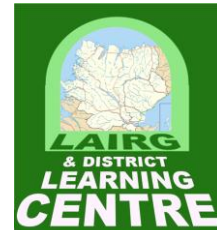


# Lairg & District Learning Centre

## Newsletter

20 July 2011



Schoolhouse, LAIRG, IV27 4DD Telephone: 01549 402050

Web: [www.lairglearningcentre.org.uk](http://www.lairglearningcentre.org.uk)

### Introduction

Well the Summer holidays have arrived and with the hope of good weather we know you will be busy, but have you thought about things you could be doing once the holidays are over?? Fear not....we can help!!

### Facebook

You can now join us on Facebook.  
We are: **lairg learning centre lairg**



### Class Timetable (example)

	AM	PM	Evening
Monday	Art for Beg. Patchwork	Guitar	Modern Jive Italian
Tuesday	German Creative Writing	ECDL Scottish Literature	
Wednesday	Gardening Patchwork Workclub	Book Keeping	Spanish
Thursday	Ready Steady Go Workclub	Gaelic Intermediate	
Friday	First Click French Beginners Workclub	1 to 1 PC tuition Poetry Beginners	Gaelic Beginners
Saturday	Children's Workshop		

### Poetry Café



### Mayfest 2011 Creative Writing

#### Section Winner

#### LEAVING by Mary Black

Just over the brow of the hill smoke wended gently upward. He was at home then. That smoke was a comfort to me just as the faint glow in the sky at night soothed me with the knowledge of his presence.

He didn't know how I felt. Didn't know I spent my days and nights dreaming. I held his name in my heart. Would he come by? It was sweet torture when he did as I waited to be noticed- or not. Why was it that some days he would bless me with the sunniest smile and at other times I was invisible to him?

I knew the sound of his truck like my own heartbeat and ran into the house to check my reflection in the spotty old mirror.

He and father were talking in the yard. I needed an excuse to go out there. I couldn't just stand and gawk. I grabbed the egg basket although I'd already collected some this morning. His nephew was with him. A young

lad, keen as mustard about every aspect of farming. Rory was the boy's name. He offered to help me gather eggs. I nodded. I could do no other. Adam wasn't about to offer help. He and father smiled benignly on us youngsters. Rory dropped the bombshell. His face alight with excitement. "Adam's going to New Zealand to work on a big sheep farm." He said, each word a poison dart. "And I'm taking over the croft. It'll be a start for me." He looked as if he would like to say more but was afraid. "Well now that'll be just grand for you." I managed to say. Rory more than liked me. That was obvious. I looked at his honest attractive face and thought 'why can't it be you? It should be someone like you.'

Adam and Rory stayed for the mid-day meal. Father was scowling a bit and Adam kept grinning at me across the table. I knew I couldn't contain my distress for much longer but couldn't think of a reason strong enough to abandon our guests. I was so concerned with my own sorrow that it took a while for me to notice the tears in mother's eyes. What a selfish besom I was. Watching Dad's frown and Mum's tears, I realised that something awful must have happened and it couldn't be Adam's leaving. I was the only one who cared about that.

Father lent back in his chair and went through the ritual of packing his pipe with Walnut Brown. He sucked and puffed until it was drawing to his satisfaction. We all watched the performance, knowing there was no point in trying to hurry him. When the pipe was securely resting in the dent in his lip it had created over the years, Father began to speak. "Annie lass we are about to have a conversation on a subject I hadn't thought to be discussing for many years yet and I don't like it. I don't like it one bit. Indeed I don't think we should be talking about it at all but your mother and this rapsallion of a traitor says it's my duty to tell you the facts. Adam here is going off across to the very opposite

side of the world as far away from family as a man can get. Do you credit it?" I nodded, unable to speak. "But that's no the worst of it, no. He wants to take our bairn with him." What did he mean by our bairn? I was an only child. Could he mean me? Adam jumped up and came round the table. He knelt beside my chair not like a suitor but to be nearer my level. He took my hands and that was quite lover like. He said "Your father made me promise not to speak to you until next year but things have changed now that I've been offered this fine manager job. I'll be leaving in three months and I'm hoping you'll come with me. I've seen it in your face and heard it in your voice and I know you have some feelings for me as I have for you but your father thinks you're too young yet." "Oh! She'll not want to go away so far from her parents." Father interrupted. Adam ignored him. "I know I haven't courted you as you deserve but I promised to make it up to you and I've brought you this. It's yours whether you marry me or not." He handed me a pretty ring with an emerald and two little diamonds in it. I looked at my parents. Mother looked dreadfully sad but resigned. Father still looked angry. I had yearned for Adam's love and now it was declared but to have him I would have to lose my family. Oh I would go with him. I couldn't not but looking at Father I saw when the realisation hit him. Next to him Rory sat stony faced. Oh why was life so difficult? I handed the ring to Adam. His face was pale and questioning.

"You put it on me." I said and he lit up like a beacon.

### **Mayfest 2011 Poetry**

#### **Section Winner**

#### **The Silvery Birch Tree**

I saw you there

Resting, peacefully

In deep thought  
By the flowing stream  
The summer sun fell  
On your warm shiny leaves  
In silent shallows  
I could almost feel you  
Watching over me  
You crossed my mind  
Strongly reserved  
I started to breathe with you  
Very tall you stood  
Prim and proper  
Isolated  
With a twisted struggle  
Curved like a silvery umbrella  
Hook opening  
Untangled you hang free  
With your droopy dreamy leaves  
Weighing wearily down  
By Katie Turney

## Courses Available

**Scottish Literature** Lairg Learning Centre is piloting an eight week course on Scottish Literature.

Course participants will study four novels over eight seminars. These are: Jessie Kesson's *The White Bird Passes*, George MacKay Brown's *Greenvoe*, Neil M Gunn's *The Silver Darlings* and Lewis Grassie Gibbon's *Sunset Song*, all of which fall broadly within the period described as the Scottish Literary Renaissance.

The course is suitable for students who have previously read these books but who would like to explore their significance and legacy in greater depth. It also serves as a useful introduction to students new to Scottish fiction of this period.

**IT Courses** from "Introduction to Computing" to the "European Computer Driving Licence", including the BBC's First Click campaign to encourage people who currently do not use the Internet to understand and enjoy its benefits, which is free for those over 55.

**Communication and confidence-building** courses, SQA accredited, to help you with the key skills needed in day-to-day life, at work and for getting into work.

**Non-vocational classes and workshops** providing the opportunity to learn various crafts, including Patchwork, Art, Cake Decorating, and Book-Binding, to name a few.

**Online learning** bringing university and college courses to you, enabling you to gain new knowledge and qualifications at your own pace.

**Business services** offering easy access to essential staff training in areas such as First Aid, Health & Safety, Bookkeeping, and Food Hygiene.

**Modern Languages** courses starting at Beginners level; others may be available.

**Spanish** Wednesday, 7pm and 9pm.

**German** Tuesday, 9:30am – 11:30am.

**Gaelic** Friday, 2-4pm.

**Italian** Monday, 7pm and 9pm.

**French** Date to be arranged

**Reading Group** for those who are not confident reading with others.

**Elementary Food Hygiene** – dates to be arranged.

## New for summer

### Grow your own vegetables and salad -

Would you like to grow your own vegetables or salad items? We are starting a new class in June using a raised bed technique, so book your place now by contacting the Learning Centre.

### SQA Accreditation

We are now able to offer a wide selection of courses that are accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), and we offer many intermediate to advanced classes ranging from Maths to Communications. Please ask us if you would like more details.

### Film Making

**Lives of Highland Women** – this film celebrates the contribution of wives and sisters, who have been the mainstay of land and fishing folk over the years, to continue as the 'oil wives'.

Please contact us for more details – no experience required!

### New Projects

Visit [www.lairglearningcentre.org.uk](http://www.lairglearningcentre.org.uk) for a full list of courses available.



**Sutherland Landscapes** – is a short film produced by a group of volunteers that documents the diversity and history of Sutherland. DVDs will be available from Lairg Learning Centre and the Ferrycroft Centre.



### Skills for Living and Working

Skills for Living and Working (Sutherland) is a project funded by the Highland Adult Literacy Partnership (HALP). The project helps with confidence building, developing personal skills, through activities such as book, poetry and photography groups, as well as one-to-one sessions, with a focus on employment skills, preferences and possibilities. Please contact us for more details.

### First Click

Are you new to computers or want to know how to get the most from them? As part of the BBC's First Click campaign, we can help! Learn about computer basics, how to browse the web and use email, and even shop, bank and watch TV online. Make the most of your digital camera with digital video and photography. We cover all the essential skills you'll need.

### SCMA

Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) has almost 5,000 members consisting of childminders and other childcare professionals. SCMA provides support, training and information to childminders to ensure they are confident they offer the best possible service.

We are looking to run an induction course to anyone interested in becoming a childminder. We plan to run this over 3 Saturdays.

Please contact us at the Learning Centre for more information, or email: [kelly-lairglearningcentre@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kelly-lairglearningcentre@hotmail.co.uk)

## Basic First Aid

Our Red Cross Certified First Aid course covers general first aid, Accident Procedures, Vital Signs, Head to toe & Recovery, CPR, Choking, Defibrillators plus much more.

## Achievements

### Mayfest Poetry + Creative Writing Competition Winners

Leaving by Mary Black – Winner

The Silvery Birch Tree by Katey Turney – Winner

Family History by Barbara Watson – Runner Up

Frog Spawn by Susan Bewly – Runner Up



## Welcoming Jane Dixon

Jane is the Development Officer for the Centre and has over twenty years training experience, in a wide range of subjects. After a career in Finance, she transformed her cake-decorating hobby into a successful retail and training business, even having work featured in magazines (her only claim to fame!). She sold the business and spent five years tutoring Accountancy and Management to trainees across the Highlands. Her hobbies are writing, gardening, and cooking.



## Facilities

We offer a friendly, well-equipped environment for all sorts of individual and group learning. The facilities include:

**Meeting/Training Suite** –a flexible learning space that can be used for classes, discussions and meetings. This facility is available for hire to community groups and businesses for meetings and training sessions.

**Resource Rooms** –two training suites, each equipped with computers, and a classroom that is ideal for small groups. There are 8 computers in the main room plus there are 2 iMacs in the smaller training room.

**Services**–We also offer fax and photocopying, as well as A4 laminating services.

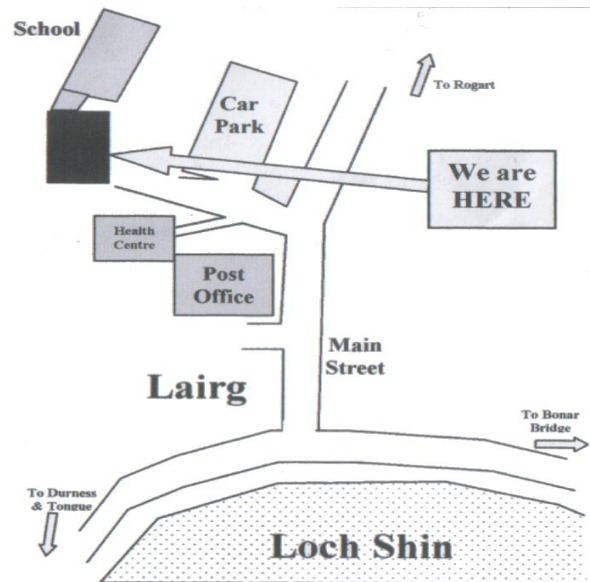
**Video Conferencing**– a state-of-the art VC suite is available for the local community and businesses to hire. Features a 50-inch plasma display running NEFSIS.

## Where are we?

The Learning Centre is in the old School House, located at the side of the Primary school on Main Street, Lairg. Park in the public car park and walk through the school playground.

**Rail Travel** - Lairg Railway Station is on the Inverness to Wick line, there are 3 trains a day in each direction. For more information see [www.scotrail.co.uk](http://www.scotrail.co.uk), or call National Rail enquiries on 08457 48 49 50 or visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk).

**Bus** - There are also bus services to Lairg, operated by Macleod's Coaches of Rogart. The services run between Lairg and Tain via Bonar Bridge and between Lairg and Helmsdale via Rogart. For more information please visit [www.macleodcoaches.co.uk/services.htm](http://www.macleodcoaches.co.uk/services.htm) or call 01408 641354.



## Contact Us

Are you a tutor? Can you offer courses? If so please get in touch with us. We are always looking for skilled tutors to help develop new learning opportunities.

The Lairg Learning Centre is a charity, so without your support we cannot offer classes. Please support us and help us to provide what you would like.

Please contact us on 01549 402050, by email to [cara-lairglearningcentre@hotmail.com](mailto:cara-lairglearningcentre@hotmail.com), or via Facebook at [lairg learning centre lairg](https://www.facebook.com/lairg-learning-centre-lairg).

## We Need Your Help

We are always looking for ways to improve our range of courses and training – you can help us by inquiring about our Training Needs form at the Learning Centre or local Post Office. Thanks!