

# THE GALLERY



## GETTING THE WRITE STUFF

**SHOTTS Prison** enjoyed a literary lesson from award-winning Scots author Alasdair Gray when he visited to officially open an impressive new library.

Alasdair – whose works include a translation of Dante’s *Inferno* and his most acclaimed novel, *Lanark* – said he hoped that reading would enhance the lives of the prisoners in the same way it had his own.

Ryan Dobbin, manager of the learning centre, said: “We would like to thank Alasdair for giving his time and coming to visit the prison library. The prisoners and staff found it an interesting and engaging afternoon.”

After being welcomed by deputy governor Phil Kennedy, Alasdair read from his translation of Dante’s *Inferno* before discussing his own career. The audience also enjoyed a question-and-answer session as they enthusiastically quizzed the author on a variety of topics.

Alasdair donated a number of his autographed books to the library, which is part of the new Shotts building completed over two phases and finalised in late 2012.



The Paws for Progress scheme is benefiting both the dogs and the young men from Polmont

## A TRUE COMPANION Scheme gives Polmont paws for thought

**A UNIQUE scheme run at Polmont has shown that going to the dogs is no bad thing.**

Paws for Progress, a collaborative project between the SPS, Dogs Trust and Stirling University, teams young men at Polmont with rescue dogs from the Dogs Trust’s Scottish rehoming centres.

And the scheme – the first and only prison-based dog training programme in the UK – has delivered positive results for the young men and their canine companions.

Since it started, 48 young men have successfully completed the programme and of the 18 graduates who are now back

in their communities, 10 are in employment, one is in a training scheme, another is in college, four are seeking employment and two are beginning volunteer/work experience placements. It’s been a huge success for the animals too, with 91 being rehomed.

**The students are taught how to train rescue dogs**

PhD psychology student Rebecca Leonardi, who developed the initiative after being inspired by a similar

training programme in the US, said: “Even though we’re only mid-way through the research project, we’ve been able to see some tremendously positive results thus far.

“The young men complete the course knowing their hard work – both practical training and preparing promotional material – has improved a dog’s prospects of finding a new home.

“By witnessing such positive change in the dogs’ behaviour, the individuals can see how it’s possible, through hard work, to change human attitude and behaviour too – and thereby develop their own prospects.”

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During the course, the students are taught how to train rescue dogs to be good companions in their future homes and about appropriate dog care, while gaining valuable qualifications that boost their core skills, such as literacy and numeracy.

As well as adjusting the behaviour of the dogs, the training process encourages young offenders to take advantage of new learning environments, so that they can unlock their potential and hopefully contribute positively to their communities when they are released from custody.

The ground-breaking initiative, which was featured on BBC Reporting Scotland and BBC Radio Scotland in September, runs in eight-week training cycles and eight cycles of the project have now been completed, overseen by Rebecca who runs the sessions with assistance from prison officer Gary Kerr.

### Feedback from the young men has also proved very positive

One graduate said: "Paws for Progress has been a life-changing experience for me. Before I started the course, I didn't like listening to people telling me what to do, but having the dogs there meant that to help them and teach them I had to learn.

"I have learned to be more patient, to listen, and understand dogs' behaviour and body language. Above all, I have learned self-control, which is making me a better person."

Sue Brookes, Governor of Polmont, said: "Many of the young men in our care have had negative and frustrating experiences of education prior to their time in custody, which has impacted on their behaviour and their opportunities.

"Paws for Progress delivers a resourceful and creative approach to education, allowing the students to experience the many benefits of learning, improve their mental wellbeing and increase their prospects of employment when they return to their communities."

Susan Tonner, Dogs Trust West Calder Rehoming Centre Manager, added: "The relationships the dogs build with the boys has certainly helped them become more appealing to potential families."

The programme in its current format is due to conclude in September 2014.



The dance and storytelling project was hugely popular with the women who participated

## A SHOWCASE FOR TALENT

### Singers and dancers boost their confidence as they take to the stage

**EIGHT budding dancers at Edinburgh gave their confidence a boost when they performed in front of a throng of arts professionals.**

The women took part in a three-week project leading up to the performance – practising for five hours a day, every day.

The performance was titled the Voice of the Selkie – an old Scottish folk tale that the women had embraced as part of a storytelling course. Others from the same course – which involved spoken storytelling and songwriting – performed two songs they had written, at the dance.

The audience was made up of about 30

arts professionals, choreographers, managers of dance studios and film makers from across Scotland, along with staff from the prison.

Ruth Quigley, learning centre assistant, explained: "We put a notice up in the hall asking for people to take part and the women put their names down. It was originally done as a one-off, but, as it was so successful, we are hoping we can do this again.

"One of the girls was released a week after the performance and was given vouchers to attend dance classes. This is why we do these performances – in the hope that they will take it up, maybe not professionally, but as something to do in their spare time to boost confidence.

"The girls are also going to be put forward for an SQA Award, which involves performing, and they will be the first female prisoners in Scotland to do this."

## SINGING FOR SELF-ESTEEM

**SINGING may lift the spirits, but for long-term prisoners at Glenochil, it has also given them confidence and self-esteem.**

Since before Christmas last year, 27 men at the prison have been exercising their vocal chords under the guidance of professional musician Mandy Miller, also a head of music at a secondary school.

Their hard work paid off with a successful first performance at a Christmas Carol Service, where the guests, including family and friends of the choir members, heard songs such as Wise Men Say, Anthem and Hallelujah.

In fact, the practice sessions over six weeks were so successful that they were repeated again in May and June.

Prison Chaplain Elizabeth Kenny, who helped set up the choir, said: "For the majority of the men, these sessions have been the first time they have sung in any choir, but what it did for them was build their self-esteem, give them a sense of accomplishment and a focus to aim towards."

One of the choir members, Jack, said: "I was pleased and encouraged to be treated as a valuable member of society even though I am in prison."

## HELP HUB OPENS AT CORNTON VALE



**A NEW Family Centre and Help Hub was opened at Cornton Vale woman's prison in early September.**

The centre aims to provide a safe and pleasant environment for family members to wait with their loved ones before entering prison, and a range of information and support they might need.

Run in partnership with Cornton Vale, Stirling Interfaith Community Justice Group and the Fife & Forth Valley Community

Justice Authority, the centre will offer non-judgemental support delivered in confidence, plus a range of associated services to visiting families and children.

The centre was officially opened by former Lord Advocate Dame Elish Angiolini, inset, who played an instrumental role in improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system following her report for the Commission of Woman Offenders.



## VETS INFO DAY A SUCCESS

**AN information day for veterans in custody was held at Castle Huntly in July, where those at the open estate were updated on the latest training and employment trends within Scotland.**

Outside agencies from Regular Forces Employment Agency (RFEA), Poppy Scotland and the veterans' support charity SSAFA travelled from Edinburgh and Perth to give presentations.

After a welcome and short introduction from Castle Huntly's Paul Elliott and Mary Murray, representatives from SSAFA explained the role of the service within the open estate and their hopes for the future.

SSAFA's Brian Pereira and Terry Shearer also spoke about the local agencies and the support available on release.

Brian and Terry were followed by Dot Pringle from Poppy Scotland, who explained the grant system and gave advice about how to present information in a way that would help achieve a positive outcome.

She then talked about the role of Jobcentre Plus and how Business Gateway could be an excellent resource for those seeking business start-up courses and support for new ventures.

The last speaker was Bill Brown, a specialist employment consultant with the forces employment charity RFEA, who gave an insight into the levels of support available. He also handed out information for veterans to sign up for the Equipped scheme, which provides further pathways to employment and training.

The floor was then opened for a forthright discussion on prisoners' experiences in the community and the open estate, as well as barriers to employment, housing and resettlement.

The regime at Castle Huntly is focused on reducing reoffending by providing employment training and supporting prisoners towards reintegration into their communities.

## Kids' hospice given make-over in Barlinnie project

# GREEN FINGERS

**GENEROUS prisoners and staff from Barlinnie have worked hard to brighten up the gardens of a children's hospice in Glasgow.**

Representatives from the prison visited Eden House Children's Hospice to install a variety of hand-made furniture and bed a range of plants.

The visit was arranged after Eden House Practice Development Nurse, Suzanne Garbarino-Danson, contacted the prison earlier in the year to request its help with improvements.

The furniture was manufactured and the plants were grown by green-fingered volunteers from the prison.

Gary Hughes, Barlinnie's activities manager, said: "The project allows the prisoners to do the work and put a bit back into the community. We would also like to thank many local companies in Glasgow who provided wood for the project free of charge."

Wood was used to create a wheelchair-



Gary Hughes, gardener Malcolm Blair, and David McGarey, joinery instructor, from Barlinnie with children and staff at Eden House

accessible garden table, which has room for up to eight people, and the new raised flower beds will provide the children, young adults, nurses and activity co-ordinators with an area for activities and games.

Suzanne said: "Everybody at Eden House would like to thank the Scottish Prison Service for their fantastic donation.

"Not only will the new garden furniture and plants brighten up Eden House's garden during the summer months, it will also increase the range of activities and games for the children and young adults to be involved with."

**Therapy dog Pepper is so appreciated at Barlinnie's support centre that a mural has been painted in her honour**



# PEPPER IS A WORK OF ART

**PRISONERS at Barlinnie have paid the ultimate tribute to multi award-winning boxer dog Pepper, who has worked with an estimated 3,500 men in custody after she was drafted in to help reduce self-harm rates at the support centre.**

Pepper is an 11-year-old trained therapy dog and has been visiting the prison's day care service for two hours each week for five years. She is looked after by owners Alyson and Willie

Raworth and also visits elderly dementia patients in care homes around Glasgow.

Day care prison officer James Traynor said: "The guys are all pet owners themselves and everyone looks forward to a Thursday morning because Pepper is coming up. You can see everyone's mood lightening up."

Along with day care staff at the prison, prisoners Steven Baird and Mark Hodge, decided they'd like to paint the mural in a warm tribute to

their regular visitor. James added: "We got photographs of Pepper when she was younger and older and incorporated both into the painting, using pens and poster art."

In July, Pepper was one of four finalists hoping to receive The Dog's Honorary Trust Award 2013, and even appeared on a BBC programme in August. Despite losing out this time, she was previously awarded Therapy Dog of the Year by The Canine Concern in May 2012 and Volunteer of the Year by Barlinnie in October 2012.

The pooch's popularity knows no bounds, as she went on to win Boxer of the Year at the Scottish Boxer Club, where she received a trophy and a painting in December 2012.

**Everyone looks forward to Pepper coming up**



## GREENOCK FUN DAY



## POLMONT FUN DAY

**THE families of young men in Polmont attended a fun day event where they enjoyed a buffet, animal show and free gifts.**

Staff booked The Animal Man, a show-and-tell performance with real animals. Also, children's books were given out for free and staff organised a demonstration of how much sugar is in juice bottles. As part of this, children were given free toothpaste, brushes and bottles of juice that showed the sugar content.

Fiona Williams, family contact officer, said: "It was very successful. The fathers bonded great with their children and it's a good opportunity for them to interact together."



## AY GETS MORE KIDS TO VISIT



### FAMILY contact officers organised a fun day at Greenock to boost children's visits.

The youngsters enjoyed family time, a bouncy castle, face painting and a barbecue at the two-hour event.

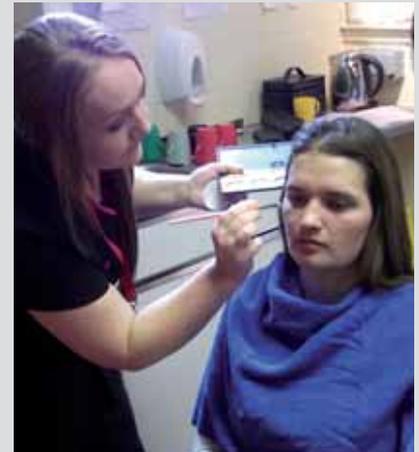
Also, internal departments and external organisations offered families support.

Head of operations Kenny McGuckin said: "The event went really well. A total of 20 male and female prisoners took part and the 28 children had a great time. Feedback has been very positive and we have experienced an increase in children's visits since the event."

## Y HELPS FATHERS TO BOND WITH CHILDREN



## A LESSON IN SELF-BELIEF



### FEMALE prisoners in Greenock were given a boost to their self-esteem and wellbeing in May when a group of beauty students visited.

Two senior lecturers from James Watt College, along with three hairdressers and four of their beauty students, attended Greenock and showed the women how looking better on the outside can help improve their confidence on the inside.

William Stuart, deputy governor of the prison, said the event had proved overwhelmingly popular.

He said: "They were all really excited by this event and it was oversubscribed in a matter of minutes when it was publicised.

"The changes, not only in the physical appearance of the girls but also their smiles and mood, were remarkable, with them encouraging and supporting each other to try something just a bit different."

The college has been working with Greenock over the past year, with students being given the chance to work in the prison salon while completing their own college exams. The partnership has now inspired some of the women in Greenock to follow in the footsteps of the students.

William added: "This has encouraged several of the prisoners to obtain a place at college upon their release. We hope that this will lead them to a career in the beauty and hairdressing industry."

The event was organised by the prison's own local hairdressing instructor Ann Hardman, who also attends the college to increase her knowledge and ability to help the prisoners to gain skills.

Local professional photographer Andy Stark, of Stark-Images Digital Photography, took pictures of the ladies during their makeovers.



The hair-raising event was in support of the Help for Heroes charity

## HELP FOR HAIR-ROES

**A NUMBER of prisoners had a hair-raising experience at Inverness in June when they volunteered to help the fundraising efforts of Operations Officer Jane Rorison, who was part of a team of five SPS colleagues taking part in the Tough Mudder.**

The Tough Mudder is an exhausting 12-mile obstacle course designed by Special Forces to test participants' all-round strength, stamina, determination and team work.

All funds raised go to Help for Heroes – the charity that supports soldiers in their transition to civilian life.

Jane's idea to 'Go Bald for Help for Heroes' was supported by eight prisoners and several of her colleagues, who underwent 'shearing' with help from a local hair and beauty salon.

Several officers bravely went further, bearing the pain of being waxed, including Wattie Dickson, residential officer, who endured his legs, chest, arm-pits and back waxed, along with his head shaved!

The eye-watering experience raised more than £500 in sponsorship, with more to come from the sale of Help for Heroes wristbands and pins.

Jane said: "I am extremely grateful for all the donations that Inverness has raised."

# BOYS TACKLE OUTDOORS FOR AWARD

## Adventurers from Polmont head down to Dumfries for DoE Silver

**FOUR young men from Polmont put their camping and mountain biking expertise to the test when they visited Dumfries as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award.**

The trip was a result of the successful partnership the Scottish Prison Service enjoys with Barnardo's, in a bid to develop the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme within Polmont Young Offenders Institution.

Escorted by physical education instructors Gyp Penman and Alan Keith, the team from Polmont made their campsite within the grounds of Dumfries, in an area known locally as the 'back field'.

The challenge got under way in earnest, with a dash to find the best spots to set up camp. This saw the demonstration of communication and problem-solving skills.

As part of the exercise, the group also had to budget their meals over the weekend, using the local Tesco store for supplies.

A trip to Mable Forest, on the outskirts of HMP Dumfries, followed, where the participants had to negotiate seven progressively more difficult mountain bike routes.

The next day, the group had to break camp and restore the area to its normal state, in



Part of the challenge required the boys to budget for, and cook, their own food for weekend

tune with the environmental ethos of the DoE award, before embarking on the expedition.

Prior to this, they had been involved in completing their skill, volunteering and physical sections for their Silver Award.

To complete these, they have been fundraising for charity, helping other young people with their reading, writing and spelling, learning new skills through music, and via gym instructor courses and sports leadership courses.

Polmont currently has 30 young people taking part in various sections of the award and is hopeful of arranging a Bronze Expedition before the season finishes in October.



The boys' mountain biking skills were put to the test during the trip

The learners from Polmont were acknowledged for their efforts in achieving certificates in a range of subjects



# CELEBRATION OF LEARNING

**Eighteen students, 70 certificates – that adds up to a real result!**

**EIGHTEEN learners from Polmont received a whopping 70 certificates among them at a ceremony held by Fife College.**

These included qualifications on skills ranging from communications (reading, speaking, listening and writing), maths,

numeracy and information communication technology.

Families were also present at the event on 8 August to show their support.

The young people attended the learning centre at Polmont to undertake their courses.

Audrey Mitchell, learning centre

manager at Polmont, said: "It was extremely pleasing to see the determination and effort paying off for all those who achieved a qualification.

"It was also very heartening to see how proud their families were at their relatives' hard work."

## SWEET MUSIC LEADS THE WAY TO MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AT PERTH

**MUSIC and applause was heard in Perth in July when family and friends celebrated the achievements of their loved ones who had studied hard over the past six months and gained qualifications.**

Brian Cunningham, learning centre manager, hosted the event and praised the learners for their hard work – and to show what can be achieved, introduced four learners from the advanced guitar group, who played and sung a couple of songs for the audience, to much

applause and cheering. The learners received their certificates from Katharine Brash, assistant head of school from Carnegie College, and then enjoyed a celebratory buffet with their friends and family. Also there were guests from the Visiting Committee and local councillor Jock Munro, who is responsible for education and skills at Perth and Kinross Council.

The celebratory atmosphere of the event was appreciated by the learners. One said: "This was a special night for me. I never imagined I could achieve so much – I was rubbish at school!"

Another said that "it let my mum see that I was not just doing nothing in here", while a father said: "It was much more relaxed for my kids to attend than a normal visit session."

The Learning Centre also celebrated with a Bronze Certificate from Perth and Kinross Council's 'Securing the Future 2013' awards, which recognised Perth's contribution to working in partnership with the community.



The four musicians from the advanced guitar group who entertained the audience at Perth during the presentation



Above: loved ones were delighted at the achievements of the learners. Left: Katharine Brash, assistant head of school for communities and learner development at Carnegie College, presents one of the young men with their award





# ON THEIR MARKS FOR KIDS' CHARITY

**PRISONERS at Barlinnie – many in fancy dress – raised more than £1,200 in a 10k race around the grounds for a children's charity.**

The race, which took an hour-and-a-half to complete, saw 130 prisoners run around the inside perimeter six times. The

first to cross the 10k finishing line was Gareth Rodgers. They also enjoyed a staff versus prisoners 11-a-side football game, which ended 3-3.

The events, which were organised by PEIs Patrick McShane and Mark Hope, were part of Men's Health

Week, where Barlinnie promoted men's health in conjunction with the health centre and education department.

Mark said: "An excellent and fun 10k was attended and supported by prisoners and staff raising money for Kidney Kids Scotland, a very worthwhile cause."

## REFUGEE WEEK

**PRISONERS across Scotland took part in a variety of events during June to mark Refugee Week.**

At Dumfries, staff were the victors when they took on the prisoners in a football match, winning 5-2.

Others events to mark the week included a film festival and international food jamboree at Cornton Vale, where the women also heard a refugee talk about her experiences.

At Dumfries and Glenochil, a music workshop featuring a variety of African instruments was held.

Music was also the focus at Low Moss, where Glasgow Gospel Choir performed African choral songs, and at Greenock, where students learned African songs, and were given an opportunity to try fabric printing using symbols from the continent.

There was a week of activities at Shotts, including art and music classes, as well as a talk from author Karen Campbell and a series of films about refugees.

Prisoners at Barlinnie, meanwhile, enjoyed a heritage quiz and food tasting, and were also given an insight into the life of a refugee by Charles Atangana from Cameroon.

# WEIGH TO GO, FUNDRAISERS!

**Perth does its bit to help British Armed Forces**

**PRISONERS and staff at Perth paid tribute to British troops overseas by stretching their muscles to the limit in a charity weightlifting challenge.**

The 'Lift-a-Thon' saw 28 prisoners and two physical education instructors take turns to deadlift, squat and bench press 50kg.

The aim was to lift a total of 2,600,000kg between them in just one day between 7.30am and 4.30pm. But they did even better – reaching a whopping 3,000,000kg.

The original target was calculated by multiplying the number of miles from Kabul to London by the number of British Armed Forces personnel killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan.

Andy Hoey, one of the physical education instructors who organised and supervised the event, said: "The event strongly tested the physical and mental reserves of the competitors.

"The feeling of camaraderie was very visible throughout the day, with everyone involved encouraging and supporting each



other's efforts. It was a challenge, but every competitor realised that, for the service personnel returning from duty, many with life-changing injuries, our efforts were little compared to their sacrifice."

Their efforts raised £1,000 for the charity Help for Heroes, which funds combat stress recovery programmes, sports programmes, counselling and employment services, all of which helps soldiers adapt to civilian life. And an extra £200 was raised from collection tins by visitors to the prison.