging bats. All our bats eat insects and by the thousands! Bats roost in houses and hollow trees. In buildings they often shelter in roof spaces. But unlike rats, which are rodents, bats do not gnaw wood, wires or insulation. They do not build nests and they don't bring bedding materials inside (or insects!)

Photo: Hugh Clark/www.bats.org.uk

Work to do in the garden in March

First of all, tidy up the beds and borders. This is a good time to get ahead of the weeds before they

can get established. Remove seed heads carefully so as not to spread them on the soil and dig out large roots making sure not to leave any bits which could re-grow. Make sure to remove the seed heads of any remaining winter bedding plants too.

Remove seed-heads from bulbs which have finished flowering but don't cut the leaves off since they are needed to provide energy for next year's flowers. Wait at least six weeks after flowering before cutting them back.

Herbaceous perennials and ornamental grasses need to be tidied up, removing dead leaves and stems.

Shrubs such as *cotinus* (smoketree), *buddleia* or *cornus* (dogwoods) need pruning right back to the base.

The lawn will be growing by now and needs tidying too. Make sure the first cut of the year is lighter than normal, raising the blades about ¼ inch higher than usual. Trim the edges with a spade and create a 3 inch gutter to separate the grass from the beds. Leave the clippings on the lawn if possible but if there is too much then add them to the compost, in layers with other material in between to allow air to circulate.

Add some home-made fertilizer to the lawn. Collect seaweed off the beach and remove any creatures. Rinse and steep the seaweed in boiling water for about an hour then strain the leaves and use the 'tea' that is left. Dilute the fertilizer at a rate of one part seaweed to 10 parts water.

Direct sow hardy annual seeds including wildflowers seeds.

Sow half-hardy annual seeds inside now, ready to plant out in June. Tomatoes and sweet peppers can stay in the greenhouse all summer.

Clear all the weeds off your vegetable patch and start sowing hardy vegetables including parsnips.

Plant onions, shallots and early potatoes.

Caroline Lathe (Ayton Gardening Society)


SPLASH BRUNCH
HUB
Brunch Hub
Alison and her colleagues are looking forward to welcoming you to the Splash Brunch Hub. Open every Thursday at the Community Centre from 10.30 for breakfast rolls, teas and coffees with Lunch being served from 11.30. Closing at 1.30
Weekly Specials including home made soups and puddings, traybakes, cakes and scones


Splash
EYEMOUTH LARDER AND COMMUNITY FRIDGE
OPENING HOURS
Monday 9 - 11
Tuesday 3 - 5
Wednesday 9 - 11
Thursday Closed
Friday 9 - 11
PARISH CHURCH, EYEMOUTH


Splash
VOLUNTEER ROLES AVAILABLE
here are some of the roles we have available within the Splash Projects
ONE HOUR
• Collect food from our partner supermarkets for Eyemouth larder and community fridge. Afternoons and evenings. Pick ups in Eyemouth and Berwick (mileage paid)
• Help set up the Splash Brunch Hub community cafe 9am
• Help tidy away the Splash Brunch Hub 1.30pm
TWO HOURS
• Help us to run Eyemouth Larder and Community Fridge mornings and afternoons
• Help us in the Brunch Hub serving snacks and meals between 10.30 am and 1.30pm
THREE HOURS OR MORE
• Help us by marshalling at events
• help us with serving hot and cold drinks at events
Full training given and annual appraisals for all volunteers
susie@eyemouth.org or scan the QR code


4TH FILM DAY
MARCH ACTIVITIES
25TH TBC
11TH RESIN JEWELLERY
18TH RESIN JEWELLERY
Splash
WOMEN'S GROUP
WE MEET EVERY TUESDAY AT THE MASONS HALL 1PM - 3PM
Ladies, if you live in Eyemouth and the surrounding area and would like to meet new friends and learn new skills come along and join us.

book news

Library opening times:
Monday 10am–1pm, 2–5pm, Thursday 10am–1pm, Friday 10am–1pm, 2–5pm.

***An Almost Perfect Summer* by Jill Mansell**

Jill Mansell is one of the queens of romantic literature and this book does not disappoint.

The story centres on a five-star retreat of luxury holiday houses in the Cotswolds village of Starbourne. The retreat is managed by Nick and he is ably assisted by Nella who is concierge to the pampered guests. Nella finds Nick attractive and intriguing but he's her boss and therefore the one man she can't risk falling in love with. She'll just have to deal with it!

One of the retreat guests is Lizzie, a Hollywood actress needing respite, and she and Nella become firm friends. Lizzie's sworn off people – especially men – until her friendly new neighbours entice her out of her shell. Maybe she needs a flirtation – with gorgeous Nick, perhaps? Not with taciturn local Matthew though, who definitely isn't a member of her fan club. Then an astonishing secret revealed changes everything... It turns out Lizzie has more in common with the village than everyone first thought.

There are many characters, all with their own story, and I enjoyed reading how they all connected, at times quite unexpectedly. Every character had a reason to be in the story and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know each of them. From clubland wars to ghost-writing, emotional baggage, secrets and of course lots of humour, this was a heartwarming and uplifting read.

Available at Eyemouth Library

Joany Cook

Library News

Bookbug on Tuesdays 9.45–10.15am. No session on 25th March.
Walking Bookgroup Tuesday 11th March 2pm.
Lego drop in every second and fourth Friday afternoon, 2–4pm.
Hearing Aid Clinic Friday 21st March 10am–12pm.

eyemouth clubs/activities

Club/Activity	Information	Contact
Abundant Borders	Community food gardens and food related activities	https://abundantborders.org.uk
Afternoon Tea Group	E Berwickshire U3A	https://u3asites.org.uk/eastberwickshire/welcome
Andy's Man Club	Mon 7pm Parish Church Hall	https://andysmanclub.co.uk
Art Appreciation	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Basic French	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Bingo	Tavern Bar Thursdays	see facebook page
Birdwatching	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Book groups, various	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Busy bees baby/toddler group	Wed 10.30–12, 1.30–3 Friday 10.30–12	see Eyemouth Parish Church facebook page
Chirnside Amateur Boxing Club	Monday, Wednesday, Friday see page for details	see facebook page
Coldingham Brave Bayers	Sundays 10am and see page for details, Coldingham Beach	www.facebook.com/groups/270968488826861 74/
Coldingham Ukeleles	Tuesdays 7–8.30pm	see facebook page
Connect Berwickshire Youth Project	Thursday 5.30–7pm P7 to S2 Thursdays 7–8 S3 +	https://bypconnect.com/drop-in-sessions
Community Café	Thursdays 10.30am–1.30pm Community Centre	www.facebook.com/Splash.Eyemouth/
Community Choir	Wednesdays 6.30–8pm EU church	
Electric Car Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Eyemouth and District Amateur Swimming Club	see page for details	see facebook page
Eyemouth and District Coastal Rowing	see page for details	see facebook page
Eyemouth and District Walking Football	Thursdays 6–7pm High School Sports Hall	www.facebook.com/groups/1196035434451614/
Eyemouth Bowling Club	Seasonal	www.facebook.com/groups/1747266198918352/
Eyemouth Golf Club	Junior membership <16 yrs £5	www.eyemouthgolfclub.co.uk
Eyemouth Mens Shed	Tuesdays 9am–2pm	see facebook page
Eyemouth Scouts	Tuesday evenings, ages 6–18	www.borderscouts.org.uk/eyemouth

Do please let us know if you would like your voluntary organisation/community group included, or your information updated.

eyemouth clubs/activities

Group/Club	Information	Contact
Eyemouth Rotary	Thursdays via Zoom 6 for 6.15pm	jo.pawley@talktalk.net
Eyemouth United Football Club	Weekly	stephanspeirs@hotmail.com
Eyemouth Variety Group	see page for details	www.eyemouthvariety.co.uk
Fisherman's Choir	Tuesdays 7pm Hippodrome	see facebook page
French Conversation	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Gardening Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Geology Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Knit 3 purl 3 Knitting Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Lego Club	Every 2nd and 4th Friday 2–4pm Eyemouth library	www.liveborders.org.uk/home/our-libraries/library-lego-sessions/
Lipreading Group	Community Centre	www.scotborders.gov.uk/disabilities/deaf-deafened-hard-hearing/3
Local History Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Majong Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Murder Mystery Book Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Music Appreciation	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Opera Appreciation	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Junior Park Run	Sundays 9.30am	www.parkrun.org.uk/eyemouth-priplayingfields-juniors/
Poetry Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Prostate Cancer Support Group	1st Tuesday of month 7–8pm Eyemouth Golf Club	Check facebook page
Quiz Group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Sea the Change	E-bike hire, cycling support etc	info@seathechange.org.uk
Scottish Country Dancing	E Berwickshire U3A	see above
Scottish Karate Federation	Thursday 6–7pm and 7–8.15pm Eyemouth High School	www.skfscotland.co.uk/clubs/eyemouth.html
Scottish Womens Institute	Chirnshide, Ayton and Coldingham	hello@theswi.org.uk
Singing For Fun	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Skill, Chill, Chat Womens Group	Tuesdays 1–3pm	susie@eyemouth.org
Table Tennis	E Berwickshire U3A	see website
Walking for Wellbeing Book Group	2nd Thursday of month 1.30pm Eyemouth Library	www.liveborders.org.uk/exercise-referral/walking-for-wellbeing/
Walking group	E Berwickshire U3A	see website

Pioneer No 3: James Weatherhead, Boatbuilder

Eyemouth has been fortunate in having a boatyard for more than 180 years. It all began in 1841 when James Weatherhead began a boatbuilding business at Brownsbank, on the south side of the river Eye, in an area once occupied by Gunsgreen Distillery! For the next 100 years the name Weatherhead was associated with producing fine, seaworthy boats.

James was born in Tweedmouth in 1814 and served his apprenticeship there with James Lee, Boatbuilders. At the age of 27, he formed a partnership with his uncle, John Hall, and for the next 22 years they traded as Hall and Weatherhead. At first they built open boats, and half-decked boats, up to 30 feet, that fished with drift nets for herring and were powered by a lug sail or oars. They built smaller cobles to fish for white fish (with short or long lines), or to lay creels.

In the 1850s the size of these yawls increased to over 40 feet. Their design was altered to include a vertical stem and stern, and a long keel. These sea-kindly boats were known as Fifies (eg *Dauntless*, below left) and were rigged with a mizzen sail as well as a dipping lug sail. Clinker-built hulls with overlapping planks gave way to carvel hulls with planks that were butted against one another to give a smooth finish. In 1865 the yard built what was probably the first fully-decked boat in Scotland. Fully-decked boats were safer, able to travel as far as Fraserburgh and Yarmouth, and therefore more successful than open boats.

John Hall died in 1863 and the business became simply James Weatherhead. James had three sons, all of whom trained as boatbuilders: William, James

and Alexander. The boatyard's reputation for designing and building seaworthy boats spread and commissions came from fishing communities along the east coast. In 1870 the yard was among the first to introduce the 'iron man', a mechanical aid to help pull in the nets or lines.

In the 1860s formal registration of fishing vessels had been introduced and Eyemouth vessels, although built in Scotland, came under the Berwick customs area. In 1878 Weatherhead's built the *Ariel Gazelle*, BK893, for skipper Alex Burgon. This was the boat that, miraculously, returned to the harbour two days after the hurricane of 14 October 1881 when 129 Eyemouth men and many boats were lost. Alex Burgon was so impressed with his boat's performance that in 1883, he commissioned another boat from Weatherhead's, and named her *Ariel Gazelle II*, BK1082.

The aftermath of the 1881 east coast disaster led to the boatyard's order books being full for the next few years. Then, in 1890 the yard started to build steam-powered fishing vessels. Some were as long as 87 feet, but had to be towed elsewhere to have engines and boilers fitted. The sailing Fifies also benefitted from steam. Steam-powered capstans helped with hoisting the heavy sails, and enabled crews to work with longer fleets of nets.

In 1901, at the age of 87, James Weatherhead retired. His second son, James, took over the business. In 1880 William, James' eldest son, had left Eyemouth to set up a boatyard in Port Seton, and later Cockenzie. William Weatherhead and Sons was a well-known boatbuilding firm, until 1955, even taking over the Eyemouth yard in 1946.

James, senior died in 1905 aged 91 – a much respected and innovative boatbuilder, businessman and church elder. According to the book, *The Pioneers of Eyemouth*, the local saying about boats built by James Weatherhead was, "Wind coudna blaw, nor sea run, tae dae them harm".

Fay Waddell

andys man club

eyemouth rotary

Eyemouth Rotary: Don't be a Dumb Dumper? Hmmm?

Saturday 8th February saw 10 members and friends of Eyemouth Rotary litterpick the Fairnieside layby. This was a new spot for us. We spent 2 hours and this is what we collected: 42 bags of rubbish, totalling 192 kilos and we hardly scratched the surface.

Fairnieside layby is an utter disgrace, who on earth thinks this is remotely acceptable?

Don't be a dumb dumper? Don't be a Tosser!

united congregational church

Rue the day – Roo's away

Sunday 2nd February was a sad day for Eyemouth United Congregational Church, as well as the wider Eyemouth Community, as it was the last service led by Ruaridh (Roo) MacRae. On Thursday 13th February Roo took up his new post as Minister for Market Harborough Congregational Church

Roo was appointed on 22 August 2015 following a long period with no Minister and has made a significant, positive and lasting impact on the congregation and wider community. As he says, "I was born in the Highlands but Eyemouth is my home."

Although Roo was appointed on a part-time basis you would never know it as he consistently worked well beyond his contracted hours, on an entirely voluntary basis. It's his nature to help whenever possible and his personable, engaging and good humoured approach to those in the Congregation and Community meant that many with little affiliation to formal religion saw him as 'their Minister'. He has been liked and loved by people of all ages, regularly engaging with pupils and staff at the High School as well as running toddler groups and undertaking hospital and home visits supporting those suffering loss and in difficulty whether they were members of the Congregation or not.

Roo supplemented his ministerial work with jobs ranging from 'paper boy' to taxi driver but still had time to be fully involved in Eyemouth life, whether it was as Chair of the Herring Queen Committee or organising the Hustings for elections

His new role is a full-time appointment but there's little doubt that he'll still find time to continue to be involved in the wider community. As always he'll be supported by husband James and their two boys Declan and Aidan who will move down to join him in May when exams are over. We wish them well.

Fishing in Eyemouth (in 1872!)

Painting by James Whitelaw Hamilton

As Storm 'Eowyn' blows around Upper Burnmouth and having access to a Newspaper Archive I have found interesting articles from 1872. The articles appeared mainly in the *Berwickshire News and Daily Advertiser*.

In February 1872, a Mr Wilson, Fisheries Officer at a function in the Masonic Hall, praised "a race of the finest boatmen in Scotland ... with sailing qualities that are unmatched".

On 27 February 'mind-blowing' statistics were given for the consumption of mussels as bait by the fleet of boats. 43 boats had crews of 7 men, each with a line. 1,200 mussels were required for each line, making a total of 8,400 for the 7 lines. For the 43 boats 361,000 mussels were required each day. Multiplying 43 by an estimated 120 days at sea during the 'white fish' season, October to May, 49,344,000 mussels were required – over a million mussels for each crew! Each mussel had to be extracted singly from the shell by the wives or families of the men. Using these multipliers, each boat carrying about four and a half miles of line, would give a figure of 42,400 miles shot and landed!

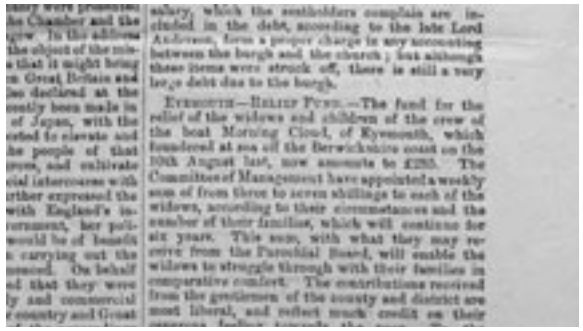
In April a very successful start to the herring season was recorded. Two boats are reported to have returned with 16 'crans' sold at 20 shillings (£1) a cran.

At the height of Summer, a "Fearful thunderstorm in the North of unwonted violence" occurred. "Seamen who had witnessed tropical thunderstorms were appalled by it". Eyemouth fisherman John Aitchison, aged 26 (with a wife and two children), was killed by a "thunderbolt" when lightning struck the mast of *The Ten Brothers*. John was killed by flying splinters, Lester Rutherford was injured. The skipper was Peter Aitchison (John's father), and Robert Cartney was amidships with Robert Jack.

In a July article, fishermen were said to have a "striking Scandinavian appearance ... being square built, sturdy and strong with an odour of ocean

from the archives

about them, take kindly to the sea, and become intrepid and expert fishermen".



August saw three fatal disasters in a week. *Morning Cloud* was lost with 5 men, "11 children and three widows were left destitute". Six men were lost off Burnmouth. In the final incident, *Flying Cloud*, a herring boat belonging to William Craig, skipper (married with 6 children) heeled over in a gale and was lost. The crew was Robert Patterson, George Dougal, George Crombie (6 children) and James Collins.

Immediately above an article on Eyemouth, the *Shields Gazette and Daily Telegraph* reported "Fifty Sailors Eaten by Cannibals". A ship had been wrecked on the rocks off Formosa and 57 men were "barbarously killed and eaten by the cannibals". A totally different hazard faced by men of the sea!

In November, 300 fishermen at sea were "exposed to the fury of the storm, the excitement in the Town during the day was immense". The Schooner *Ocean* was stranded and on the 'Harkars' and its cargo lost.

On Christmas Eve, it was reported that a gale caught the fleet at sea and forced a return to Harbour. *The Matchless*, skippered by David Stephenson was driven on to rocks and the 'Rocket Brigade' was called out to rescue the men "one by one".

In the 150 years from 1872 to the present day great advances have been made in fishing in terms of the boats, equipment, harbours and weather forecasting and yet fishing (along with logging) is still the most dangerous occupation.

Of course, only 9 years after 1872, the 'Great Disaster' struck.

David Littlewood

eyemouth high school

As a school, we have been talking about kindness and the power of words. Too often when we broach this subject, we point out the negative examples or impacts of unkindness and we forget to celebrate just how positive, warm, and generous our pupils can be. Every single day at Eyemouth High School, I see our young people helping each other, supporting each other, and complimenting each other and I feel enthused by the lovely cohort we have here.

Kindness is more than just a virtuous act; it is a catalyst for well-being and creates a solid platform for individual and communal health. Scotland is at the forefront of a drive to ensure that well-being is at the heart of everything we do when engaging with youngsters.

The UNCRC Article 24 explains that young people have the right to be as healthy as possible, ensuring that schools provide environments that keep our pupils physically and mentally fulfilled. Article 29 asks schools to develop every child's personality and encourage respect for others. Talking about kindness and politeness, and challenging our pupils to put this into practice is important. To enhance this, we invited an LGBTQ+ charity into school this week to talk to our first years about the language that is acceptable, respectable, and friendly to use when talking about people from the LGBTQ+ community.

The volunteers that came in, spoke to the pupils about their own experiences in school and in later life and the impact of both cruel and kind language. Some pupils spoke to me afterwards about how they were worried that they had accidently used language that may have been unkind without realising it. We explained this is exactly why we want to help guide them in their language choices and model respectfulness and generosity, so that they can speak to people in the warm and well-intentioned way that they intended.

It is truly inspiring to see our young people embracing kindness, learning from one another, and striving to create a school community where everyone feels valued, respected, and included.

Mr Mackenzie
Teacher of English and PT Health and Well-being

sea the change

Cycle Shack, Eyemouth

Sea the Change was thrilled to receive support from SOSE, enabling us to not only purchase a property in central Eyemouth but also carry out essential renovations. These upgrades transformed a derelict garage into a fully operational Cycle Shack, including new doors and windows, insulation, and plans to install a toilet soon.

As Eyemouth marks the endpoint of the new South of Scotland Coast to Coast Cycle Path, there was a clear need for a local hub where people could buy, hire, or repair bikes – previously unavailable within a 20-mile radius.

Since opening the Cycle Shack in June, we've fostered a vibrant cycling culture in the town. We've delivered a range of cycling initiatives, including guided rides, bike maintenance workshops, repairs and upcycling projects. Our free children's bike library has been a huge success, and the highlight of our week remains taking residents from the local care home on outings using our accessible bike.

haiku poetry

Traditional and structured, this short form of Japanese poetry is well-known for its rule of 5/7/5: five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five again in the third. Haikus are known for their ability to paint a vivid picture in just a few words. A practice of artistic discipline, their minimal nature forces writers to pare down to only the essentials – making each word, or even syllable, count.

This traditional example comes from Matsuo Bashō, one of the four great masters of Haiku. Historically, haikus are a derivative of the Japanese Hokku. Hokkus are collaborative poems which follow the 5/7/5 rule. They are meant to comment on the season or surroundings of the authors and create some sort of contrasting imagery separated by a kireji or 'cutting word' (like "Splash!").

'The Old Pond' by Matsuo Bashō

An old silent pond
A frog jumps into the pond—
Splash! Silence again.

Though sometimes, the kireji comes at the end of a haiku to give it a sense of closure. Kobayashi Issa, another great Haiku master, writes this stirring poem that places the kireji at the end. Translated, Issa's haiku doesn't meet the 5/7/5 rule, but its power remains.

'A World of Dew' by Kobayashi Issa

A world of dew,
And within every dewdrop
A world of struggle.

Haikus focus on a brief moment in time, juxtaposing two images, and creating a sudden sense of enlightenment. A good example of this is haiku master Yosa Buson's comparison of a singular candle with the starry wonderment of the spring sky.

haiku poetry

'Lighting One Candle' by Yosa Buson

The light of a candle
Is transferred to another candle—
Spring twilight

Katsushika Hokusai, a disciple of Bashō, writes another powerful haiku that translation cannot accurately capture. In it, he compares a written poem to a blooming poppy. He uses imagery of the spring season to describe his writing process.

'A Poppy Blooms' by Katsushika Hokusai

I write, erase, rewrite
Erase again, and then
A poppy blooms.

A slightly more modern Japanese poet, Natsume Sōseki, likens his breath to the wind in this haunting haiku.

'Over the Wintry' by Natsume Sōseki

Over the wintry
Forest, winds howl in rage
With no leaves to blow.

https://www.readpoetry.com/10-vivid-haikus-to-leave-you-breathless/

u3a

Charity No SCO 31477

The February Open Meeting was very well attended and we enjoyed a fascinating talk by local organic farmer Denise Walton on James Hutton the 18th century geologist, chemist and naturalist. Hutton is known as 'the father of modern geology' and his research and observations on the age of the earth, were revolutionary and contentious at the time.

Denise also informed the group of Hutton's pioneering farming activities here in Berwickshire on his land at Slighhouses where he turned the uncultivated open-field system into enclosed fields fit for arable crops, fertilised using marl from his own pits. It was while clearing, cultivating and draining his land that he observed the nature and age of the soil and rocks. Visits to Siccar point and his observations on his own land brought Hutton's ideas together to form *A Theory of the Earth* in 1760.

Our next Open Meeting at Eyemouth Community Centre is on March 12th (10am coffee for 10.30am start), and will be a talk and demonstration by Pat Young entitled 'My Journey to Becoming a Jeweller'.

Look forward to seeing you there.

gunsgreen news

I suspect you may have heard snippets about what's been happening at Gunsgreen House over the past 12 months. Indeed, you may have even been involved in helping to shape our future plans. Following a wide-ranging community engagement exercise involving local groups, businesses, stakeholders and individuals we now have an agreed vision for the future of Gunsgreen which reads as follows **"Eyemouth's iconic harbourside mansion house, linking the stories of the community's past to its aspirations for a sustainable future."**

The Gunsgreen Trustees have agreed to support in principle the recommendations of the independent feasibility study which proposed the reinstatement and creation of a new visitor attraction located in the cellars, basement, and ground floor of the main house. The plan also proposes to enhance our public spaces, enabling the people of Eyemouth to make use of our resource through learning, participation, volunteering, special events and gatherings.

Trustees have accepted that there is a huge challenge to raise over £5 million to cover the initial estimated development costs of the preferred option in the study. To that end Impact Fundraising were appointed in December 2023 to work on the feasibility of raising the required capital to make the project a reality

Business activity has significantly increased over the past 12 months: our best ever self-catering accommodation occupancy figures recorded for both the Merchant's House and Nisbet's Tower, the introduction of our monthly indoor markets in May attracting over 1200 visitors and local people to the house and our popular afternoon teas were once again a sell out in the lead up to Christmas.

The challenges of maintaining a Grade A listed building dating back to 1753 remain significant with the costs of overheads, repairs and fabric updates continuing to rise.

Riddell Graham
Chairman Gunsgreen House Trustees

Winter Wellbeing calendar

30 things to give you hope

Be Kind, Enjoy and Learn, Nurture, Be Active, Belong, Be Aware

1 Wrap up, go outside and take notice of what's around you	2 Call, text or arrange to meet with a friend	3 Have some digital downtime today and switch off your device
4 Read a book	5 Connect with nature	6 Do a random act of kindness
7 Take part in a gentle exercise video online – try mindful stretching	8 Download a mindfulness App – Calm or Headspace	9 Do something to relax like having a bath
10 Learn some breathing exercises, they can help you to cope with stress	11 Find out about activities and groups in your local area and go along to one	12 Take control of your finances with the Money Worries App
13 Watch a film or dance and sing to your favourite songs	14 Do a puzzle or crossword to keep your mind active	15 Go somewhere that makes you feel good
16 Try to eat and drink more healthily today	17 Remember to be kind to yourself today	18 Tidy up outdoors or pick some litter
19 Ask a friend how they are and start a conversation about mental health	20 Write a list of things you can do or you hope to achieve	21 Learn some coping skills for managing stress today
22 Allow your mind to wander, daydream and hope	23 Give someone a compliment or smile at someone today	24 Take a small step towards a goal today
25 Check out the mental wellbeing courses at Togetherall today	26 Prioritise your sleep today - these video tips could help	27 Take some time out, watch one of Health in Mind's wellbeing videos
28 Go for a walk outside	29 Volunteer your time	30 Do something creative

The underlined text are links to web pages including the Wellbeing College bitesize videos on YouTube. Find out more: www.wellbeingcollege.org.uk/courses/bitesize_videos/d238/

For information about support visit www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint
Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or NHS24 Mental Health Hub on 111 for urgent support