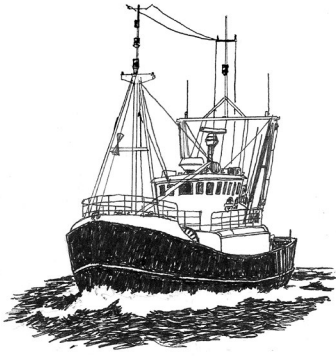




Pittenweem Post

14 NOVEMBER 2025 Issue no. 35

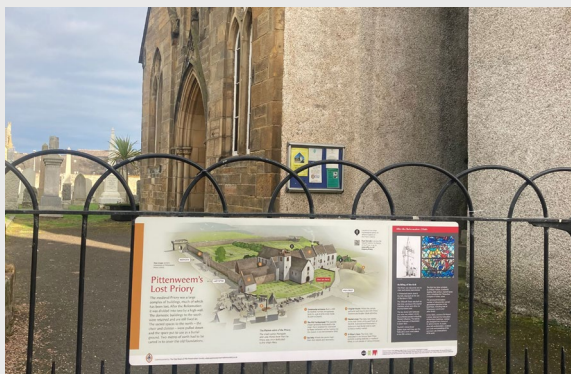
Pittenweem Post is our monthly community newsletter, produced by volunteers at Pittenweem Community Library. Publication is normally on the 2nd Friday of the month. Back issues are on our website www.pittenweemlibrary.org.uk. Paper copies are also available at Barnetts, One Market Place and the library – copies are free but we welcome donations of £1 to offset the cost of printing

This issue has been sponsored by a generous library member.

INTERPRETIVE PANELS AT PITTENWEEM PRIORY

The East Neuk of Fife Preservation Society (ENFPS) has installed three interpretive panels around the perimeter of the Priory, each covering a particular aspect of its history.

Cove Wynd: this 'Sacred Foundations' panel details the timeline from the original 8th century Celtic monastery on May Island to the 12th century use of the site in Pittenweem as the shore base for a Benedictine foundation on the May, and to the establishment in the 15th century of a full Augustinian monastery in Pittenweem, which thrived till the Reformation.



Kirkgate: this 'Lost Priory' panel illustrates the monastery buildings that have disappeared (cloister, nave, confessional chapel, sacristy and ceremonial entrance), and describes the Reformation era buildings which followed (the 16th century Tolbooth and Parish Church). The 19th century addition of St John's Episcopal Church and the adaptation of the Priory's West Range into the Town Hall are covered, together with Sir Robert Lorimer's early 20th century restoration of the Priory and his design of the sanctuary of St John's Church.

Priory Court: this 'Priory Life' panel explains the monks' daily lives and shows the important buildings of the monastery which remain, including the fortified Gatehouse entrance, the Prior's Lodging that had a hall for receiving visitors, and the Great House, originally the chapter house, dormitory and refectory. The panel also records the important national figures who were the Priors and its post-Reformation owners.

Relatively little was known about the origins of the Priory until fairly recently, but this gap has been addressed thanks to extensive research into original sources by ENFPS member Professor Anthony Lodge, whose 2020 book *Pittenweem Priory* provides the information for the panels.

Sponsorship for the project was provided by Fife Council community funds, Fife Environment Trust, by ENFPS members and by local charitable trusts including ENFPS.

To find out more about ENFPS see www.enfps.co.uk.

To view the content of the panels and to see more of Professor Lodge's history see www.eastneukpreservationsociety.co.uk/what-we-do/projects/previous-projects.

Bill Kennaway, Chair, The East Neuk of Fife Preservation Society



THE MERMAIDS AND THE MISSION

Very well done to the Pittenweem Menopausal Mermaids in raising a great amount for a great cause, The Fishermen's Mission. Thank you to everyone who donated and supported them at the Big Dip, especially their neighbouring swim group The Nae Richters. When they organised the Big Dip the Mission set themselves a target of £5000. The result was even better than they hoped as the event brought in £6195, of which the Mermaids contributed £1153.

The biggest thanks though must go to the Mission itself for supporting fisherman and their families up and down the country. We all enjoy a fish supper from time to time and probably don't give a lot of thought to what was actually endured to provide such a tasty tea. Fishing is still regarded as one of the most dangerous professions in the world if not the most!

Someone at the fundraiser asked me what it is exactly that the Mission does. Going back to being a young fisherman myself and working a lot away from home I can't tell you how important the Mission Centres are. These centres in the busy fishing towns of the UK provide hot showers, washing machines, a hot meal, and accommodation if you need it. You are always guaranteed a warm and friendly welcome and after some particularly harsh



trips and winter seas you can imagine the relief at having somewhere warm and companionable to go.

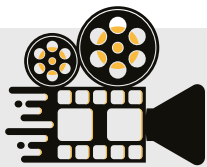
I now sell fish but will always have huge respect for the hard-working men and women out there catching the commodity that provides myself and thousands of others with our livings. They risk injury and their lives on a daily basis.

The Fishermen's Mission provides round the clock assistance to anyone involved in the industry with anything from assisting with fishing licences to financial advice, emotional support, medical issues and injuries or accidents at sea. They are also very much committed to improving safety at sea.

The National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, to give the Mission its full title, was founded by Ebenezer Mather in 1881 after he witnessed the loss of 189 souls in the Eyemouth Disaster. By 1887 there were six Mission Ships which took to the waves to provide boats at sea with a variety of services. The vessels housed hospitals, tobacco shops, places of worship, clothing stores and libraries among other things.

In 1896 Queen Victoria bestowed her Royal Approval on the organisation making it The Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. The Mission receives no government or lottery funding so community support for this organisation is vital.

Billy Hughes



**COLINSBURGH
COMMUNITY
CINEMA**

The cinema will be screening **Limbo**, the second film of the current season, on Friday 14 November. Set in the Outer Hebrides it follows the experiences of a group of refugees determined to make a new life for themselves in Britain. The screening starts at 7.30.

Due to changes in the date for replacing the main south window in the hall, which will now take place between 17 November and 6 December, we have had to cancel the screening of **Best in Show** on 28 November. The film will be rescheduled as part of the spring programme.

Further disruption will be caused in Colinsburgh by the much needed resurfacing of Main Street, although this is planned to be completed by the 14 November and should not affect the screening that night. Apologies for any inconvenience. For more information please see www.colinsburghcinema.wordpress.com or pick up our programme from Pittenweem Community Library.

POPPIES BRING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER IN REMEMBRANCE

The Dreel Crafters, an East Neuk DIY craft group, have created a striking and poignant Remembrance Day installation at [Dreel Halls](#) in Anstruther. Hand-knitted poppies adorn the front entrance of the community building, cascading over a five metre drop from a window at the front of the 16th century St Nicholas Tower, creating a beautiful display and wonderful tribute of remembrance.

Volunteers sourced the fishing net, with assistance from Pittenweem Harbour Master Steven Middleton, who supported the project by cutting and shaping the net to create two drapes to hang above the entrance of the building. The repurposed fishing net is representative of the East Neuk's fishing heritage and creates a unique backdrop for the poppies. The hand-crafted display also includes poppies on stakes dotted around the graveyard surrounding the building, garlands wrapped around posts and three poppy-covered wreaths.

The talented craft group is organised by Anstruther Improvements Association (AIA), a local charity that owns and manages the Dreel Halls for the benefit of the community. The Dreel Crafters group started in 2022 and now meets twice weekly at the halls. The crafters installed a small remembrance display of 250 hand knitted poppies outside the heritage building and surrounding graveyard in 2024. After a positive response from the community, the group were inspired to do more.



Photo courtesy of Lynne Muir

Over the past twelve months, members of the group continued to regularly knit poppies, extending the invitation to the local community to contribute to their Poppies Project. The shared project connected people in a new way, encouraging others to get involved and contribute with a shared aim. Friends, family members and people from the wider community have donated their knitting to the group's project, some from as far afield as Wales.

AIA Trustee Christine Palmer said: 'The Dreel Crafters and members of the wider community have created a beautiful and respectful Remembrance display. The Upper Hall of Dreel Halls, the former Anster Wester Town Hall, was at one time the meeting place of the Royal British Legion. It feels fitting to highlight both the past and present use of our historic building, whilst paying tribute and remembering those we have lost.'



St John's Lectures 2025

We are pleased to welcome

Revd Bonnie Evans-Hills

Priest-in-Charge at St Margaret's Episcopal Church, Leven



'They R Us'

A talk on all those, but not just refugees, who traverse this earth in what is called migration

7.30pm, Friday 28 November
St John's Episcopal Church
Marygate, Pittenweem

Please reserve free tickets by email:

lectures.stjohns@eastneuk-episcopal.co.uk

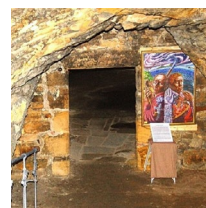
All are most welcome. Refreshments available.

St John's Episcopal Church is a registered Charity No SC010982



Light in our Darkness

A Short Candlelit Vigil for Advent
in the ancient, holy St Fillan's Cave,
Cove Wynd, Pittenweem



Sunday 30th November, 5pm

All Welcome!

Scottish charity no SC010982

NEWS IN BRIEF

East Neuk of Fife Probus Club

The East Neuk of Fife Probus Club's next meeting will be on Tuesday 18 November when retired GP Dr James Grant will give a talk titled 'The Art of Quackery – the worst cures for nearly everything!' James promises to take us on an amusing and fascinating journey among the sick, the not so sick and the gullible. Beware however – this is not a source of actual medical advice!

Meetings are held in the Coastline Community Church Hall on the first and third Tuesday of the month from October to May, starting at 10.00am for refreshments followed at 10.30 by the talk, which lasts about 45 minutes. If you would like to join please just come along to the talk or contact our secretary Tim Brett at timbrett324@btinternet.com.

Kellie Castle and Garden winter opening

Kellie Castle and Garden are delighted to announce that this winter we will be remaining open for weekends up until Christmas! New tours focusing on Hew and Mary Lorimer and their lives in the castle during the winter are available to book on our Eventbrite page.

Our tearoom will also remain open for light lunches, hot drinks and sweet treats 10am – 4pm on weekends and, as always, our garden and grounds



are open for winter wanders 7 days a week. We'd like to say a massive thank you to all of you who came to visit and support us this year and we hope to see you all this festive season!

New housing development

Construction is expected to start soon on the new housing development at James Street/ St Margaret's Farm. For more information on the development see [Green light for new housing in Pittenweem | Cruden Homes](#)

Planning news

No. 25 Session Street, Pittenweem - Planning application: 25/02734/FULL

This intriguing older building has historically functioned as a small workshop but the building has stood vacant and unused for an extended period. In its current condition it is uninhabitable and visibly deteriorating, with the roof and windows requiring significant repair and restoration. The proposal is to convert the existing building into a sustainable family home. The design approach prioritises preserving the charm and character of the original structure.

Priory Singers Christmas Carol Concert

A date for your diary! This year's Christmas concert will take place on Wednesday 10 December at 7pm in St Salvator's Chapel, St Andrews. Come along and listen to music by JS Bach, Poulenc, Bruch, Vaughan Williams and other seasonal favourites. Directed by Sarah Moerman. Tickets from choir members or at the door (£12, students £5, accompanied children free).

PITTENWEEM COMMUNITY LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE

AUTUMN 2025 EVENING TALKS

AN EVENING WITH SCOTLAND'S MAKAR

Peter Mackay (Pàdraig MacAoidh), writer,
teacher and broadcaster



THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER
Doors open 7pm, talk starts 7.30pm
Tea and biscuits included in the ticket price

Coastline Community Church
21 Session Street, Pittenweem KY10 2QL

Tickets: £7 available from the Library
Opening hours: Mon & Wed 2-5pm; Fri & Sat 10am-1pm

Pittenweem Library Cove Wynd, Pittenweem KY10 2LE
WEB: pittenweemlibrary.org.uk EMAIL: library@pittcllc.org.uk
FACEBOOK: @pittcllc

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation – Charity number SC047013

Pittenweem's Blue Plaques

JAMES MORE HORSBURGH (1924 – 2007), FISHERMAN AND ARTIST

James More Horsburgh, known as More, was the son of Robert Horsburgh, a Pittenweem fisherman, and herring packer Ann More. He was born in Hartlepool and grew up in Pittenweem, attending the primary school there and then Waid Academy. His artistic ability was clear from early on, and his elder stepbrother offered to put him through art school. However More's father died when More was 14 and he felt he must go to the fishing to help support the family. He worked on his cousin's boat the *Eulogia* until he was called up in 1942 and became an ASDIC (anti-submarine detection) operator in the Royal Navy, serving latterly in the Mediterranean. After the war he returned to the fishing for another 30 years, retiring to take up the post of night harbour master in Pittenweem.

In 1952 More had married Mary Webster Watson of Cellardyke and the couple had two children, Lawrence and Moreen. After Mary's death in 1983 More's life took a new direction.

He enrolled in art classes at Dundee College of Art where his teacher was James Mackintosh Patrick, an artist celebrated for his detailed paintings of the Angus landscape.



More turned his attic into an artist's studio and set out to record the fishing, now fast disappearing, as he remembered it, painting yawls, fifies and steam drifters alongside scenes of everyday life at the harbour.

His reputation as fisherman turned artist grew, and in 1996 Joyce Laing invited him to exhibit his work at the Pittenweem Arts Festival. For the next four years he showed his paintings in the meeting room at the old Granary under the title 'Fishing Nostalgia'. His work was later celebrated in a retrospective exhibition in 2009 accompanied by a catalogue featuring a perceptive and beautifully written biography by Christopher Rush. That same year a commemorative plaque was put up at 8 Calman's Wynd where he had lived at one time.

Two of his paintings are on display at the Scottish Fisheries Museum and many others are treasured by local families. In the words of Joyce Laing, 'He has left a beautiful visual record of fishing life over the past fifty years. He never thought of himself as an accomplished artist, yet he has enriched our experience of living in the East Neuk of Fife and of life itself'.

Acknowledgements: many thanks to More Horsburgh's family for permission to use photographs of his work, and to Willie McNaughton and Ronnie Hughes for allowing the Post to reproduce material about More's life published in Yet More Tales from the East Neuk.



SCOTTISH FISHERIES MUSEUM HOSTS PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

It is always a pleasure to welcome back photographers Emily Noakes and Caroline MacDonald to our Merchant's Room Community Art Gallery. Their pictures, which capture the spectacular sites of the surrounding area in all seasons, makes it feel like lots of little windows have opened onto the beautiful world around us – which is just what we need when the dark evenings and dreich weather keep us stuck indoors. An added bonus is that as the gallery is part of our friendly Waves Café, you can enjoy some warming broth or a brew as you browse!

This winter exhibition runs into January, but as we're closed over Christmas, we suggest coming



All Tied Up, Pittenweem by Emily Noakes

soon to snare that extra special, unique gift for someone you love who loves the East Neuk. Open everyday except Tuesdays 10am - 4pm. All welcome and entry is free.

THE STORY OF COAL GAS IN PITTENWEEM

Whenever I take family or friends on a tour of our wonderful burgh I point out the cast iron lamp posts in the wynds, each one featuring the name of the wynd itself. The lamps date from the late 19th century, and you can still see some of the original straight-sided lanterns on Routine Row and South Loan. They were subsequently replaced with the glass globes we see today. All of these were fed by our local coal gas supply.

In last month's *Pittenweem Post* we mentioned the invaluable historical source of printed newspapers. In 1948 *The Weekly News* printed an article on the introduction of coal-fired gas to domestic dwellings in the UK. This was thanks to a Scottish engineer and inventor, William Murdoch, who first experimented by putting burning coals inside a kettle and igniting the vapour coming out of the spout. Gas lighting had been invented, and in 1792 he first lit an entire house using gas. Murdoch also acted as assistant to his fellow Scot James Watt, famous for developing his steam engine.

There were two coal mines close to Pittenweem, one at Pathhead and another at Grangemuir, and these eventually supplied our very own gasworks at the end of West Shore. It was hoped that the supply of good quality coal would bring prosperity to the burgh. The proposed new railroad from Markinch to Anstruther (at an estimated cost of £250,000) would 'carry our coal west and north and native and foreign vessels would load in our harbour'. Pittenweem coal was even advertised for sale as far away as Hamburg.

The 1844 *Pittenweem Register* for 7 December quotes lines from a local song:

*Of all the coal upon the Forth,
There's none like Pittenweem;
Put on a fire where you like,
No ashes will be seen.*

In February 1845 the *Register* reported that 'A numerous and respectable meeting of the inhabitants of Pittenweem was held... to select a place whereon to erect a Gas Work.' Over £900 had been subscribed to enable Pittenweem to have the benefit of gas light before the following winter. A meeting of the shareholders in March approved plans for the gasworks at the West Braes.



Gasworks photograph courtesy of Pittenweem Past
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/508521916200515/>

There were delays as a change to the ancient feudal law of entail was required from Westminster but on 27 November 1845 Pittenweem was lit by gas for the first time. The *Register* reported that 'It has already dissipated the awful gloom in our streets . . . a gas light will not cost more than the light of a candle while it will give ten times more light and no snuffing or trouble whatever with it.' The new gas lighting was not popular with everyone, as 'Some evil or disposed person or persons cut the pipe of two of the street lamps.' A reward of twenty shillings was offered for their apprehension.

Pittenweem's gas works was initially supplied by the Cassingray coal works, situated just east of Largoward, but the Gibliston and Kellie collieries had closed down and there was a shortage in the area that gave Pittenweem's rich seams an advantage. It was estimated that local miners would be constantly employed for five hundred years.

In June 1848 the steamers *St Kieran* and the *Fair Trader* began to load and disembark passengers and Pittenweem coal could now be transported easily to the St Monans salt pans, which had gone into decline due to the shortage of fuel. In May of 1855 fifteen additional street lamps were to be installed before the following winter and in November Pittenweem's gas works started plans to supply St Monans.

Anyone interested in the history of our local coal industry might like to read *Coal Mining in the East Neuk of Fife* by John McManus, an extremely thorough, detailed and technical account that is available at our very own Pittenweem Community Library.

Meic Brooks

Acknowledgements: this article would not have been possible without invaluable information from the National Library of Scotland and Fife Council's archives. I am also indebted to the Fife Family History Society for making access available to the Pittenweem Register in digital form.



FOCUS ON LOCAL BUSINESS: THE COCOA TREE

Since Sophie Latinis opened the Cocoa Tree café and chocolate shop in 2007 it has been a year-round haven, attracting local residents and visitors from around the world. This Pittenweem attraction has been featured in iconic publications including Scotland the Best, Lonely Planet, Coast, Chicago Tribune, and Condé Nast Traveller.

Sophie was born in Belgium and grew up in Harare in Zimbabwe. She graduated from the Cape Town School of Fashion and then ran a clothing factory in Zimbabwe. Her journey to Pittenweem started when she became friends with a Belgian family who opened a chocolaterie in Harare. Sophie gave up her fashion business to join them, cementing her love of all things chocolate. While still based in Zimbabwe, Sophie visited the East Neuk on holiday and felt so much at home that the family decided to settle here. Knowing very little about the burgh of Pittenweem, she felt instinctively that it was special and would be an ideal place to set up a chocolate café business.

And now, after almost two decades, the popularity of Pittenweem Chocolate, and the café, has outgrown the current kitchen facilities and has inspired the creation of her Artisan Chocolate Kitchen. The Cocoa Tree shop and café in Pittenweem will continue to offer a chocolate-infused menu, handmade daily in the High Street kitchen and showcasing fine local produce and carefully sourced speciality ingredients from around the globe. The new development will allow Sophie and her dedicated team, led by Manager Fiona Irwin, to do more with the incredible produce they use. The new space in Anstruther has been designed to meet the needs of year-round chocolate production with state-of-the-art temperature-controlled areas for the manufacture and storage of chocolate, raw materials and products.



Once the kitchen is up and running, Sophie plans to seek additional funding for a cooking and dining space that will become the 'heart of the home'. She explains, 'The East Neuk is our home. So we want to give this community an opportunity to gather for feasts, experience chef tastings or specialist workshops, discover new talents and niche skills, enjoy wine or supper clubs, or use the space for their own events.' Finally, the Artisan Chocolate Kitchen project will realise Sophie's goal of bringing production of the Pittenweem Chocolate Company's gin and whisky liqueur collection – handmade by her partner in Belgium – to its home in the East Neuk.

This consistent and steady approach has been rewarded with local and global visitors who return to the Pittenweem Chocolate Company time and again.

'The incredible support is what gets me out of bed in the morning,' Sophie said. 'I've poured everything into this place and I've loved seeing the café and shop become woven into the fabric of the community. I've watched children grow from babies into young adults who began their careers working in the café. I love teaching people about the art and science of chocolate making, seeing the wonder on children's faces as they melt and mix, and meeting new people thanks to word-of-mouth recommendations.'



SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Earlier this month, I hosted a business breakfast in Cupar, bringing together local business owners to share the challenges they are facing. From family-run shops and cafés to service providers and professionals, the room was full of people who are the backbone of our local economy.

The discussion was wide-ranging, constructive and deeply grounded in the reality of running a business in a relatively rural patch. One of the clearest themes was the ongoing challenge of keeping our town centres accessible. In Cupar, parking availability and ongoing roadworks have been affecting footfall. While we can all appreciate that essential maintenance works are necessary, utility companies need to think about the wider impact – there's no denying the disruption it brings to local trade.

Businesses also expressed frustration at the pace of local planning decisions, with concerns that outdated frameworks and slow responses are holding back growth. I know that issues with planning decisions are having an impact around Scotland, and I'll be speaking with my MSP colleagues to discuss how we can tackle this.

Many businesses shared that they are struggling with high rents or unsuitable premises, especially when older or listed buildings require costly upkeep. This is something I will be raising

and I'll be looking at mechanisms to ensure fair and responsible commercial letting.

High property costs are compounded by ongoing and sustained price rises. Energy bills, food prices, and business rates are all adding to the pressure. Some businesses have struggled to access green energy grants or loans, as upfront costs can be prohibitive. And with interest rates still at a 30-year high, investment is harder to justify, especially as uncertainty looms over the next UK Budget.

Access to banking services continues to be a concern for businesses, as I know it is for many customers. While local Post Offices were praised for their helpfulness, businesses, and I know many others across North East Fife, remain frustrated by the loss of local branches. Meanwhile banks are continuing to step back from the high street. Businesses and consumers still want and need these services and I will continue to press for a banking hub in North East Fife to ensure easy access to cash and services for all.

I'll be following up on all of the issues raised and looking for the best ways to offer support to our local businesses. Our small businesses are at the heart of community life, and it's vital that every level of government listens, acts, and helps them thrive.

Wendy Chamberlain MP



JOIN THE ANSTRUTHER
PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY FOR OUR

Christmas CONCERT

TELLING THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Accompanied by a wonderful string ensemble, the choir will take a journey through five centuries of Christmas music, from Mediaeval England to Italy, Germany and the best of British cathedral music.

With many well-loved carols as well!

Featuring En Hudson - Harp
Directed by Au Arias

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025 AT 4:30 PM
ST. AYLE CHURCH, CELLARDYKE
TOLL ROAD, KY10 3BQ

TICKETS £12

Via our website www.anstrutherphilharmonic.org
From members or at the door.



Coming up... at Dreel Halls

Saturday 15th November, 10.30am - 12pm
Early Winter Coffee Morning: drop in any time and join us for a cup of tea or coffee, seasonal home-baking, a book swap and stories, a craft table and a good blether. Entry: £3.50 per adult, £1.50 per child

Thursday 20th November, 7.30pm
Anster Nicht: Could Anstruther Become the World's First Digital Safe Haven? Jon Rogers, Cellardyke resident and Professor of Creative Technology at the University of Northumbria, has a vision of an internet that works for our community, nourishing us and our environment. AIA members free, £3 non-members.

Sunday 7th November, doors 6.20pm, film 6.45pm
Anster Cinema: Bridget Jones, Mad About the Boy: our favourite romcom heroine is back. Bridget Jones, widowed and bringing up two children, is on the hunt for a job and love. £6 / £3 under 18s - on the door. Refreshments by donation

 Further details of all AIA events and activities can be found on our website:
<https://www.anstrutherimprovements.org/events/>



Anstruther Improvements Association is a registered SCIO under Scottish Charity Number SC016109

COAL FARM NEWS FROM PETE PEDDIE

Fifty Shades ofGreen! Well, maybe not 50, but certainly a few different shades around Coal Farm reflecting different things going on at this time of year.

The first shade is the newly sown winter wheat. This is sown in the autumn for harvest next September. Other farms close by will have other autumn-sown crops like winter barley and winter oil seed rape, but we only do the wheat. Because of the heat in the ground, the wheat has emerged (braided, we would say) quickly and there is something enjoyable about being able to see the rows of new-sown wheat, when you can see every row, bullet straight up the length of the field.

The next shade of green is the carrots, still in the ground waiting to be lifted. The foliage is a less

vibrant green than it was during the height of summer as the carrot sends all available resources into its over-wintering organ, the root. Most of the field has been strawed to protect the carrots from frost, but some of the field towards the Fingerpost is unstrawed and we hope the harvesting team appears before we have significant cold weather.

Next in our list is a less desirable shade of green. The ground after our barley is uniformly green right across the whole field. These fields came ready for harvest so rapidly that they dried before they were fully ripe and in this state they were very brittle. The greenness is because the heads broke apart just before, or as, the combine came through, resulting in viable (and saleable!) seeds landing on the ground evenly across the field and these seeds have grown with the damp autumn weather.

The last shade of green is the green-crop. This is sown in the autumn after wheat and has a dual purpose of building up organic matter in the soil and bio-fumigating the soil before we plant potatoes. We sow a variety of seeds in the mixture but the main one is oil seed radish. The roots of this plant produce chemicals which discourage eel-worm, as they can damage the potato crop. This crop is not harvested, but it grows until the frost kills it off. As it grows, it soaks up any unused nitrogen in the ground and converts it into organic matter. Good for the environment, good for the soil, good for the soul!



BOOK WEEK SCOTLAND 17–23 NOVEMBER

This year Book Week Scotland has chosen Friendship as its theme. To celebrate, storyteller Marie Louise Cochrane and Andrew Whitley, baker, writer and activist, both of whom live in St Monans, have teamed up to present a delightful evening of stories, songs and reflections all about bread, books and companionship.

Andrew will share with us the books that inspired him first to become a baker and then a miller, endeavouring to provide everyone with good bread by changing the food system. Marie Louise will share stories and songs celebrating bread and friendship and the vital part in our lives they both play.

They will also be launching a library of bread books to support those who want to make their own bread, and in anticipation of this a selection of books about bread will be on display in Pittenweem Library during Book Week.

The Companionship of Books and Bread will be held on Thursday 20 November at the Coastline Community Church – details on the poster. Entry is free with donations warmly accepted towards local community baking. For more information email Marie Louise queenofrevelry@gmail.com.

The Companionship of **Books & Bread**

Celebrate **Book Week Scotland** by joining baker and writer Andrew Whitley and storyteller Marie Louise Cochrane for a unique evening of

tales, songs and reflections about bread



Entry is **free** with donations welcome to support community baking.

More info from: queenofrevelry@gmail.com

Thursday **20th November 2025**
7-8.30 pm
at **Coastline Community Church**
Pittenweem KY10 2QL

WRAP UP WARM WITH EAST NEUK KNITS

East Neuk Knits is a new fibre festival coming to Fife on the weekend of the 29–30 November 2025. Celebrating the crafting community and the historic links between gansey knitting and the fishing heritage of this beautiful part of Fife, visitors will be able to learn a new skill, squish yarn, snuggle a goat, alpaca or sheep, eat cake, and purchase lovely Christmas gifts.

East Neuk Knits is a collaboration between Di Gilpin, designer and judge on the *Game of Wool* Channel 4 programme, researcher and designer Alison Mayne and Susan Anderson, publisher of the *Journal of Scottish Yarns*. At a traditionally quiet time of year Di, Alison and Susan are bringing this exciting event to Fife to support farmers, makers and the local tourism industry.

Bowhouse near St Monans is our hub for the weekend, with vendor marketplace, lots of great food, pop-up talks, mini-exhibitions and our community decorated Drifter herring boat sail.



Di Gilpin and Sheila Greenwell, part of the East Neuk Knits team and Game of Wool judges.

A range of exciting workshops and talks are being held at the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther, Kellie Castle and Di Gilpin's Wool Hoose at Comielaw Farm, with children's crafting sessions held at Ardross Farm.

More information and tickets are available via our website: eastneukknit.com

Email: eastneukknit@gmail.com

Instagram: [@eastneukknits](https://www.instagram.com/eastneukknits)



Saturday 29 – Sunday 30 November 2025
Bowhouse
St Monans
East Neuk
Anstruther
FIFE KY10 2DB

Tickets from £5.00, more info at:
www.eastneukknits.co.uk

EAST NEUK KNITS

ALSO AT SCOTTISH FISHERIES MUSEUM, KELLIE CASTLE, ARDROSS FARM AND DI GILPIN'S WOOL HOUSE



Pittenweem
Parish Church



Coffee Morning Come for a Cuppa and a Chat

Looking for something to do on a **Wednesday morning**?
then come along for a coffee/tea and a chat/blether
and raffle to the Parish Church Hall.

Church Hall, James St

Wednesdays

10.00 - 11.30 am

Special thanks to all our 'regulars' supporting
local groups, charities and the Parish Church

All Welcome

PITTENWEEM COMMUNITY CRAFTS

We are thrilled to announce that Pittenweem Community Crafts has raised a grand total of £3,760 from our efforts at this year's Pittenweem Arts Festival. We are delighted to say that the funds will be equally distributed between our two chosen charities for 2025. Each of these two charities will receive £1,880:

- **RNLI (Anstruther):** The Royal National Lifeboat Institution provides essential life-saving services along our coastlines. The donation will support their ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of those at sea.
- **Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance:** This vital service offers rapid response medical care across Scotland, providing critical support in emergencies. Our contribution will help them continue their life-saving work.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated and contributed to this fantastic cause. Your generosity and community spirit have made a significant difference.

Our committee have been hard at work planning for next year's Arts Festival. Once again we will be making and selling all sorts of hand-crafted items such as knitwear, crochet, quilting, paperwork, jewellery and more. If you'd like to join us in our endeavours, we'd love it if you could make and donate anything on our 2026 theme, 'This Farming Life'.

Get your crafty thinking caps on! If you'd like some inspiration or support, you can find us on Facebook or Instagram.



Our chosen charities for 2026 are:

- **RHET - the Royal Highland Education Trust:** a charity working with volunteers, teachers and farmers to provide every child in Scotland with the opportunity to learn about food, farming and the working countryside. They organise trips for school pupils to working farms, partnering with farmers to create a wider understanding of the environmental, economic and social realities of rural Scotland.
- **Crossroads Fife Central:** a charity operating across all Fife, providing support to carers who look after someone of any age with a disability or illness. Support is provided in the form of short breaks and befriending (visiting the person in their own home or meeting in the community).



Warmest regards from
Pittenweem Community Crafts

BRYTE COFFEE

Just along the coast from Pittenweem in the village of Boarhills an exciting new coffee start-up has just launched – introducing Bryte, a speciality coffee roastery founded by Sam Robertson. Bryte crafts beautiful, light roast coffee that celebrates the extraordinary efforts of farmers and producers and – hopefully – will bring a little extra joy to the moments in life that people love most.

The company is also committed to an eco-friendly approach to packaging, using bags, boxes and labels that are all 100% recyclable in our home paper-card recycling stream. To celebrate Bryte's launch and welcome readers of Pittenweem Post, Bryte is offering 20% off all single orders (not including shipping or subscriptions); just head to their



website (brytecoffee.co.uk) and use the code PITTENWEEMPOST at the checkout.

We know it can be a challenging time bringing a new start-up into the world, so we wish Sam and Bryte all the very best.

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF PITTENWEEM – JOIN THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Do you care about the future of Pittenweem? Would you like to have a say in what happens in the burgh?

The Community Council is looking for new members to join our team. As a councillor, you'll play a role in local decision-making – from reviewing planning proposals and voicing community concerns to Fife Council, to supporting projects that aim to improve everyday life in Pittenweem.

We're looking for local residents who work well as part of a team and are keen to make a positive difference in the community. No special qualifications are needed – just your commitment and local insight.



Meetings are held on the **third Wednesday of each month at 7pm**, at the **New Town Hall on Session Street**.

Whether you're ready to get involved or simply want to learn more, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

Contact our secretary, Graeme MacGilchrist, at gmacgilchrist@gmail.com

PCC news

Key points discussed at the October meeting included access for construction vehicles to the new Crudens housing development at James Street/St Margaret's Farm and the administration of the Community Benefit Fund. It was reported that Toby Anstruther will donate a Christmas tree to Pittenweem – details forthcoming. You can read the full minutes here: www.pittenweemnewtownhall.co.uk/community-council.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 19 November** and members of the public are welcome to come along.

CHRISTMAS IN THE LOFT

Pop along to Christmas in the Loft at Ardross Farm on **Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 November**. Joining us are a host of makers and artists, with pottery, jewellery, glassware, paintings, woodwork, textiles, toiletries, knitwear and festive wreaths – truly something for everyone. **Open 9am to 5.30pm** both days, with plenty parking and, of course, an award winning farm shop downstairs.



Christmas

at Crail Community Hall - 11am - 4pm
Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th November



Christmas Café - Craft & Art Stalls
Primary School Concert Sunday 12 & 2 pm
Crail Choir Concert Sunday 7.30 pm
Free Entry to Fayre

Concert tickets through Crail Choir Further Information
www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk

ST MONANS MEMORIAL GARDEN

On Saturday 22 November, people will gather in St Monans for the opening of a Memorial which has been six years and more in the planning – and is arguably 150 years overdue. The Earl and Countess of Crawford and Balcarres – Anthony and Minnie – will do the honours. The Mayor of King's Lynn will be there, and the Provost of Fife, both resplendent in their golden chains; and all of them outranked only by Her Majesty Grace Kell, Sea-Queen of St Monans 2025. There will be plenty 'ordinary' people there too, including descendants of some of the men whose names are inscribed on the three pink granite plinths that form the centrepiece of the Memorial Garden, designed by local architect Fermín Beltrán dos Santos.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of one of the worst fishing disasters to hit the East Neuk of Fife. Not the only one by any means, and we are acutely aware of those who have lost loved ones at sea before and since, but November 1875 stands out because of the large number of men – 37 in all – who were lost at the one time.

Around 80 small Fifies (at 40ft they were just over half the length of the *Reaper*) had set off two months earlier for the Autumn Drave in East Anglia, following the herring on their annual migration south. Five of these boats – *Beautiful Star* (KY 1298), *Thane* (KY 1071) and *Quest* (KY 221) from St Monans; *Janet Anderson* (KY 1176) and *Vigilant* (KY1214) from Cellardyke – left with many others on Friday 19 November, judging that the violent storms of the previous week had abated, and never made it home. You can read the story in *Tales from the East Neuk* (PFMA, pp. 71-81), where this rare photograph appears of James Paterson, skipper of the *Beautiful Star*, with his wife Julian Allan and three of their children in happier times.

Mrs Paterson was cited in newspapers of the time as an example of how closely knit these small fishing communities were.



The Paterson family.



Artist's impression of the St Monans Memorial Garden.

Not only was her husband, James, in charge of one of the boats that went down; her brother, David Allan, was skipper of another, the *Quest*. In total she lost nine close family members in the space of a few days: her husband, her son, two brothers, a brother-in-law, three nephews and a cousin. Many others would have had similar tales to tell.

It speaks of the resilience and faith of these people, together with the strength of the community to which they belonged that they did not give in to despair. They kept on going, making boats, mending nets, catching, curing and selling fish, knitting, writing poems, painting pictures, working, worshipping and relaxing together, living courageous lives that deserve to be remembered. Their legacy will be honoured in our Memorial Garden for many years to come.

St John's Episcopal Church, Marygate, Pittenweem

Please join us for a new season of short recitals

Music at St John's

Sunday 23rd November

at 3pm

when we welcome back

Robin Bell

Playing a selection of music by Bach, Gibbons, Rameau, Howells and Schumann on St. John's Chamber Organ

Enjoy tea, cake and music in our welcoming space

This is an event open to all, donations are welcome at the door

Robin Bell graduated from Glasgow University with Honours in Music. He has been organist in Linlithgow, Grangemouth, Dunblane and Stenhousemuir and assistant organist at St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh. He has taught music at Falkirk, Alloa, Madras College and St Leonards in St Andrews. Robin has also been administrator of SCOTS (Scottish Churches Organist Training Scheme), conductor of Cupar Choral Society, accompanist to the East Fife Male Voice Choir and is a past chair of the Friends of the Caird Hall Organ.

St John's Episcopal Church is a registered Charity No SC010982

DON'T MISS YOUR COPY OF THE POST!

Would you like to receive the Post by email?

If so, all you have to do is send an email to post@pittcllc.org.uk with *Subscribe* in the subject line.

You will receive an email on the second Friday of each month with a link to the new issue of the Post. The Post keeps you up to date with what's happening in the Pittenweem area. If you enjoy reading it please tell your friends and neighbours.

Interested in contributing? Our editor would love to hear from you at post@pittcllc.org.uk.



*The library's Halloween raffle prize:
pumpkin carved by Moti Black*

East Poetry Group



“

The beginning,
waiting, unfolding
in the begun.

William Thomson

Join us at Pittenweem library
Wednesday evenings: 6.30-8.00pm

PLEASE REGISTER ATTENDANCE, EMAIL:
HAIKUEAST@PROTON.ME



**Get ready for the ultimate
rock experience as
Bat Out of Hell
roars onto the big screen!**

The cast of the West End production will bring Jim Steinman and Meat Loaf's iconic anthems to life, including I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), Paradise By The Dashboard Light, Two Out of Three Ain't Bad, Dead Ringer For Love, and, of course, Bat Out of Hell.

Saturday, 15th November - 7.30 pm
Crail Community Hall - BYOB
Tickets £10
www.crailcommunityhall.co.uk



Material for inclusion in the Pittenweem Post should be sent to post@pittcllc.org.uk by 5pm Friday, one week before publication. **Dates for your diary:** please note the next issue will be the joint December/January issue. It will be published on **Friday 12 December 2025**, contributions to be submitted no later than **Friday 5 December**.

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We thank you and hope you have enjoyed reading the Post! Why not also become a contributor?
We always appreciate receiving news, information and stories – past and present – about our community.