



The  
Newsletter  
of Dundee  
Pensioners'  
Forum

# Pensioners' Voice

Issue 35

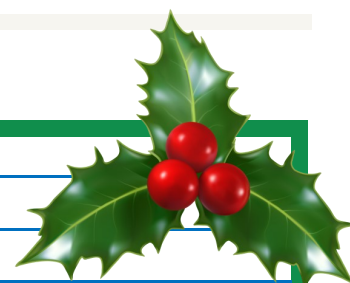
December 2021

FREE

IT'S  
BEGINNING  
TO LOOK  
A LOT LIKE  
CHRISTMAS

Merry  
Christmas

## Eating in the 50s



1	Pasta was not eaten
2	Curry was a surname
3	A takeaway was a mathematical problem
4	A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower
5	Crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not
6	Rice was only eaten as a milk pudding
7	A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining
8	Brown bread was something only poor people ate
9	Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking
10	Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green
11	Sugar enjoyed a good press and was regarded as being white gold. Cubed sugar was posh
12	Fish didn't have fingers
13	Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi
14	None of us had ever heard of yoghurt
15	Healthy food consisted of anything edible
16	People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy
17	Indian restaurants were only found in India
18	Cooking outside was called camping
19	Seaweed was not a recognised food
20	Kebab was not even a word, never mind a food
21	Prunes were medicinal
22	Surprisingly, museli was readily available; it was called cattle food
23	Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have been a laughing stock
24	<b>And, the things we never had on our table in the 50s and 60s; elbows or phones</b>

*Wishing you all a Happy Christmas  
and a Prosperous New Year!*



[www.wintersimpson.co.uk](http://www.wintersimpson.co.uk)

16 Dunsinane Avenue, Dunsinane Industrial Estate, Dundee DD2 3QT t: 01382 813813 e: sales@wintersimpson.co.uk

**LITHO PRINTING | DIGITAL PRINTING | LARGE FORMAT AND DISPLAY | PRINT FINISHING**

# Christmas Reflection 2021

Erik Cramb

The cost of postage has made lots of people now send their greetings by email, but most cards will carry the message, "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

I suspect that many of us still really enjoy brightly decorated cards physically dropping through the letterbox.

There's a delight in opening envelopes in anticipation of who each one might be from, even if sometimes we struggle to make out scrawled signatures of grandchildren and old memories are evoked by surprise cards from friends we haven't seen for donkeys years.

Most of us in Dundee Pensioners' Forum can find ourselves recalling the days when, as children, out of our minds with excitement, the stocking was hung up above the kitchen fireplace where Santa couldn't possibly miss it.

Many of us even remember the days in the late 40s and 50s when we were old enough to have started work, in Scotland, Christmas wasn't nearly as big a deal as New Year. Christmas wasn't even a public holiday until the late 60s, or even well into the 70s when there was the beginnings of the great commercial bonanza it has now become, piling huge pressure on today's parents to spend themselves into debt so that their kids get whatever is this year's 'must have'.

Perhaps, as we fondly remember the stocking hanging from the kitchen mantelpiece, we also remember a week later, the bottle of whisky that stood on the same mantelpiece waiting for the bells. Who would be the first foot at your

door? Tall dark and handsome with a lump of coal, black bun and a bottle?

I'm glad that cards today still bear the old message, "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" because I believe both are important and together they offer a balanced kind of hope.

Christmas, the ancient story telling of new hope coming out of nowhere, entering the world in the shape of a vulnerable child, his mother giving birth in a stable because there was no room in the inn.

The hope, the faith, that when everything seems so dark and overwhelming, as it has been during the Covid pandemic—there is a power that can ring light into our darkness.

New Year, the ancient ritual of clearing out the ashes from the grate, the clean slate, the welcoming of friends and strangers, where we, in all our human frailty, begin to tackle the darkness that is present around us.

It's a good Scottish balance. So Dundee Pensioners Forum, with joy and expectation, wish all our members and supporters,

**"Merry Christmas and  
a  
Happy New Year"**







**Wishing All a Merry Christmas**  
**and**  
**Happy New Year**  
**from**  
**UNISON**  
**Tayside Healthcare Branch**  
***Supporting Our Retired Members***  
***Throughout Tayside***



# A Poem from Annie and a Story from Long Ago



## Icy Blast

The winter sun shines down  
upon the freshly trodden snow.  
The snowdrops push their heads up,  
just to say hello.  
The berries on the holly dance, soft  
against the breeze,  
A flurry falls down from above, just to  
tease the leaves.

The children in the park, they play, red  
cheeked every one.  
The snowman stands beneath the hill,  
all alone and forlorn ..  
Here they come, a hat for him, a scarf  
and buttons too,  
now the eyes then the nose .... and a  
mouth that's laughing too!!!

Now they dance a ring around voices  
loudly singing.  
Someone hears their mothers cry, so  
home they go arunning.  
The birds now start their call for help,  
so I will go and feed them.  
They are so little helpless things, and  
yet they give such pleasure.

A big log fire, a pot of tea, a pie  
cooking in the oven,  
This is what contentment is in this  
cold, cold weather.



## DUNDEE POLICE COURT

Saturday – before  
Baillie MACDONALD

(date unknown)

**CHARGE OF THEFT** – Margaret  
McMillan or Lamond was remitted to  
the Sheriff, charged with stealing a  
pair of drawers on 16<sup>th</sup> October last  
from a draper's shop in Hawkhill, ag-  
gravated by two previous convictions.

### A DAUGHTER'S APPEAL FOR HER MOTHER

– Catherine  
Brannon or Hay, Urquhart Street, was  
charged with committing a breach of  
the peace in Murraygate and Wellgate  
on Friday night. She pleaded guilty.  
Previous convictions were proved  
against her for similar offences. A  
young girl, a daughter of the accused,  
came forward, sobbing and crying and  
said to the Magistrate *"Please sir, if  
you would only be as kind as to let her  
away. We live in Robertson's Land  
and he folk 'll come and kick in the  
door, and steal the things in the  
house. If you would only let her away  
to her work. They are wild folk 'at bide  
there, and they'll come in and take our  
meat, and everything, and me and my  
sister are feared to bide in the house  
ourselves."*

The accused, who appeared some-  
what affected by the grief of her  
daughter, joined her application for  
mercy, promising that she would never  
come back, if she got away this time.

The Baillie said – *"You heard the  
statement that this is your 20<sup>th</sup> appear-  
ance before this Court. I am sorry for  
your family, Catherine, considering the  
appeal which your poor daughter has  
made, but the ends of justice would  
not be served if I passed on you a less  
sentence than the last recorded  
against you, viz, a fine of 30s or fifteen  
days in prison."*



# DUNDEE'S OLDEST PUB



When in the heart of Dundee why not treat yourself to a visit to the iconic Pillars Bar? It is not only the oldest pub in Dundee (established 1864), but it also sports more than 30 of the best craft gins Scotland has to offer behind the bar. In an easily accessible city centre location, you are sure of a warm welcome!

## THE PILLARS BAR

9 Crichton Street, Dundee DD1 3AP




A very **MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
and a **HAPPY NEW YEAR** to all our friends and  
customers.


Join us for the **Pillars Xmas Party** on  
**Tuesday 14th December, from 3pm.**



# Out of Sight, Out of Mind



A BBC Reporter, commenting on the tens of thousands of young people marching through Glasgow during the recent COP26 event protesting against the “blah, blah, blah” from inside the conference hall, said, with a tear in her eye, “They are all everybody’s children.”



**Chancellor Rishi Sunak’s recent Budget speech highlighted a blatant disregard for pensioners—in fact, the front bench was so busy slapping one another on the back that they totally forgot to mention the year-long suspension of the Triple Lock—or was this simply because it wouldn’t affect their nearest and dearest anyway?**

With many older people still facing an uncertain future in the midst of a pandemic, and still being encouraged to follow government guidelines to stay indoors, it really was a case of **Out of Sight, Out of Mind!**

A meagre State Pension increase of an average £4 per week will plunge even more older people into poverty when set against rising fuel and heating costs, skyrocketing super-market prices, withdrawal of the concession on the TV Licence for over 75s—the list goes on.

NHS Dental Services are in a parlous state with thousands of older people forced to pay for

treatment privately—on average, a filling costs £80!

The majority of pensioners must now also pay for Chiropody services and Ear Syringing (previously part of the GP Contract) now offered by High Street Opticians at huge cost.

The latest drain on older people’s restricted budgets is the newly introduced legislating enforcing the installation of fire alarms in all rooms.

**Pensioner poverty is real** and it is high time the UK Government treated older people with the dignity they deserve.

The Government is well aware that only 60% of those entitled to Pension Credit actually claim it—and that £3.5billion is returned to the Treasury every year.

**Dundee Pensioners’ Forum calls on the UK Government to produce and publish an Action Plan to ensure that every older person eligible for Pension Credit, is supported to receive it.**



**Dundee Labour** 

## Season’s Greetings

to  
**Dundee Pensioners’  
Forum**

Secretary: Marion Sporing  
Vice Chair: James McGovern  
Contact: [secretarydundeelabour@gmail.com](mailto:secretarydundeelabour@gmail.com)

 DundeeLabour





**GMB**

**SCOTLAND**

# **GMB Scotland Defending Your Interests Seasons Greetings & A Prosperous New Year**



**Louise Gilmour**  
**Acting GMB Scotland Secretary**

**Jim Lennox**  
**GMB Scotland President**

**[www.gmbscotland.org](http://www.gmbscotland.org)**



**@GMBScotOrg**



**/GMBScotland**



**@GMB\_Scotland**





**Funeral Link is a local charity based in Dundee aiming to prevent hardship as a result of paying for a funeral.**

**We understand the challenges you face when planning a funeral on a low income, or little or no savings and you don't know where to start.**

Funeral Link's support service offers:

- To help you save money on funeral costs
- Confidential independent advice
- Friendly one-to-one support
- Community connections with other local support organisations
- Support with funeral related benefit Applications

In our last financial year we supported 122 individuals, saving 37 of these families a total of £70,725.

We have adapted our service and operated throughout the Covid-19 pandemic supporting individuals throughout our community to save money when arranging their loved one's funeral. We offer a range of support to individuals including informed choice around plans for their loved ones' funerals, financial savings, help with flowers, funeral clothes, and transport to funerals.

We have also been able to offer emotional support and a space to feel listened to when those who are bereaved wish to talk about their loved ones they have lost. Possibly the saddest statistic I can share is that the average age at death of the loved ones of those who have been supported is just 55 years - far too young I'm sure you will agree! Many of those we have supported have experienced a sudden and unexpected death. Many families supported have encountered deaths involving substances and we have also supported several losses by suicide—deeply distressing for those involved but vital those in need of support can talk openly, especially

when there can be stigma associated with deaths of these nature.

Funeral Link are incredibly grateful to the funeral directors who have worked with us to support many of our clients. With their help we have also managed to help prevent 8 National Assistance (or 'paupers') funerals since our service commenced in March 2019.



Grief is an emotion which is not often spoken of; For many it is so very hard to share as it affects us all so uniquely. We have all been experiencing grief of varying degrees as nationally we mourn the extensive losses encountered via Covid-19 and more personally the losses of those we knew.

There has been much written about the impact of lockdown on funerals, and we are glad that funerals continued for at least the small number of attendees. This doesn't take away the impact many of us have felt by not being able to attend funerals we would normally have chosen to be present at.

We have updated our leaflets and if you would like us to provide these to groups you are part of, or for us to come and speak with your group, virtually or in person, then please do give us a call.

**If you or someone you know could benefit from our help, please give us a call on 01382 458800.**

***We are open Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm. We really hope you don't find yourselves in the position to need our support, but we want to ensure we continue to be here for those who need us now and in future.***

**Best wishes, Linda**

Linda Sterry, Service Manager,  
Funeral Link

[linda@dfss.org.uk](mailto:linda@dfss.org.uk)  
[www.funeralink.org.uk](http://www.funeralink.org.uk)



# Love and Marriage

## Her 4th Marriage

A local news station was interviewing an 80 year old woman on why she had recently got married for the 4th time. They wanted to know her secret for finding love again and again.

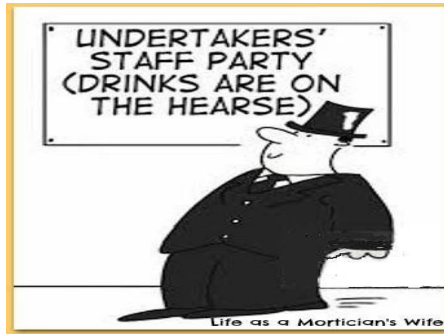
The interviewer asked her a few questions about her life, and about what it felt like to be a bride again at age 80. Then he asked what her new husband did for a living.

"He's a funeral director" she answered.

The newsperson was surprised at her answer and wondered who else she had married. He then asked her if she wouldn't mind telling him a little about

her first three husbands and what they did for a living.

She paused for a few moments, needing time to reflect on all those years. Her life had been full of exciting moments, especially with three husbands.



After a short time, a smile came to her face and she answered proudly, explaining that she had first married a

banker when she was in her 20s, then a circus ringmaster when in her 40s, a preacher when in her 60s, and now—in her 80s, a funeral director.

The interviewer looked at her, quite astonished, and asked why she had married four men with such diverse careers.

**She smiled and explained—**

**"I married one for money, two for the show, three to get ready and four to go."**



# Tele-Taxis

**Dundee, Broughty Ferry, Monifieth & Surrounding Areas**

**Tele-Taxis wish all our patrons**

**A Very Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year**

**01382 825 825**



# COP26, Carbon Capture and Dundee Trees



## From Elizabeth Kane:

Well, COP 26 is over and an agreement of sorts has been reached. Not everyone is happy with it though!

One of the outcomes was to stop, or at least reduce deforestation. **In other words, to stop cutting down trees.**

The Scottish Government has pledged to plant a thousand saplings. However, it is older, more mature trees that help the environment, by soaking up moisture.

Isn't it ironic that countries across the globe are trying to do their bit for the climate, but building contractors continue to be allowed to pull down trees!

A case in point is the former Downfield Infant School plot between East School Road and Camperdown Road in Downfield. This is now a housing development.

There was a Copse of about 20 mature trees on the north east corner of the site—this has been raised to the ground and turned into wood chippings.



That won't do anything to help the environment. In fact, it may do some harm in the long run, as the Gelly Burn runs under it.

Perhaps the Council's Planning Department should consider carefully before allowing developers to cut down mature trees on any site.

## Comment by Dorothy McHugh:

Exactly the same thing happened on Macalpine Road—on part of the site of the former Macalpine School. This is also now a housing development.

I watched a beautiful avenue of mature trees being destroyed, one by one, on my daily dog walk. It was heart-breaking! Now, only 1 tree remains where once around 20 stood.



But this issue is much larger than local developers. Here is an excerpt from the Friends of the Earth press release at the conclusion of the COP26 Conference:

*"The final outcome of COP26 leaves developed countries free to keep polluting whilst giving the green light for massive land grabs for offsets in developing countries. The UK Presidency and their allies are patting themselves on the back but no deal at all would have been better... It is nothing less than a scandal. Just saying the words 1.5 degrees is meaningless if there is nothing in the agreement to deliver it. COP26 will be remembered as a betrayal of global South countries – abandoned to the climate crisis with no money for the energy transition, adaptation or loss and damage."*

*"Perhaps it is no surprise that this was the moment a deal was finally forced through on carbon markets which are a free pass for rich countries reluctant to cut emissions. Many Southern delegates struggled to attend or make their voices heard, but fossil fuel corporations were present in force..."*

Trees take a long time to grow. Studies have found that as they age, most species absorb more carbon. Therefore, larger and older trees tend to soak up and store more carbon than smaller and younger saplings. This highlights an issue with tree planting as a solution to global warming. The Scottish Government's pledge of 1000 saplings won't go far. It will take decades for the trees that we plant today to remove significant quantities of carbon from the atmosphere and it would require a huge number of trees to be planted every year.

It is calculated that the typical American produces 14.95 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year. A mature tree captures on average about 22 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> per year through photosynthesis. **Every American would need to plant an incredible 618 seedlings every year to offset their carbon footprint.** Well, what do you reckon to the chance of that happening!



# STURROCK COMB & DAVIDSON

Independent Family Funeral Directors. Est. 1890.

## The oldest remaining independent family owned funeral directors in Dundee & District

Sturrock, Comb & Davidson is one of the few remaining family owned and run funeral companies serving the communities throughout Dundee & District.

The business has been built up over five generations on a solid foundation of trust, recommendation, and the high quality of personal service provided.

As a family owned and run business great pride is taken, ensuring that the bereaved are afforded every care and attention.

All our premises are furnished to the highest standards, each one offering the most modern facilities in very relaxed and comfortable surroundings.

Within our modern premises we are able to provide a sensitive, dignified and effective service, for all beliefs, affording essential peace of mind to the bereaved.

Operating primarily within our area, we also coordinate arrangements both nationally and internationally.

FORFAR ROAD



BROUGHTY FERRY



LOCHEE ROAD



SOUTH ROAD



Complete flexibility to choose the funeral you want at:

102 St Vincent Street, Broughty Ferry  
01382 770500

135 South Road, Dundee  
01382 611506

34a, Forfar Road, Dundee  
01382 462159

150a Lochee Road Dundee  
01382 667745

[www.dundeefunerals.co.uk](http://www.dundeefunerals.co.uk)

Golden Charter  
Funeral Plans



## Where did it all go?

(A personal view)

Having grown up in the West Port, on leaving school I started an apprenticeship in A.G. Kidds, the Baker.

My mates all had jobs as well—there was plenty of work in the mills, at the boatyard and in many other industries.

These were the rock and roll years. The music was great and with our wages we bought the latest clothes—**crepe sole shoes, drain pipe trousers, Slim Jim ties.** There were plenty of dance halls—**The Palais, The Emperess, Robbies, Kids Rooms, The Chalet, and The Continental.** Sadly all gone now.

We would walk from the top of the Overgate to the Wellgate steps and back up the other side two or three times on a Sunday night after coming out of the Palais listening to Andy Lothian and his band.

No alcohol was served in those days, just tea and lemonade.

Teenagers nowadays - no jobs or a life on low wages—if any are lucky enough to get a job. No hope of much other than poverty, drugs, and deprivation.

In the old days we didn't have much - but I think we had the best opportunities.

**Where did it all go?**

*Jim Elder*

# COP 26 OR COP-OUT?



**Now that the dust has settled and the COP 26 Road Show has left town**, the world awaits with bated breath on just what has been achieved in halting the progress of climate change.

Already, respected climatologists and activists have dismissed the summit as being a wasted opportunity.

A recent study in the scientific journal *Nature* suggests that to stand a 50% chance of avoiding more than 1.5C of global heating, we need to retire 89% of proven coal reserves, 58% of oil reserves and 59% of fossil methane ("natural gas") reserves.

If we want better odds than 50-50, we'll need to leave almost all of them untouched .

That is the bottom line.

Every speech and pledge and gesture at Glasgow this week is thistledown, by comparison to the hard facts of new coalmines, oil and gas fields.

**It's the mining and drilling that counts: the rest is distraction.**

We have the technology required to replace fossil fuels.

There's plenty of money, which is currently being squandered on the destruction of life on Earth.

The transition could take place in months, if governments willed it.

**The only thing that stands in the way is the power of legacy industries and the people who profit from them. This is what needs to be overthrown.**

*Taken from an article in the Guardian by George Monbiot.*



**6th November, 2021—Members of Dundee Pensioners' Forum at the conclusion of the march, on Glasgow Green.**

*- emerging tired and exhausted after a 4 mile hike from Kelvin Grove: Gordon Samson, Willie Shields and Peter Robertson*





The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Joe FitzPatrick MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for  
Dundee City West Constituency

**Represents:** Charleston, Menzieshill, Dryburgh, Lochee, Gowriepark, Clement Park, West End, Perth Road, Blackness, Kirkton, Trottick, St Marys, Ardler, the Dales, Downfield, Mill O' Mains, Claverhouse, The Law, Beechwood, The Glens, City Centre.



### Office Address:

37 Dock Street,  
Dundee, DD1 3DR

**Phone:** 01382 843244

**Email:** [joe.fitzpatrick.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:joe.fitzpatrick.msp@parliament.scot)

**Surgery:** By appointment  
(please get in touch to book).

**Facebook.com/**[JoeFitzPatrickSNP](https://www.facebook.com/JoeFitzPatrickSNP)



**Twitter.com/**[JoeFitzSNP](https://twitter.com/JoeFitzSNP)



**Instagram.com/**[JoeFitzSNP](https://www.instagram.com/JoeFitzSNP)



Published by Joe FitzPatrick MSP. The cost of this publication has been met from parliamentary resources. The Scottish Parliament is not responsible for the content of external websites.



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Shona Robison MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for  
Dundee City East Constituency

**Represents:** Fintry, Whitfield, Douglas, Mid Craigie, Linlathen, Happyhillock, Broughty Ferry, Ballumbie, Woodside, Fairmuir, Fleming Gardens, Clepington Road, Dens Road, Stobswell, Mains Loan, Maryfield, Baxter Park, Stobsmuir, Craigie.



### Office Address:

Factory Skatepark, Douglas,  
Dundee, DD4 8PS

**Phone:** 01382 903219

**Email:** [dundee@shona.robison.scot](mailto:dundee@shona.robison.scot)

**Surgery:** By appointment  
(please get in touch to book).

**Facebook.com/**[ShonaRobisonSNP](https://www.facebook.com/ShonaRobisonSNP)



**Twitter.com/**[ShonaRobison](https://twitter.com/ShonaRobison)



**Instagram.com/**[ShonaRobisonSNP](https://www.instagram.com/ShonaRobisonSNP)



Published by Shona Robison MSP. The cost of this publication has been met from parliamentary resources. The Scottish Parliament is not responsible for the content of external websites.



# 2021 Update

**Year 2 of Covid19 hasn't stopped us from campaigning for a better deal for older people, or from engaging with our members and the wider public. Here is a flavour of what we have been up to in 2021:**

**MEETINGS** – The Executive Committee continued to meet monthly, initially via Zoom and, finally, face to face again from October. Thanks to Jim Elder for organising the Dee Club.

**NATIONAL CARE SERVICE CONSULTATION** – an on-line consultation on this most vital of services for older people. A sub-group was formed to consider our response and efforts made to meet directly with Scottish Government ministers, without success. Finally the group met with a senior SG civil servant and a collective response was produced and sent.

**DUNDEE'S YEAR OF THE OLDER PERSON** – Originally planned to run from November 2020 to October 2021 but planned events cancelled due to Covid restrictions. We were able to organise the Face of Experience Portrait Competition, start up a Blethers Café and have our March & Rally for UN Day – see separate reports in this issue.

**HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE** – members and others highlighted a number of issues to us throughout the year, including - Care Packages not in place, the process for organising Community Alarms, the criteria for a Stair Lift, long waits for Booster vaccina-

tions, Sheltered Housing needs. All of these issues were raised with Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership and the Housing Department for resolution.

**BLETHER BUSES** – We led a deputation to a meeting of Dundee City Council who proposed to remove the Blether Buses and save £50,000 in the process. The deputation was unsuccessful, but the vote came to 13-13 and the committee convener used his casting vote to pass the proposal. Watch this space for further developments.

**WASTE DISPOSAL** – we continue our discussion with the Council on removal of the bin chutes in multi-storey blocks – decided on without proper considerations of the negative effects on older and less able tenants.

**COP26** – Three Dundee Pensioners' Forum members attended the march and rally in Glasgow – to lend support to the amazing efforts of young people in organising this most important of campaigns.

**NEWSLETTERS**—following fortnightly and then monthly issues being produced during the Covid lockdown and beyond, we resumed our standard quarterly format with the September issue.

We also dealt with issues about buses, broken fencing, opening up of sheltered lounges, and much, much more.

**So—another busy year. Let's see what 2022 brings.**

## A wet day at Holyrood



## Friary Blethers Café



## Hiroshima Remembered



## The Blether Bus



## Zoom Meetings



## UN Day March Poster

### Dundee Pensioners' Forum March and Rally



**Saturday 2nd October**  
Assemble 11.30am McManus Galleries  
March Off 12 noon

**Bring your Flags and Banners. Join us to celebrate:**

**UN International Day of the Older Person**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
&  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**From everyone at  
Dundee City Unison**

**Supporting our Retired Members Section**

**Dundee City Unison  
Room 2, Floor 3  
11 Castle Street  
Dundee DD1 3AA  
01382 224048**



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**MICHAEL MARRA MSP**

*Member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Scotland Region*



**michael.marra.msp@parliament.scot**



**0131 348 5943**



**facebook.com/michaelmarramsp**



**@michaeljmarra**



As one of your regional MSPs, I'm here to help however I can. Please feel free to speak to me or contact me on any issues you think I can help with.

I was privileged to be elected to the Scottish Parliament in May 2021 as an MSP for the North East of Scotland and am grateful for the opportunity to serve the communities of Dundee, Angus, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Morayshire.

Since being elected, I have been working hard on issues around the economy, education and health. I am keen to hear your priorities for the area and if you would like to share those or need my assistance in any way, I would encourage you to get in touch using the details above.



# THE FACE OF EXPERIENCE 2021

**2021 was designated the International Year of the Older Person.**

Dundee Pensioners' Forum were determined that their annual celebrations around 1<sup>st</sup> October should be special this year and together with the DVVA planning began almost a year ago.

The many exciting plans were hit and severely curtailed by the restrictions on so much of life by the pandemic.

Amongst these ideas we had, was the notion of organising a portrait painting competition, based on the format of Sky TV's 'Portrait Artist of the Year' where 3 sitters are painted by up to 9 artists. Our competition was to be called 'The Face of Experience 2021'. We thought this was a good way to remind our fellow citizens of the wisdom and experience we still have to offer in our old age. To tell the truth, we also thought it would be a bit of fun.

The pandemic apart, there was another snag. We had neither the contacts, skill or experience to turn a good idea into reality. But by engaging the help of Dundee's prestigious art school, Duncan of Jordanstone, and blessed with the support of the V&A Dundee, despite the disruption of so much else in life due to the pandemic, the 'Face of Experience' became a possibility and on 28<sup>th</sup> September the competition took place in the V&A, followed by an exhibition of all the portraits in Meadowside St. Paul's Church following the Pensioners' march and rally on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

Names of members of the Pensioners' Forum were put in a hat and 3 lucky (?) sitters were chosen. The enthusiasm and contacts of Janice Aitken of the Art School attracted the painters and the welcome hosting of the event by Peter Nurick and V&A staff were key to creating a most memorable event.

**Huge thanks are also due to Erik Cramb of the Pensioners' Forum whose idea it was in the first place and to Lali Tudela of DVVA whose patience and organising skills drew everything together so beautifully.**

**Some photographs taken on the day ..**







**Merry Christmas  
And  
Happy New Year**

**to all our friends and  
patrons**



Maryfield Lane, Dundee DD2 3DY  
Telephone 01382 611238

## **Dundee Joint Shop Steward's Committee**

Tayside Contracts Branch, UNITE SC/154/3



**A Merry Christmas and a Prosperous  
New Year to Dundee Pensioners' Forum**



**We vow to continue the fight for jobs and public  
services for the citizens of Dundee in 2022**

**Colin Young, Chairperson**

**Paul Drummond, Secretary**



20 Taylor  
Street,  
Dundee  
DD2 3DA  
Telephone  
01382  
611108

**DEE CLUB**



**A Merry Christmas  
and a Goal Filled New Year  
to all our Members,  
Patrons and Dundee FC  
Supporters  
everywhere**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**Dundee Taxi Branch (sc/33/15)  
Secretary—Chris Elder**

**HAVE A SAY IN YOUR TAXI TRADE  
JOIN OUR BRANCH**

# Blethers Café

During discussions around projects for Dundee's Year of the Older Person, the issue of loneliness and isolation, exacerbated by the Covid19 lockdown and restrictions was raised, again and again.

And so, the Blethers Café idea was born. A group of three—from DPF, Celebrate Age Network and Baillie Helen Wright sought funding for an initial 6 week pilot and the first Blethers Café began on 23rd September in The Friary.

Numbers were slow to start, but the same people came along week after week, so we realised the format was working. Gradually, more and more older people attended (mostly women) and the volume of blethering increased week by week—last Thursday, we were singing some Dundee Street songs and folk, remembering their old favourites, were giving it a go. A great atmosphere.

**Thursday, 24th December is the last café for this year and will have a Christmas theme. Bill Lynch from DPF is organising some music, we will have Christmas pies and crackers—and a DPF is providing a wee Christmas gift for everyone.**

The staff and volunteers at The Friary Café have been absolutely outstanding—welcoming and friendly to everyone. Their café also offers a Food Larder (10 items for £2) and free fruit and vegetables, some of them grown in their own community garden—the potatoes were excellent. There is no doubt The Friary is an ideal venue for us.

Many old acquaintances have been renewed and memories shared at our Blethers Café on Thursdays. Thank you to the DPF members who come along regularly to help with the blethering.

**The group are seeking funding to carry on into 2022. We'll let you know how that goes.**



**Dundee's**  
Year of the Older Person

## west end blethers

Thursdays at The Friary  
Café, 12noon until 2pm

**EXTENDED UNTIL 23RD DECEMBER**

For further  
information,  
phone:

Dorothy on  
07468525107  
or  
Margaret on  
01382  
667178

Fancy getting out of the house for a wee  
while? Come and join us for a cup of tea  
and a blether.

Suggested donation £1



# Blackadders

Whatever way the wind may blow.  
**We are here for you.**

Blackadders is a long established law practice delivering first class, trusted advice to individuals and businesses throughout Scotland.

Our ability to adapt to our clients' changing needs has helped us in our delivery of quality legal services and has contributed to our diverse, loyal and growing client base.

---

You & Your Family

---

Property

---

Business

---

Dispute Resolution

---

Wealth Management

---

**Aberdeen**  
01224 588913

**Dundee**  
01382 229222

**Edinburgh**  
0131 222 8000

**Glasgow**  
0141 248 1888

**Perth**  
01738 440088

**Arbroath**  
01241 876620

**advantage you**  
[www.blackadders.co.uk](http://www.blackadders.co.uk)





## Too Little, Too Late for Too Many

The Scottish Pensioners' Forum welcomed the findings of the report by the National Audit Office which uncovered the administrative blunders leading to many married women losing out on their state pension entitlement.

However, the Forum believe that this catastrophe was nothing short of blatant

indifference on the part of the UK government.

Without being given a full explanation of the complexities of the situation throughout their working lives, both as home-makers and in paid employment, access to their state pension should have been an entitlement for women in their own right and not just another bureaucratic hoop for them to jump through.



Women have a right to their state pension—not merely thrown scraps at the end of their working lives.

The report from the National Audit Office shows that 134,000 pensioners, mostly women, were underpaid their state pension due, in part, to outdated computer programmes and systems at the Department for Work and Pensions.

The SPF are quick to condemn the UK Government for trying to lay the blame directly at the door of the DWP and any move to blame staff for adhering to guidelines set out by them is a blatant cop-out.

Too many women have died in poverty because of these archaic bureaucratic structures.

**Change must be made urgently to ensure the pensioners of today, and tomorrow, don't meet the same fate.**

**Age Scotland** is calling for urgent action to tackle the social care "crisis", with soaring numbers of older people stuck in hospital beds waiting for care in their communities. The latest figures from Public Health Scotland show that the number of delayed discharges from hospitals has soared in recent months, now matching pre-pandemic levels.

In September, an average of 1,615 beds were occupied per day due to delayed discharges. In total, 48,436 extra days were spent in hospital in September, up 47 per cent on the same month last year.

The vast majority of these were due to older patients awaiting a social care package at home or a place in a care home. Health and social care partnerships across Scotland are struggling to cope with

"unprecedented" staff shortages and increased demand, partly due to Covid-19 absences and the loss of EU workers due to Brexit.

Brian Sloan, Chief Executive of Age Scotland, said:

"... Each day, hundreds of older people are stuck in hospital beds, alone and isolated, simply because there is no one to care for them in their community. As well as this unacceptable human cost, delayed discharges are costing our cash-strapped NHS hundreds of thousands of pounds each day.

"While plans for a National Care Service are a welcome step, we can't wait any longer to tackle this crisis and ensure every older person receives the care they need."



**UNITE DUNDEE RETIRED MEMBERS BRANCH (SC/160)**

wish all our members and friends

**A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

Secretary: Peter Robertson



Retired Member Plus

Chair: Jim Elder

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL  
GMB MEMBERS  
from  
Branch Secretaries**



GMB's purpose is to improve the quality of life of our members and their families, widening horizons and striving to bring new opportunities within reach.

We aim to enhance the lives of GMB Members and ensure that their achievements spearhead the advance of working people throughout Scotland, Britain and the World.

**GMB SCOTLAND  
UNIT 12  
CITYQUAY  
CAMPERDOWN STREET  
DUNDEE  
DD1 3JA**

**Telephone 01382 225419/228291**



## Is the state pension triple lock doomed?

Failure of Lords' last-ditch battle sparks warnings of future 'tweaks' and more broken promises.

- Tory MPs supported a one-year suspension in a 300-229 vote
- State pension will rise by 3.1 per cent next April, despite inflation forecast of above 4%
- Move will 'put more pensioners into poverty', says Ros Altmann
- Pension experts warn of longer-term threat to the popular guarantee

Elderly people will face hardship after a last stand to save the state pension triple lock founded, politicians and financial experts have warned.

Fears have been raised that the popular pensioner guarantee could be tweaked or even scrapped for good in future, after Tory MPs



voted for a one-year suspension.

Their overturning of a rebel House of Lords amendment means the state pension will rise by 3.1 per cent next April, lagging inflation which is already thought to be running at 4 per cent.

Three hundred MPs voted with the Government to put more pensioners into poverty.

Ros Altman, who led the revolt in the House of Lords, said "Don't they understand how low our state pension is and how many elderly people rely on this for most or all their income?"

Telling people in their 90s who can't afford their heating it's just for one year doesn't help."

## MERRY CHRISTMAS from everyone at ALLARDYCE HEALTHCARE

*“We know you might be having a difficult time this year, more than ever. Wishing you strength and peace in these challenging times.”*



**ALLARDYCE**  
HEALTHCARE

Your local, independent healthcare supplier

TOM JOHNSTON ROAD,  
WEST PITKERRO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,  
DUNDEE  
DD4 8XD

Email: [sales@allardyce.co.uk](mailto:sales@allardyce.co.uk)  
Phone: 01382 773600  
Fax: 01382 77486  
Web: [www.allardyce.co.uk](http://www.allardyce.co.uk)

Specialists in • Seating • Mobility • Healthcare Supplies





**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
from  
**UNISON, UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE BRANCH**

**Supporting all our retired members**



University and College Union



***MERRY CHRISTMAS***

*from Dundee Pensioners' Forum*

*to all our members, affiliates, supporters and  
friends.*

*"May the road rise up to meet you and the wind be always at  
our back"*



Dundee Pensioners Forum

**CONTACT US:**

[dundeepensionersforum@gmail.com](mailto:dundeepensionersforum@gmail.com)

Phone – Gordon 01382818001  
Dorothy 07468525107