**New Faces at Fife Carers**

Say hello to our three new staff members! Joining us at Fife Carers Centre are (L to R) Sandra Morris, Anna Maria Cairns and Biff McMahon.

**We’re lucky that all three women have a wealth of knowledge and experience that they are bringing to their new roles. Biff is working in Reception and Admin and is part time, working during our opening hours Mondays to Wednesdays. Sandra Morris joins us in a new six month post as a Carer Support Worker for carers with someone in hospital awaiting discharge to help with the planning for a successful discharge as well as helping carers to anticipate where they might need help. Anna Maria Cairns is a Dementia Carer Support Worker covering West and Central Fife on a trial basis. She will be working with carers of people who are living with dementia; helping them to find out about and access the support available through statutory and voluntary agencies as well as the help we can give them. 35% of the carers we see at Fife Carers Centre are caring for someone living with dementia so by having a dedicated support worker for them we are hoping that it will free up the other support workers to enable them to continue to see a broader range of carers.**

Anna Maria and Sandra are both working in trial roles so have a lot to do in a short time so we can evaluate positively and look for more funding in future!

**21st Birthday Celebrations**

Fife Carers Centre is celebrating 21 years of providing support to unpaid and family carers in Fife!

It’s amazing to think that we started with one part time worker and half a desk in someone else’s office! We now have our own premises with six full time and seven part time workers. So many things have changed in the years we have been active - no one knew how many carers were around and how important supporting carers would become.

To mark our anniversary and to celebrate Carers Week this year we are having an open day at Fife Carers Centre welcoming carers and those involved or interested in carers issues to come along and meet the staff; learn more about the work of the centre and enjoy a cup of tea with us (there might even be cake!)

So that we can pace ourselves (we don’t want to get too excited too early in the day!) and to allow everyone to come along when it suits them we will be hosting three sessions throughout the day.

- in the morning between 10.30 am & 12.30pm,
- the afternoon between 2pm & 4pm
- the evening between 5.30pm & 7.30pm.

To help us plan our day it will be useful for us to know if you would like to come along and if so which of the sessions you would like to attend.

You can do this by telephoning 01592 205472 or emailing us at centre@fifecarers.co.uk. We look forward to seeing you soon!

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**Orange and Yogurt Cake**

A deliciously tangy teatime treat – easy to make and yummy to eat!

**Ingredients**

- 175g salted butter softened
- 175g caster sugar
- 225g self-raising flour
- 3 large eggs
- 1 orange zested & juiced
- 1 orange peeled & zest cut into strips
- 5 tablespoons natural yogurt
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar, for dusting

Preheat the oven to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas mark 4.

Lightly grease and line a deep 20cm cake tin.

Put the butter, sugar, flour and eggs in a bowl and, using an electric hand mixer, beat until mixed to a smooth batter. Stir in the orange zest, 1 tsp orange juice and the yogurt.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin. Bake the cake for 50-55 minutes until risen, golden in colour and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out, remove the paper and cool completely on a wire rack.

Bring a pan of water to the boil, add the sliced orange zest and boil for 1 minute until the zest starts to soften. Remove and dry on kitchen paper.

Once the cake has cooled, dust with icing sugar and decorate with the strips of orange zest. You can substitute the orange for lemon if you fancy something a little zingier!

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**Word Search Puzzle**

Celebration is the theme of this word search – which word is not in the puzzle? - You’ll find the answer at the bottom of page 7

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**Fife Carers Centre NewsletteR**

**About Fife Carers Centre**

Fife Carers Centre is an independent charity providing support and information to unpaid and family carers of all ages caring for someone in Fife, who may be ill, disabled or elderly.

**Our services**

At Fife Carers Centre in Kirkcaldy we provide a wide range of services to help carers meet the challenges of caring.

- **Carer Support Worker**
  - for carers of people who are in hospital waiting to be discharged
  - for carers of people with dementia
  - for carers of children

- **Befriending Project**
  - matching carers with one-to-one befriender support

- **Carer Support Groups**
  - evening, after work, lunchtime and weekend groups

- **Information Seminars**
  - practical advice and support for carers

- **Knowledgeable Staff**
  - experienced and helpful staff ready to listen

**We offer carers in Fife the following services:**

- Up to date information & support
- Benefit Checks
- Training Workshops & Information Seminars
- Carer Support Groups
- Stress Reduction Activities
- Telephone information & support

**Fife Carers Centre staff is:**

- Manager
  - Mhairi Lochhead

- Carer Support Workers
  - Cindy Souter
  - Grant Kidd
  - Andy Egerton
  - Martina Forsyth
  - Anna Maria Cairns
  - Sandra Morris

- Befriending Project Coordinator
  - Helen Honoré

- Administration Officer
  - Yvonne Taylor

- Reception & Administration Assistants
  - Biff McMahon
  - Katherine Pearson

- Training and Information Officer
  - Lesley Childs

**We are open for carers to drop in at the following times:**

- Monday 9.30 - 1.00
- Tuesday 10 - 4.30
- Wednesday 9.30 - 1.00
- Thursday 9.30 - 4.30
- Friday 9.30 - 4.00

To mark our anniversary and to celebrate Carers Week this year we are having an open day at Fife Carers Centre welcoming carers and those involved or interested in carers issues to come along and meet the staff; learn more about the work of the centre and enjoy a cup of tea with us (there might even be cake!)
Carers Stories
We asked some carers to tell us about some aspect of their experience as carers – these are their tales.

Irene is a carer for her grandson Reece and here she tells us about some of the experiences she has had as a carer.

A Part of my journey with Reece

In 2011 my grandson Reece aged 12 came to live with me after being diagnosed with Hypokalemia, a very rare mineral metabolic disorder causing loss of potassium in the body. This causes Reece to experience various levels of paralysis. This mainly triggers during sleep. Reece is now 17 and is the only boy diagnosed genetically in the UK.

As Hypokalemia is so rare I had to educate myself on the condition so I could help Reece and care for him as well as possible. I searched for information and found a Dr Jacob Levitt in the USA who as well as being a specialist in the field of Hypokalemic Periodic Paralysis is also affected by it. Having tracked him down I was able to get him to liaise with the consultant caring for Reece. When Reece’s medication was discontinued in the UK I organised its supply from Australia via his GP. I got a clinical psychologist on board and social workers so that Reece has the best possible chance of successful ongoing support and treatment.

Through Fife Carers Centre I applied successfully for grants from two trusts for tuition to help Reece to keep up with the school work he would otherwise miss. I was gifted an amazing weekend away from Rufflets Hotel as part of the Respite project that Fife Carers Centre is part of. More recently I felt really spoilt with therapies at Heavenly Sensations in Kirkcaldy also arranged by Fife Carers Centre. One of the great things I’ve found with Fife Carers Centre is you can p

Medically he receives fantastic support - Dr Alan Stewart at Pathhead Surgery has always been there for Reece, allaying his many fears, writing letters and reports to Balwearie High School in support of Reece’s educational plan and for their part the school have supported Reece 100% in preparation for his Higher.

I find that staying positive, although this is often very hard, is key. Seeking out all the avenues of help and arranging them has helped the feeling of isolation I have had as his carer – and I always say Thank You!

Universal Credit is a new means-tested benefit for people of working-age who are on a low income. It replaces six existing means-tested benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income-related Employment & Support Allowance (ESA)
- Housing Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

A limited form of Universal credit is already in place for single people who have recently become unemployed but is due to come out in Fife in its full form December this year. Even at this point it will only be applied to new claims, so people who already have a claim with one of the above benefits won’t see any immediate change but will be eventually transferred over in the following years. If your present claim stops and you reapply, then that new claim would be for Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is intended to simplify the current system of benefits and tax credits. So a household that previously received a number of different payments from the above benefits would now get a single payment. Whilst as a couple you still make a single claim as with ESA or income support, each claimant must accept a ‘claimant commitment’, this could mean some people who at present are covered by their partners claim may be required to seek work.

Universal Credit is paid on a monthly basis. Entitlement is worked out by comparing your basic financial needs that the government says you need to live on with your financial resources. Universal Credit can only be claimed online and you will need to establish an online account.

In some circumstances it will be possible to make a face to face claim but these are likely to be the exception rather than the rule.

Universal Credit is intended to ‘make work pay’ and to smooth out the transition from benefits to work, although there are concerns that cuts to the

Befriending success – Irene and Jutta’s story

In 2016 Irene, who had recently moved back to Fife after some time away, was interested in finding new ways to fill her time. When she saw an advert for people to act as befrienders for carers Irene was interested in finding out more and had free time so applied. After training she was ready to be a befriender.

Jutta had been caring for her partner Charles for several years and was feeling a bit isolated and lonely. So when she read an article about befrienders in our Newsletter she thought that it might be just what she needed.

The pair were matched following discussion with Befriending Coordinator Helen Honore. Helen then arranged for them to meet and the rest is history!
Dementia Friendly Glenrothes

To promote the excellent dementia friendly work that’s being done in Glenrothes you are invited to a Forget-Me-Not Tea at the Rothes Halls on June 1st from 1-4pm. Anyone can go along if they are interested in learning more about the work of the Dementia Friendly Glenrothes project. It’s hoped to see people living with dementia and their carers coming along as well as healthcare professionals, local businesses, services and community groups and the general public.

This event is one of several activities that will take place in Glenrothes during Dementia Awareness Week. Others are:

- May 29th: 1-4:30pm: Information and Blether, Rothes Halls Library
- May 29th: 2pm: Dementia Friendly WalkON, Rothes Halls Library (Run by Fife Libraries and Active Fife) Places are limited for this so advanced booking is required. Call 01592 583 204 or Email: walkon@onfife.com
- May 30th: Memory Bus will be at Aldi in Glenrothes
- May 31st: 1-5pm: Dementia Awareness Information Stand, Michael Woods Sports and Leisure Centre (With Fife Sports and Leisure Trust)

June 1st: 1-4pm: Forget-me-Not Tea will be at the Rothes Halls – just drop in and find out more about the support available as well as enjoying an afternoon treat!

You can find out more by contacting Amanda Hunter at 01592 803 800 or ashunter@alzscot.org or by checking for updates on the Dementia Friendly Glenrothes Facebook page.

If you are living with dementia or caring for someone with dementia in Glenrothes, please get in touch with Amanda. Your stories will help to make the changes that are important to you. Amanda is also keen to hear from any businesses, services or community groups in Glenrothes who are currently working to become Dementia Friendly, or who would like support to get involved.

The Joy of Clay – workshop

Fife Contemporary Art & Craft in partnership with Fife Carers’ Centre have organised some workshops with leading ceramic artist Carol Sinclair.

Working with clay is a wonderfully relaxing and enjoyable experience, and Carol is offering carers an opportunity to escape into the world of making and to experiment with this fantastic material. Carol used creativity to help her cope with the stress of being a carer for a family member living with dementia, and wants to share this way of working with others in similar situations. No experience of working with clay is required for this workshop, although anyone who already enjoys ceramics is also very welcome.

The workshops will take place in Kirkcaldy. At the same time there will be an exhibition of Carol’s work, Making Space, at Kirkcaldy Galleries as part of Luminate: Scotland’s creative ageing festival www.luminate.scot

There will be 3 workshops, so that you can get to know the materials, experiment with your ideas and have pieces fired between sessions. The workshops will be on Tuesday 26th Sept, Tuesday 3rd October and Tuesday 24th October 2017. All sessions will start at 10.30am and last a couple of hours. There will be a one off fee of £5 to take part and this will cover all materials and refreshments.

Session 1 - Carol will introduce you to the porcelain ceramic materials and tools that she uses and guide you through using them yourself.

Session 2 - Will include a short tour of Carol’s exhibition. You will get back the fired pieces from session 1 and you can experiment further to develop your own ideas and making techniques.

Session 3 - You will get back your finished pieces and have a chance for a catch up and cuppa. Places are limited to 8 people and so you will need to book as quickly as possible to be sure of a place. Because of the very limited numbers it’s important that you can commit to coming along to all three of the sessions.

To book your place contact Lesley on 01592 205472 or email to Lesley.Childs@fifecarers.co.uk

Find out more about Fife Contemporary Art & Craft at www.fcac.co.uk

(continued from page 2)

Now Irene and Jutta meet once a week and have become good friends. It’s definitely a beneficial partnership for them both. Jutta gives Irene advice on improving her stylishness and her cooking and Irene gives Jutta gardening advice and support.

Irene says: “I really enjoy being a befriender. Jutta and I have great conversations as we travel around central Fife, looking at charity shops, drinking coffee and visiting art galleries.”

Jutta says: “Fife Carers Centre’s befriending service has really helped me. I feel less isolated and depressed. Now I look forward to planning our outings and I’m starting to make positive changes to my life.”

It’s great to see how beneficial a good befriending pairing can be for both the carer and the befriender can be and Jutta and Irene are just one of many!

If you think you could be a befriender and would like to know more please contact Helen by email at Helen.Honore@fifecarers.co.uk or by calling her on 01592 205472

The Creative Breaks fund is money provided by the Scottish Government to help carers have a break. Carers can apply for up to £400 every two years to help them spend some time away. Carer Sam Riggs and her wife Pipa used Sam’s Creative Break award to have a holiday with a difference...

Creative Break - The Breakdown

Written by Pipa Riggs, Photos by Sam Riggs

For some time we had been planning a mammmoth road trip taking in pointless points of the U.K. such as the most northerly, southerly, westerly and easterly points not forgetting the highest and lowest points. In retrospect, for someone with a chronic pain condition and severe visual impairment along with poor mental health this may have been somewhat ambitious.

Our Creative Break was supposed to take in the most eastern and southern points. This plan fell apart a few days in after I, Pipa, got reliable co-ordinates from a reliable website for Ness Point near to Lowestoft in Suffolk, the county now famous for Castle on The Hill by Ed Sheeran. Unfortunately in transpiring about three hours into a one hour drive that maybe the co-ordinates, maybe weren’t quite as reliable and after joking that we would find ourselves in the middle of a field miles off course. We did. Never-the-less we found Lowestoft, which is like Blackpool but with the hustle and bustle of Kinghorn out of season, and had a huge plate of fresh fish and chips.

Since the trip was proving to be more tiring than expected, we decided to cut out the most southern point from our trip. This gave us more time to recover between doing loads of other stuff like:

- Dover Castle – which fortunately happened to be on an open day and we got to go under the castle into the tunnels that Operation Dynamo (evacuation from Dunkirk) was run from. These are still classified as important to the military and aren’t often open for Jo Bloggs to visit.
- The Museum of Witchcraft and Magic – I had contacted them before hand to arrange a touch tour. This was super, since Sam and I are pagans and have an interest in the occult – it was interesting to see traditions that were local to Cornwall and those that aren’t as widely known about from the rest of Britain.
- Siddmouth Donkey Sanctuary – This was somewhere that I had visited as a child but really want to take Sam to since we were in the area. I fell in love with a big grey donkey who was happy, just like me, to stand around chatting all day. I was sure he would get bored before me – however, it turned out that Sam got bored before either of us and led me away...Poor donkey...

I could probably go on for ages talking about all the amazing historic Buildings we visited and all the yummy scones and tea we had. Sam and I had a fantastic time, albeit exhausting, and we highly recommend applying for a grant from the Creative Breaks Fund.

If you would like more information about applying to Creative Breaks fund please get in touch with Fife Carers Centre
Join us to celebrate our 21st Birthday!

Tea & Dancing the old fashioned way
As part of our 21st anniversary celebrations, we are holding three vintage-themed tea dances around Fife this summer. There will be lovely afternoon tea from good old fashioned tea services with tiered cake stands jammed with delicious delicacies to give you the energy to join in with dancing and singing along to live music. It’ll be a relaxed and fun afternoon. Dressing up in the theme is optional but we would love to see tea and swing dresses, pin curls, spiv suits, Fee’s Free to dress up in 1940s/1950s fashion – we will be!

Each event is free but ticketed as we need to limit numbers. The dances are open to unpaid carers in Fife and if you want to bring the person you care for you are welcome; just let us know when you are booking tickets. To book your tickets just call us on 01592 205472 or email centre@fifecarers.co.uk

All of the dances take place from 12.30pm – 3.30pm and the dates are as follows:
- Monday 22nd May in St Andrews
- Tuesday 11th July in Kirkcaldy
- Wednesday 16th August in Dunfermline

So if you fancy a fun afternoon, taking a break from the norm and dusting off your dancing shoes then book your ticket today and we’ll look forward to seeing you soon!

Ambling with Andy
Walking and talking with friends is a lovely way to get out and feel better both physically and mentally. We know that and you know that so let’s get on and do it!

Carer Support Worker Andy Egerton has recently completed his Walk Leader training and has the arm band to prove it! He is now looking for carers to join him on walks. The walks will be fairly straightforward routes with good access and with a café somewhere near the end of it!

Our first walk will take place on Wednesday 5th July in Pittencrief Park starting at 10.30am. The walk will set off from the rear of the Glen Pavilion and places are limited to 10 people so must be booked. You can do that by calling us on 01592 205472 or by email to centre@fifecarers.co.uk

We’re interested in having the walks take place in various locations around Fife so that as many people as possible can join in. We would like to hear from carers who would be interested in joining a carers walking group – we’d like to know which part of Fife you live in and also any special requirements you may have. Please give us a call or send us an email with these details to let us know that you’re interested Andy’s really looking forward to getting out and about so don’t leave him hanging! Book your place today.

Bye Bye Brad!
Each year we have a Social Work student on placement with us as part of their course. This year Brad Archer joined us for his four month placement. Brad spent his first few weeks learning about the work of the Carers Centre and the ways in which we support carers.

After a short while Brad was able to take on the role of Carer Support Worker and work with carers who had contacted the centre for help. It brought Brad into contact with a range of different carer experiences so he was able to develop a greater understanding of the lives carers lead and the issues they may encounter. Brad said “Working at Fife Carers Centre has helped me to understand that there are many unpaid carers who need support in various ways. Being a student here was an excellent opportunity to hone skills University has taught me and put them into practice. I think the team here at Fife Carers Centre is fantastic with a wide range of knowledge and experience that allows them to support carers in various ways.” We’d like to thank Brad for his hard work and for joining in so well as part of the team. We have no doubt that he will be an asset to any organisation he works with and we wish him good luck in the future.

Carers Week Annual Concert
Our fifth annual Carers Week Concert will take place on Thursday 15th June at Templehall Community Centre in Kirkcaldy starting at 11am. In addition to the Carefree Chorus and we'll have performances by special guests. Refreshments will be served. Tickets are £3 entrance charge and you can buy them in advance from Fife Carers Centre or on the day at the venue.

The Carefree Chorus are our busiest and best attended carers group. The Choir began in 2013 when Lesley and Kerry from Fife Carers Centre asked for advice about setting up a choir. We were very lucky when Bob Barclay, then Choir Mentor with Kirkcaldy Choral Society, offered to help. The first time we met Bob he had already written a song for us which the fledgling choir went on to perform. Bob brought along Irene Campbell as his accompanist and with around 15 people keen to get singing and we were off!

We targeted Carers Week that year as our first performance and we were thrilled with the result. Mind you in our early days we were thrilled when we all started and ended the song at the same time! Anyone who has followed the progress of the choir will know how they have developed in skill, confidence and repertoire.

Carers come to the choir to enjoy time away from their caring role and to meet up with other people. There is no doubt that the support and friendship that they all give one and other has built the success of the choir. We’re so grateful to Bob and Irene without whom the choir would struggle - Thank you.

Tickets are £3

Contact Cindy or Helen to get your Free tickets on 01592 205472 or by email to centre@fifecarers.co.uk

Ambling with Andy
Get your brains in gear for the Fife Carers Centre fundraising Quiz nights!
Quiz nights are a great way to have a fun night out with work colleagues and friends and to raise money for a good cause – such as Fife Carers Centre!

We’re holding the first of our fundraiser quiz nights on 1st July 2017 at the St Clair Tavern in Kirkcaldy.

You’ll get another chance to prove that you are all truly genii at various ways. “We’d like to thank Brad for his hard work and for joining in so well as part of the team. We have no doubt that he will be an asset to any organisation he works with and we wish him good luck in the future.