

THE GALLERY

SUITS YOU, SIR – GOING SUMO WAY TO HELP CHARITIES



THREE hours of exercise is not something most of us would volunteer for lightly.

But prisoners at HMP Inverness were happy to take part in a fitness marathon as it

was for a worthwhile cause – to raise badly needed cash for a children’s hospital charity.

During the sponsored ‘aerobathon’ prisoners and staff were put through their paces in a

mammoth session of aerobics led by PE instructor John Kelly wearing a sumo wrestler’s suit (pictured above). There were also spinning and kettlebell exercises.

It was the final activity in a

week of events focused on health and fitness.

The efforts of all involved raised at least £200 for the

CONTINUES BACK PAGE

A DAY TO REMEMBER

PRISONERS at Cornton Vale marked International Women’s Day by showcasing their poetry, songwriting and drama about the struggle for women’s rights.

Poets Magi Gibson and Anita Govan came to the prison chapel to join in the Women of Words event,

which also explored what it means to be a modern female.

Magi won loud applause when reading poems from her books ‘Graffiti in Red Lipstick’ and ‘Wild Women of Certain Age’. Anita, the prison’s reader-in-residence, had worked with Wendy Miller,

Motherwell College lecturer, to stage creative workshops with prisoners in the run-up to the event.

The Glasgow Women’s Library put on archiving and rosette-making sessions. Prisoners were able to handle authentic objects from the suffragette era including pro and

anti-suffragette memorabilia, jewellery and publications.

Lorna Callery, learning centre manager at Cornton Vale, said: “I’m highly impressed with the way that the women have

CONTINUES PAGE 2

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Radio stars
go live

Rapper with
a message



The power
of the pen

NEWS IN BRIEF



NOT BAD, BOYS: Young Offenders at HMYOI Polmont completed a business course – and put what they learned into practice to raise funds for good causes. The young men raised £1200 for charity after setting up 'Bad Boy Bargains', which saw them sell cards and gifts to fellow YO's. The Young Enterprise Scotland programme covered topics such as financial planning, market research and teamwork – equipping the young offenders with skills to help them avoid reoffending once they are released. The Young Enterprise Scotland programme covered topics such as financial planning, market research and teamwork. They divided their profits into donations to Strathcarron Hospice and the Salvation Army's Falkirk branch, which runs a rehabilitation programme.



TOY GIFT: A charity that has supported prisoners' families at HMP Edinburgh for a decade has been recognised for its generosity. The Friends of Edinburgh Prison runs a shop serving refreshments in the visits room. Profits go to prison-related charities, and the latest donation of £500 was spent on new toys for the room, which has been refurbished to make it more child-friendly. As a thank you, staff gave the group a commemorative plaque.



INSIDE STORIES: Nearly 60 guests came to HMP Barlinnie to see an exhibition of prisoners' work exploring the prison's 130-year history. The event was held to show the progress they had made in a year-long project led by the charity Theatre Nemo, which it is hoped will end in the production of a documentary film. Artwork, sound recordings, film and written stories by prisoners were all displayed. Isabel McCue, of the theatre group, said: "We're not here to turn prisoners into artists and actors. Instead, we are using the arts to engage with prisoners to show them what they are capable of achieving."



Clockwise from bottom: poet Anita Govan; discussing support for families; Governor Kate Donegan introduces the event; displaying rosettes



FROM PAGE 1

embraced this event, especially as most of them had no idea about International Women's Day. The idea of discussing women's rights and the issues facing women had never occurred to them.

"As well as marking International Women's Day, the event was also an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the prisoners who had planned it."

An exhibition on the suffragette movement was also provided, and a film, *The Red Skirts of Clydeside* – which examines women's history using the 1915 Glasgow rent strike as a focal point – was projected on to a screen as the prisoners explored the information stalls and spoke with volunteers. Staff and prisoners joined in a group sing-along and enjoyed a performance by one prisoner, Rita, on the guitar.

Governor Kate Donegan said: "It really is great that so many people came together today to celebrate this important occasion. Many suffragettes were sent to prison, many were force-fed,

and many died so that women could have better rights.

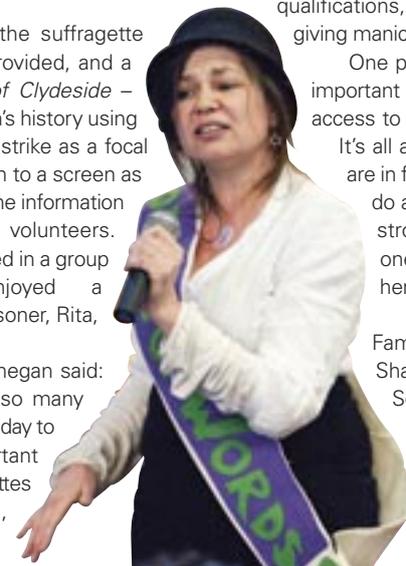
"We women have a wonderful contribution to make in Cornton Vale and in the community. We have to be confident to make our words heard and to make positive changes, however small they may seem."

A number of prisoners contributed home baking inspired by the suffragette era. Others, who have been working towards beauty therapy qualifications, demonstrated their skills by giving manicures.

One prisoner, Mandy, said: "It's very important for the women in here to have access to education and events like this.

It's all about knowledge. Whether we are in for months or years, we need to do all we can to learn and become stronger, better people, because one day we need to walk out of here and start our lives again."

Representatives from Families Outside, The Samaritans, Shannon Trust, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Caledonia Youth were all there to tell prisoners about their services. More than 60 women attended the event, which was organised by Motherwell College.





MPFree, in cap, on his visit to Polmont

PEACE MESSAGE FOR POLMONT

INSPIRING rap artist MPFree returned to HMYOI Polmont to perform for more than 60 young people using his unique blend of Christianity, hip hop and positivity.

During his performance for the audience of young offenders and staff he shared his life experiences and how he managed to turn his life around, from being a gang member to a successful family man, college graduate and established performer.

MPFree inspired some of the young people at Inside Radio to

write their own Hip-Hop track which is now part of the radio playlist, has been entered into Koestler Awards, recently featured in a programme aired on The Culture Studio on BBC Radio Scotland.

The Inside Radio team promoted, advertised and stage managed the concert. The YO's designed posters, created advertisements, presented a tribute show and interviewed MPFree himself.

MPFree, who has performed worldwide, said the audience was one of the best he had ever played to.

Since his concert MPFree has returned and delivered a Hip-Hop workshop to some of our young people and hopes to develop an album with the tunes recorded by the young people at Polmont.

HELP FOR PRISONERS FACING HOMELESSNESS

PRISONERS who find themselves homeless after release are at high risk of re-offending – so a new scheme has been launched to try to tackle the problem.

SPAN Scotland – Supporting Prisoners Advice Network – was launched at HMP Perth by the housing and welfare minister, Margaret Burgess MSP. Former prisoners and families attended the event.

The new service will give support and advice to more than 1,800 offenders from Grampian, Perth and Inverness prisons before and after release over the next three years.

It has been set up by Shelter Scotland, the homelessness charity, with Sacro, the voluntary organisation that aims to reduce reoffending, and Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau.

Graeme Brown, director of Shelter Scotland, said: "When in prison, people often lose their accommodation because of an inability to pay rent whilst serving their sentence or a family break-up. Many don't have a job to go back to upon release, making finding and maintaining a home very difficult. This can add to an already chaotic lifestyle and lead to re-offending.

"We look forward to helping prisoners and their families to find and keep a home and avoid the tragedy of homelessness."



Shelter Scotland director Graeme Brown chats to ex-offender Shah Kamaly, who has already been helped by SPAN

Ms Burgess said: "People are especially vulnerable on release from prison and it is essential that adequate housing advice is available to them in order that homelessness can be prevented.

"This project will mean that prisoners who have accommodation are given necessary advice to help them retain it, or if they are homeless given advice about their rights to accommodation."

The advice service is being paid for by a

grant of £889,317 from the Big Lottery Fund.

Alasdair Christie, general manager of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey CAB, said: "This support not only helps those who have been released, but helps the community as well by reducing re-offending. It's a common-sense investment that benefits everyone."

SPAN Scotland can be contacted on 0344 515 2535 or on SPAN@shelter.org.uk



Inspiring messages adorn walls in the revamped gym

BRIGHT FUTURE FOR FITNESS

Improvements boost numbers using gym

THE writing's on the wall in the newly refurbished gym at HMP Cornton Vale – spelling out slogans to inspire prisoners as they use it.

The gym has been newly refurbished at a cost of £25,000, and its brightly painted walls are decorated with messages such as “Imagine it. Create it. Dream it. Become it;” “Inspire others by inspiring yourself” and “Don’t wish for it, work for it.”

At a special event to open the new-look gym, prisoners presented donations to three deserving causes – the 1st Logie Brownie Unit, Strathcarron Hospice, and wheelchair racer Meggan Dawson-Farrell, who has visited the establishment to tell prisoners about her training.

A £100 donation was made to the Brownies, who have been raising funds to support a young member who is battling cancer. Strathcarron Hospice was given £200 towards its ongoing work to provide free support and care to sufferers of terminal illnesses.

Meggan, from Tullibody, received £186 from the prisoners to help her buy new equipment. Jean Duncan, sports development officer from Clackmannanshire Council, accepted the donation on behalf of the athlete, who holds several Scottish records.

The prisoners raised the cash by holding a sponsored one-mile run and two bingo events.

As well as having a colourful makeover, the gym was transformed by removing an old stage, sealing unused doors and setting up new areas for dance, cardio, weights and resistance training.

Equipment was donated by HMP Shotts and wall mounts produced by prisoners at HMP Glenochil.

Governor Kate Donegan said the gym was a “wonderful facility” and added: “The need to improve the health, fitness and self-esteem of the women here is a central part of our purpose.”

Youth Scotland made a £6,000 donation towards the work. The organisation has funded the successful Girls on the Move fitness project at the prison since 2010. In that time 75 young women have gained Sports Leaders UK Level 1 and 2 qualifications.

Two long-term prisoners are now regularly involved with Girls on the Move as peer mentors, supporting other prisoners on the programme. They are also the first people to undertake a Youth Achievement Award at Platinum level in a prison.

Rebecca Simpson, of Youth Scotland, said: “We welcome the financial investment in fitness facilities at Cornton Vale, and our supportive grant is evidence of how we have embraced the

We're motivating women who've not exercised before

partnership with prisoners and staff. This joint working has allowed us to successfully motivate dozens of young women who, for various reasons, have not engaged in regular exercise or education in the past.”

Colin McConnell, chief executive of the Scottish Prison Service, charity representatives, and Youth Scotland officials were among the guests of honour at the formal opening of the new gym.

MAGNIFICENT SEVEN TAKE TO THE STAGE

PERFORMING before an audience calls for prisoners to step well outside their comfort zone and put effort into rehearsing, learning lines and coming up with creative ideas.

But seven young men at HMP Perth did all that and more to stage their own show, called *Stand*, in front of an audience of family members, friends and staff.

The performance, a mix of songs and drama, explored issues such as being ignored and struggling to find the right words to communicate feelings and opinions.

Governor Mike Inglis was full of praise for the cast. He said: “For these men, learning how to express themselves brings about the kind of changes – life skills – that they’ll need on the outside.”

The show was developed with the help of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Carnegie College. Afterwards all cast members were presented with a certificate to mark their success.



The cast delivered a mix of song and spoken word, afterwards receiving certificates from Janet McCauslin, of Carnegie College, and show director Jess Thorpe



PRISONERS FIND THEIR VOICE IN RADIO PROJECT

CLINK FM is the snappy name for a new radio station run by prisoners and staff at HMP Edinburgh.

It broadcasts music, poetry, messages from loved ones as well as information about support services.

Scott, a prisoner involved in the project, said: "I've always been interested in music and if I'd gone to college to study it when I was younger I probably would have chosen a different path in

life. Working with Clink FM has given me the opportunity to develop useful technical skills and my confidence. I'm definitely going to put those skills to use when I leave the prison."

Equipment and software for the project has been funded with £12,000 from the prison's Common Good Fund and a £5,000 donation from Edinburgh City Libraries, which runs the prison library.

Andy Whiting, the prison officer leading the radio station, is a DJ in his spare time. He said: "I've been delighted at how well the prisoners have engaged with the project, and the commitment they've shown in coming up with ideas for programmes and content."

For prisoners who struggle with reading and writing, the radio programmes are a good

way to find out about services such as employment advice and addiction support. It is hoped that those working on the station will be able to gain SVQs, improving their chances of find a job after release.

Teresa Medhurst, the governor, said: "This is a really worthwhile project which has massive potential to improve prisoners' links with families, enhance communication within the establishment, and give prisoners new skills and qualifications."

One of the first guests to be interviewed on the station was former Hearts footballer Gary Mackay, who was visiting to promote the 'Show Racism the Red Card' campaign.

In our picture, left, Scott interviews guest Leanne Boughey.

HARD WORK HELPS BUILD A FUTURE

PRISONERS are spending their time constructively at HMP Inverness – by building up their prospects of finding work after release.

A group of 13 gained a qualification after following a training course under the Construction Skills Certification Scheme.

The scheme aims to improve construction workers' competence in order to reduce accidents and make building sites more efficient. More and more contractors are demanding CSCS cards before hiring workers.

Mark Holloway, offender outcomes manager at the prison, said: "It was encouraging to see the confidence of each and every one of the prisoners growing after each of the practice sessions. Some had never gained a qualification in any subject before, and the lift in their self-esteem should not be underestimated."



The prisoners show off their CSCS cards

Governor Caroline Johnston, presented the certificates and thanked tutors Katrina Bettie and Sharon Finney, from Apex, the training organisation that works with prisoners and ex-offenders in an effort to cut reoffending. She said they had put hard work and dedication into delivering the training and organising the assessments, with the support of Mark. She added that the successful candidates all deserved a massive "well done."

Following talks between the prison and Apex about ways to make prisoners more employable, funding for three years was gained from the European Social Fund to support an Apex worker to work with prisoners before their release.

As well as construction skills training, prisoners have also been learning about the law on disclosure of convictions, and about how to write a CV.

Francis Dunnery and singer Dorie Jackson at HMP Addiewell



MUSIC AND MUCH MORE

Visitors strike a chord with Addiewell prisoners

MUSICIAN Francis Dunnery has played with the best – and he was more than happy to share some special memories when he played a concert for prisoners at HMP Addiewell.

The guitarist and singer-songwriter had hits with his own band, It Bites, in the 1980s, and also performed or recorded with stars such as Robert

Plant, Lauryn Hill, Ian Brown, Steve Hackett and Carlos Santana. But there's more to him than music – he is also a keen student of philosophy and psychology, and has founded a charity dedicated to the health and well-being of children in his native Cumbria.

Accompanied by singer Dorie Jackson, he performed for an hour and a half to an audience of 40 prisoners, many of them saying afterwards how much they had enjoyed the event.

The pair's unplugged style created a relaxed and interactive environment, with the prisoners being asked questions during the performance.

Gavin Duffy, head of activities at the prison, said: "I would like to extend my appreciation for another great Addiewell event. The concert was a huge success.

"Our collective gratitude goes to Francis and Dorie for providing a humorous and interesting evening of musical entertainment."



Francis chats to audience members

ATHLETES GIVE PRISONERS A LIFT



Special Olympic powerlifter Geraldine Fitzsimmons demonstrates her skills

TWO top disabled athletes joined prisoners at HMP Shotts in a celebration of sport to mark the launch of an anti-discrimination magazine at the prison.

Members of the prison's equality and diversity group organised the occasion as they prepared the first edition of *One* magazine.

The newsletter, by prisoners and staff, reports on equality and diversity initiatives and makes clear that discriminating against anyone, for any reason, is unacceptable.

Lending their weight to the launch were Glasgow strongwoman Geraldine Fitzsimmons, who has won gold medals at the Special Olympics, and Craig Wilson, an autistic runner from Aberdeen who has raised thousands for charity through his sport.

Geraldine spoke about her career and

demonstrated her skills as well as coaching prisoners in how to lift weights correctly.

Craig spoke about the sense of achievement he felt from taking part in sports.

The audience also heard from an ex-prisoner, Steven, who trains adults with a disability in physical sports such as weight lifting and boxing after developing his love of sports while in custody.

Steven encouraged the prisoners to take up sport as a way of challenging themselves. He explained that exercising had been a focus for him throughout his own sentence.

The audience heard about the goals of *One* from one of the prisoner contributors, Iain, who explained that the magazine was "the ideal platform for Shotts to take a leading role in challenging conventional thinking".



Prisoners line up with staff and fitness course deliverers and Richard Gordon, centre, to show off the certificates gained

FOOTBALL CLUBS' COACHES DELIVER HEALTH MESSAGE AT HMP PERTH

FOOTBALL coaches from two of Scotland's top clubs have been helping prisoners at HMP Perth to improve their skills.

The community coaches from Dundee United and St Johnstone have been working with officers to raise fitness levels as part of an SPL scheme called Football Fans in Training.

Prisoners joining in the scheme are encouraged to adopt an active lifestyle, eat

healthily and keep their weight under control. Some have been using pedometers to check the distance they travel each day. They've also been snacking on fruit rather than sweets and crisps. Many say the programme has helped them feel more positive about themselves. Others have found they are sleeping better.

Craig Mailer, PE instructor, said: "Some of our staff members had achieved great results on Football Fans in Training courses at Dundee United and St Johnstone.

"We wanted to give the prisoners here the same opportunity. They have really taken the key healthy living messages on board. They are walking more, attending extra sessions at the gym and many have been passing what they have learned on to other inmates and to their wives, partners and children."

The prison is joining forces with researchers from the Medical Research Council and Glasgow University to come up with ways for prisoners to exercise more and improve their diets – both in prison and after release.

Professor Kate Hunt, from the Medical Research Council, said the men who had joined in the programme had done well.

She added: "Poor diet, inadequate physical activity, obesity and poor mental health are real problems within the prison service, as they are in the wider community. The benefit of being more active, eating a healthier diet and good weight management to mental health, as well as physical health, cannot be overestimated."

Richard Gordon, the BBC Scotland football presenter, came to present certificates to prisoners who completed the course.

TAKE A PEW AND MAKE SOME PENS

PRISONERS at HMP Edinburgh used their skills to give century-old church pews a new lease of life when they transformed the donated wood into top-quality pens.

The congregation of Beath and Cowdenbeath North Church in Fife, which was being refurbished, kindly donated about 30 pews, a notice board and an organ to the prison.

Offenders in the hobbies and joinery workshops made a selection of pens, in different colours and designs, from the wood, which is believed to be at least 100 years old.

The remaining wood will be used to create other items



Officer Jim Shields shows off some of the pens the prisoners made from recycled wood

such as garden planters and furniture, which will in turn help prisoners achieve City & Guilds certificates.

Jim Shields, the prison's employability trades and crafts manager, gave the pens to the 100-strong congregation at a special service.

Ken Salmon, the church member who had the idea of donating the wood, said: "The quality and the finishing of the pens were absolutely superb. I'm a joiner by trade and I thought they were just fantastic, as did the rest of the congregation."

Plans are afoot to place an order for more pens, so each church member can have one.



FROM PAGE 1

ARCHIE Foundation, the official charity of the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital.

Other events featured in the packed programme were a nutrition awareness workshop, a football tournament, lessons in Tai-Chi and yoga, and an all-day Well Man clinic.

There was also a carpet bowls competition and some cookery workshops led by resident cook Gordy MacGregor.

The week was a joint effort

I hope it motivates prisoners to make better choices once they are liberated

between the prison's Carnegie College Learning Centre, NHS and LINK Centre staff and agencies such as Apex Scotland, the British Heart Foundation and the oral health team.

Lorraine Hadley, Learning Centre co-ordinator, said: "This programme was planned on the

back of Mental Health Awareness Week. We wanted to address physical health and well-being, so we focused on the importance of nutrition to be healthy.

"From an education perspective, we are thinking about being able to budget to make healthy lifestyle choices once liberated."

Each event was well attended and received by the prisoners, which has resulted in a number of referrals to external partner agencies as well as whetting the appetite for more cookery skills classes.

Governor Caroline Johnston, who joined in the aerobathon, said: "I hope the prisoners enjoyed the high levels of energy and enthusiasm that have gone into the events, and that it motivates them to make better choices once they are liberated."

Prisoners following their aerobics session with sumo-suited PE instructor John Kelly, top. Spin cycling and step classes were also part of the fitness event

