The EYE*

Issue 11

<image>

Salute to Hogg is Sell-Out Success

John Nichol leads the Community Singing

WHAT'S ON IN THE VALLEYS Ettrick and Yarrow news and events April 2025

The Boston Hall was full to capacity on the 29th March as people came from far and wide to toast the special genius of James Hogg, the prolific writer and musician also known as the Ettrick Shepherd.

The party was one Hogg himself might have appreciated! John Nichol compered proceedings ably supported with Hogg songs and tunes by Hilary Bell and Lucy Cowan. Also entertaining the crowd were fiddle tunes from Sheila Sapkota with Davy Scott on spoons and a beautiful duet of *Both Sides of the Tweed* by Marjorie Hutton and Carol Carr.

Song books were provided and the community singing was also excellent. The main course was – of course – Shepherd's Pie, provided by the Bee Hive Café, with trifle to follow then excellent shortbread and cakes baked by local supporters.

The sell-out event was a fundraiser for the James Hogg Exhibition which runs through the summer in the old Ettrick primary school. Over £500 was raised for the exhibition with bar profits going to the hall.

We'll keep an eye on diary dates and list them in these pages so you can plan your month ahead.



Tushielaw Inn has changed management so it's goodbye to Sharon and Alan and hello to Annette and Duncan Abbott from North Wales. Annette and Duncan previously worked in a very rural pub in Penmaenpool for Robinson brewery. They're still getting settled in so Tushielaw is currently open every day but with a restricted menu for the moment. We look forward to their official opening in the next few weeks!



Clean plates all round (apart from the chatterboxes...)

Oh! The places you'll go



Studio space is still available at the awardwinning Kirkhope Steading Development, as well as space for hot desking. One large studio is available which could be shared by 3-4 artists or makers.

Cost is a very reasonable £160 per month per person (includes VAT and energy costs based on three people sharing). Free parking, 24-hour access and communal kitchen area. Hot desking is available for £120 per month per person which includes VAT and energy costs, also 24-hour access.

Contact vicky@ettrickandyarrow.org.uk for more details.

(See page 7 to meet Kirkhope fine artist Deirdre Nicholls.)



Banter and a good book ...what could be better?

Love books? Enjoy a good chat over a glass of wine? Come along to the brand-new Yarrow Valley Book Club at Yarrow Hall! Held the first Tuesday of every month, 7:00 - 9:00pm at Yarrow Hall, the cost is £5 per session to cover hall hire, wine, and refreshments (First session is FREE!)

Launch Event is on Tuesday 1st April 2025, 7-8pm. We'll kick off our first gathering with a glass of wine and a friendly chat! We'll introduce ourselves, discuss our favourite genres,



ourselves, discuss our favourite genres, and pick our first books to read. No required reading for this session - just bring your ideas and enthusiasm!

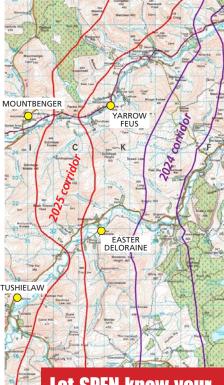
Expect laughter, bookish banter, and a relaxing evening. Each month, we'll read a chosen book and come back to share our thoughts. Whether you're a regular reader or just want to get back into books, this is the perfect club for you! No membership fees, just a small donation to cover costs! Tag a friend who loves to read and come along! For more details, visit www.yarrowhall.com/event-list

Calling Older Drivers!

Following the success of previous older driver sessions, Drivewise have released another two dates for those drivers in our communities aged over 65. Don't know what all the technology in your car does (or how to set it?) This could be the course for you! Comes with coffee and easy chat to get you up to speed (within limits of course...) Contact John Cleland to book jcleland@clelands.co.uk







Let SPEN know your opinion of the cross **Border connection**

BROADMEADOWS

Cross Border connection Preferred **Option Comparison** 2024 and 2025



he developer of the proposed pylon development SP Energy across the Ettrick and Yarrow valleys, Scottish Networks Power Energy Networks (SPEN) has recently sent round revised plans for their Cross Border Connection (CBC).

The Ettrick & Yarrow Pylon Action Group (EYPAG) is an un-constituted group of volunteers set up to oppose the CBC proposal, and is feeding in to Action Against Pylons: Scottish Borders Alliance (AAP), an umbrella organisation with around ten similar groups to EYPAG with communities facing the same fate as ours along the route. The EYPAG urges as many people as possible to get along to a presentation, scrutinise their proposals and ask the SPEN representatives any questions.

The consultation period for SPEN's revised plans ends on Friday 2nd May. You can email in your objections to info@ crossborderconnection.com

The EYPAG as a 'body' has not made any direct representations to SPEN. To date, it has gathered as much information as possible and shared it with residents in the valley for them to make their own representations. It is going to be a long and hard battle to prevent these monstrosities being built right across the Borders, and so if people would like to get involved in the campaign to stop them, please do email EttrickYarrowPAG@gmail. com. The EYPAG aims to regroup soon after the SPEN presentation at the community council meeting on Monday 7th April at 7pm.



A classic 17th Century Coaching Inn offering traditional pub food, real ales and B&B accommodation.

Main Street, Ettrickbridge • 01750 52224 hello@crosskeysinnettrickbridge.com

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www.crosskeysinnettrickbridge.com

What's On April ...



Diary Dates: April 2025

The Stitchers

Boston Hall, Ettrick

Ettrick's sociable sewing bee runs from 2-4pm. Beginners welcome, bring along whatever project you are currently working on. Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday in the month.

Planning Feedback Forum

Victoria Hall, Selkirk

Feedback session in Selkirk in the Victoria Hall for the 'place planning' that has been underway for Selkirk and the valleys. Here is what the consultants have gathered so far about what local residents want to see in their local area. 6pm start.

Yarrow Book Club

Yarrow Hall, Yarrow Feus

Launch of the Yarrow Valley Book Club in Yarrow Feus Hall from 7-8pm. A brand new club for bibliophiles to come together every month to share a glass of wine and enjoy some lively book related discussion.

New Age Kurling

Yarrowford Hall, 2pm-4pm

New Age Kurling is held on every 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month. Suitable for all ages / abilities and can be played seated or standing. The cost is £3 per person and includes refreshments.

Pub Ouiz

Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge

Wednesday evening sees the very popular pub quiz in the Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge. Maximum 5 in a team, £2 per person. 7.30 for 8pm start. Booking essential Email: Lindajack57@btinternet.com

Table Tennis

Yarrowford Hall

Table Tennis, 5.30-6.30pm – all welcome.

Craft Group

Kirkhope Hall, 10am start

The Ettrickbridge based Craft group on first Wednesday of every month.

Men's Club

Yarrowford Hall, 2-4pm

Yarrowford Hall hosts a weekly informal 'men's club' for men of all ages to drop in for a chat, game of cards, dominoes, darts or simply a cup of tea. The cost is £3.00 per session (2.00 – 4.00 pm) and includes refreshments.



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Diary Dates: April 2025

Singing Group

Yarrow Feus Hall, 7-8.30pm

Singing is not just for the birds this spring! The Safety in Numbers singing group led by Hilary Bell meets every Thursday. Cost is £3 to cover refreshments and hire of hall.

Playgroup fun

Yarrow Hall, Yarrow Feus, 9.30am

Change of venue for the Ettrick and Yarrow Playgroup this week with a 'Messy Play' session in the Yarrow Hall, Yarrow Feus from 9.30 to 11am. Open to all pre-school children. The playgroup will not meet for the next two Fridays due to the Easter break.

Sunday Morning Service

Yarrow Kirk, 11.30am

Church Services in the valleys move around the three churches. Sunday 6th is in Yarrow Kirk at 11.30am. Services are led by the Selkirk and valleys minister, Rev. Kwame Ahaligah.

Community Council Mon Meeting

Yarrow Feus Hall

The meeting this time is being held at the earlier time of 6.30pm. There will be a presentation at 7pm by SPEN about the latest projected route of the Cross Border pylon project, followed no doubt by some lively debate. The consultation period for the amended route ends on Friday 2nd May.

Ettrick WRI Tues

Boston Hall, Ettrick

Ettrick Woman's Rural meets at 7.30 in the Boston Hall for a talk about the activities and help provided by Sustainable Selkirk. Visitors, plus new and returning members always welcome.

Yarrowford WRI

Yarrowford Hall, 2pm

Yarrowford Women's SWI (the Rural) meets in the Yarrowford hall. This session features One Pot Cookery on Tuesday afternoon from 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm.



Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge, 10.30am Coffee and chat in the Cross Keys every Wed 10.30 – 12 noon.

Table Tennis

Yarrowford Hall, 5.30 - 6.30pm Table Tennis session, all welcome.

Save a Life

n the event of a suspected heart attack, call 999, sit the person down, check if they have heart medicine they can take, give an aspirin if they are not allergic to it (300mg), keep calm, remember where the nearest defibrillator is and how to do CPR. Many people

in the valley have done emergency first aid training and we hope to have funding to run a refresher course for Emergency First Aid at Work within the next few months. CPR or heart massage can help if the person's heart stops but it is hard work which is why



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CALL 999

NEC

LIFE SAVING DEFIBRILLATOR

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having access to a defibrillator quickly can save a life. If possible, send someone else to fetch the defibrillator in case it is needed.

The following defibrillators are maintained up and down the valleys by the community council with funding through the Langhope Rig

windfarm fund. They are all currently in working order and the batteries are checked regularly. To take it out, if it is in a green case, grip both sides and pull forward to open. If it is in a yellow case then turn the handle to open. In an emergency you will find one at the following locations:

- The Boston Hall
- Honey Cottage Caravan park
- **Tushielaw Inn**
- **Kirkhope Hall**
- Kirkhope Kirk
- The Glen Cafe
- Cappercleuch Hall
- The Gordon Arms
- Yarrow Feus Hall
- Yarrow Kirk
- Yarrowford Hall
- The Waterwheel Café
- There is also one in the courtyard at Bowhill with public access.



Se

The monthly Mobile Library service, run by Live Borders will be coming to **Yarrow on** Monday 7th & Monday 21st April at the following locations and times:

| LOCATION | STOP | TIMES |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Broadmeadows | Bridge | 13.40-13.55 |
| Yarrowford | Yarrowford | 14.00-14.10 |

The library bus will also be visiting the Ettrick Valley on Thursday 3rd and 17th April at the following locations and times:



| LOCATION | STOP | TIMES |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Ettrick | Roweburn | 12.30-12.35 |
| Ettrick | Newhope | 12.40-12.55 |
| Ettrick | Boston Hall | 13.05-13.30 |
| Ettrick | Honey Cottage | 14.10-14.30 |
| Ettrick | Tushielaw | 14.35-14.50 |
| Ettrickbridge | Woodend Rd | 15.10-15.40 |

Bowhill is blooming – and open!

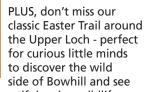
The grounds at Bowhill will be reopening from April 5th to 17th, and the wonderful weather has dressed the landscape in its glorious best. Everything is greening and the show of daffodils cannot fail to lift the spirits.

But apart from poetic musings, there is plenty more to explore and enjoy:

Adventures in the Playground

Scenic walks through the grounds

- Delicious bites at the Old Kitchen Café
- Step back in time in the Victorian Kitchen



the beautiful spring wildlife emerging!

More details at: www.tinyurl. com/bowhill-easter-opening

Spring at Bowhill: Phoenix Photography Scotland





■ More tree planting in the community owned Ettrick Marshes will be taking place this month with native trees supplied by the Woodland Trust, but we're short of tree stakes - if you have any spare or know of anyone who might be willing to donate some to us we'd be very grateful. Volunteers welcome – please message Marshes ranger Tommy Bryson if you can help. **07749834896.**

Nature Aware ■ Please note – if walking around St Mary's Loch please take care not to disturb oystercatchers which will now be nesting on the shingle.

Spring into the Saddle this April

Make the most of the good weather this month by loosening up the muscles without too much puff-and-pant! Electric Bikes always available to hire from the old Ettrick School- £20 per bike, must be booked in advance, **07846 505630** / **bikes@ettrickandyarrow.org.uk**



Diary Dates: April

Ettrickbridge WRI

Kirkhope Hall, 7.30pm

Ettrickbridge Women's Rural meets at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month in the Kirkhope Hall (September to May). All welcome.

Men's Club

Yarrowford Hall

Informal 'men's club' for men of all ages, 2-4pm. £3.00 per session (incl. refreshments).

Music Weekend

💶 📱 Cross Keys Inn;

Kirkhope Hall,

Ettrickbridge

The Kirkhope hills are alive with music as the lan Lowthian music weekend moves to the Cross Keys pub for a session on Saturday evening with a concert in the Kirkhope Hall on Sunday. Toe-tapping stuff!

lan Lowthian

Palm Sunday Service

Kirkhope Church, 11.30am

Palm Sunday and the Church Service is in Kirkhope Church at 11.30am. Teas before the service from 11am. Services are led by the Selkirk and valleys minister, Rev. Kwame Ahaligah.

The Stitchers

Boston Hall, Ettrick

Ettrick's sociable sewing bee gets together from 2-4pm in the Boston Hall. Beginners welcome - bring along whatever project you are currently working on. Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday in the month.



FRIDAY 4 APRIL: Last day of term for pupils EASTER HOLIDAYS: Monday 7 to Friday 18 April

SUMMER TERM: Monday 21 April term commences

QUOTES FOR SPRING:

"You gotta bloom where you're planted." – Dolly Parton **10** Sat/

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Diary Dates: April 2025

New Age Kurling

Yarrowford Hall, 2–4pm. £3 per person includes refreshments.

Art Group

Kirkhope Hall, 10am-12noon



This month we are going to be celebrating spring - flowers, hares, lambs - whatever takes your fancy. Any medium. All abilities welcome. Email: iris@happyhedgerow. co.uk for more info.

Wed 16

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Table Tennis

Yarrowford Hall, 5.30 - 6.30pm Table Tennis session, all welcome.

Men's Club

Yarrowford Hall, 2-4pm

Informal 'men's club' for men of all ages £3.00 per session (incl. refreshments).

QUOTES FOR SPRING:

"Spring is the time of year when it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." – Charles Dickens

Fri **18**

Brigend Darts Doubles Open Competition

Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge, 7pm

Fancy yourself the next Luke Littler? The Brigend Darts Doubles Open competition in the Cross Keys is a chance to test your aim! The Tweed Foundation is a conservation charity dedicated to protecting and improving the natural environment of the River Tweed and its tributaries including the Ettrick and Yarrow waters.

Part of their work involves engagement with the general public. In 2023 they launched a citizen science project called, 'Guardians of the Tweed' and began participating in the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative which is run by the Riverfly Partnership. The initiative works to keep our rivers



Call for volunteers to count river flies

clean by monitoring freshwater invertebrates to detect any severe declines in river water quality.

They are interested in establishing a monitoring site on the Ettrick or Yarrow and wondered if anyone in the Ettrick and Yarrow community would be interested in participating? The three key groups are stoneflies, caddisflies and mayflies. If you are keen to be involved, contact Suzanna Taylor, one of the biologists at Tweed Foundation for more details. **staylor@tweedfoundation.org.uk**

The iridescent wings of a Mayfly

Langhope Rig Education and Training Fund Foundation Scotland

The Langhope Rig E&T Fund provides bursaries of up to £1,500 for the first year, to residents of Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council area to help them access training and education opportunities that better equip them with the range of skills needed to enter or retain employment. Courses can include Driving Lessons, Modern Apprenticeships, SVQs, NCs, HNCs, HNDs and short vocational courses.

Awards are open for all ages and can cover costs that are directly related to attending your course or apprenticeship, including:

- Driving lessons and driving tests
- Course fees, where these costs cannot be waived or funded through any other means.
- Study aids and equipment, e.g., laptops, software, stationery
- Technical aids/equipment, e.g., specialist clothing relating to the course, tools, and other specialist equipment.
- Travel and subsistence/ meals costs
- Accommodation costs
- Childcare costs to allow you to study

For more details please contact: Niome@foundationscotland.org.uk





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stocks all your essentials and is now into it's new season opening hours. The Beehive Shop and Café is at the Honey Cottage Caravan Park and its Summer opening times are: 7 days, 10am - 2pm midweek and 2.30pm at weekends. Kirkhope Mill Ettrickbridge are awash with creative talent. This month we are featuring Sculptor, Watercolourist and Educator, Deirdre Nicholls who works in Studio 2 at Kirkhope.

Deirdre studied sculpture and print making in the 1970s and has been winning awards ever since. Her best known portrait piece is a bronze bust of Nelson Mandela which was commissioned by Glasgow City Council. She also has portraits in many public and private collections in the UK and abroad. Her 'Dolly the Sheep' featured on the publicity

Creativity unleashed at Kirkhope!

for the Scottish Royal Academy Summer Show in Edinburgh and she has been chosen to exhibit in all 3 Royal Academies. She is currently making a sculpture of a Beltie calf.

Deirdre also teaches watercolour painting and is currently taking bookings for a series of workshops. The first is at the Eskdalemuir Hub on the 3rd May and is a day-long workshop.

Visitors are welcome to visit her studio at Kirkhope by appointment. Email: deirdrenicholls@icloud.com



Roadworks scupper Glen Cafe Opening plans

The last week in March saw the road between Moffat and St Marys Loch undergoing surface repairs – the potholes have been filled! Unfortunately the road closure on the A708 for this work co-incided with the Glen Cafe's planned opening day for the 2025 season so instead of opening on Friday 28th as advertised in last month's EYE, the eatery opened its doors on Saturday 29th, 10am - 6pm.

However, with the promised sunny weather forecast over the Easter break, the café's Facebook page warns "bikers should be aware that the road is surfaced with gravel (compared to their usual bucket of asphalt). This is a skid risk! Please take extra care! Also, a 50mph speed limit has been placed on the A708."

"We know this road is tempting, and when the sun shines, everybody likes to go fast. But fatal accidents occur too often. Stick to the limit, be aware of the conditions and watch out for timber wagons!



Diary Dates: April
2025

Shaken, not stirred...

Bee Hive Cafe, Ettrick

Whether a margarita, a mohito or a Shirley Temple is your style, the Bee Hive café is where you need to be this afternoon. Learn some mixology skills and make 4 different cocktails (and drink them of course) with lots of fun along the way. £35 per person, starts at 4pm. Must be booked in advance.

Easter Sunday Service

Yarrow Kirk, 11.30am



Church Service in Yarrow Kirk at 11.30am. Services are led by the Selkirk and valleys minister, Rev. Kwame Ahaligah.

Holiday Sunday Jazz

Cross Keys Inn, Ettrickbridge

Relax with some toe tappin' Live Easter Jazz in the Cross Keys, Ettrickbridge as you enjoy a hard-earned Sunday roast lunch. Food 12-7pm; Jazz 2-4pm. Call **01750 52224** to book a table - or online at www. crosskeysinnettrickbridge.com/ book-a-table



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Easter Afternoon Tea

Yarrowford Hall, 2-4pm

Come along and enjoy an Easter Afternoon Tea in Yarrowford Hall from 2-4pm. There will also be an Easter competition for adults and children for the best Easter Bonnet, the best Decorated Egg and the best Decorated



category. The afternoon tea costs £4 per person and with some excellent bakers on the hall committee it will definitely be a treat!

Table Tennis

Yarrowford Hall, 5.30 - 6.30pm Table Tennis session, all welcome.

QUOTES FOR SPRING:

"Spring is Nature's way of saying 'Let's Party!'." – Robin Williams



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Diary Dates: April 2025

Singing Group

Yarrow Feus Hall, 7-8.30pm

The Safety in Numbers singing group meets each Thursday in Yarrow Feus Hall. The weekly sessions led by Hilary Bell cost £3 to cover refreshments and hire of hall.

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Men's Club Yarrowford Hall

Informal 'men's club' for men of all ages, 2-4pm. £3.00 per session (incl. refreshments).

Playgroup fun

Kirkhope Hall, Ettrickbridge, 9.30-11.30 Babies, Toddlers 0-5 years. Lots of toys and an experienced play leader. All welcome.

Spring Social Night 🔊

St Mary's Hall, Cappercleuch

Spring Social Night at the village hall, 7.30pm. Come along and enjoy lighter evenings, warmer weather - and each other's company! Cash bar, family friendly. Everybody welcome!

Live Music Session

The Cross Keys, Ettrickbridge

Locals live music session tomorrow night everyone very welcome to come and join in!

Sunday Morning Service

Ettrick Kirk, 11am

The historic Ettrick Kirk hosts the Church Service today at 11am led by Rev. Kwame. Followed by tea and biscuits and a chance to catch up with neighbours. Toilet provision is in the Boston Hall which will be open before and after the service.



