

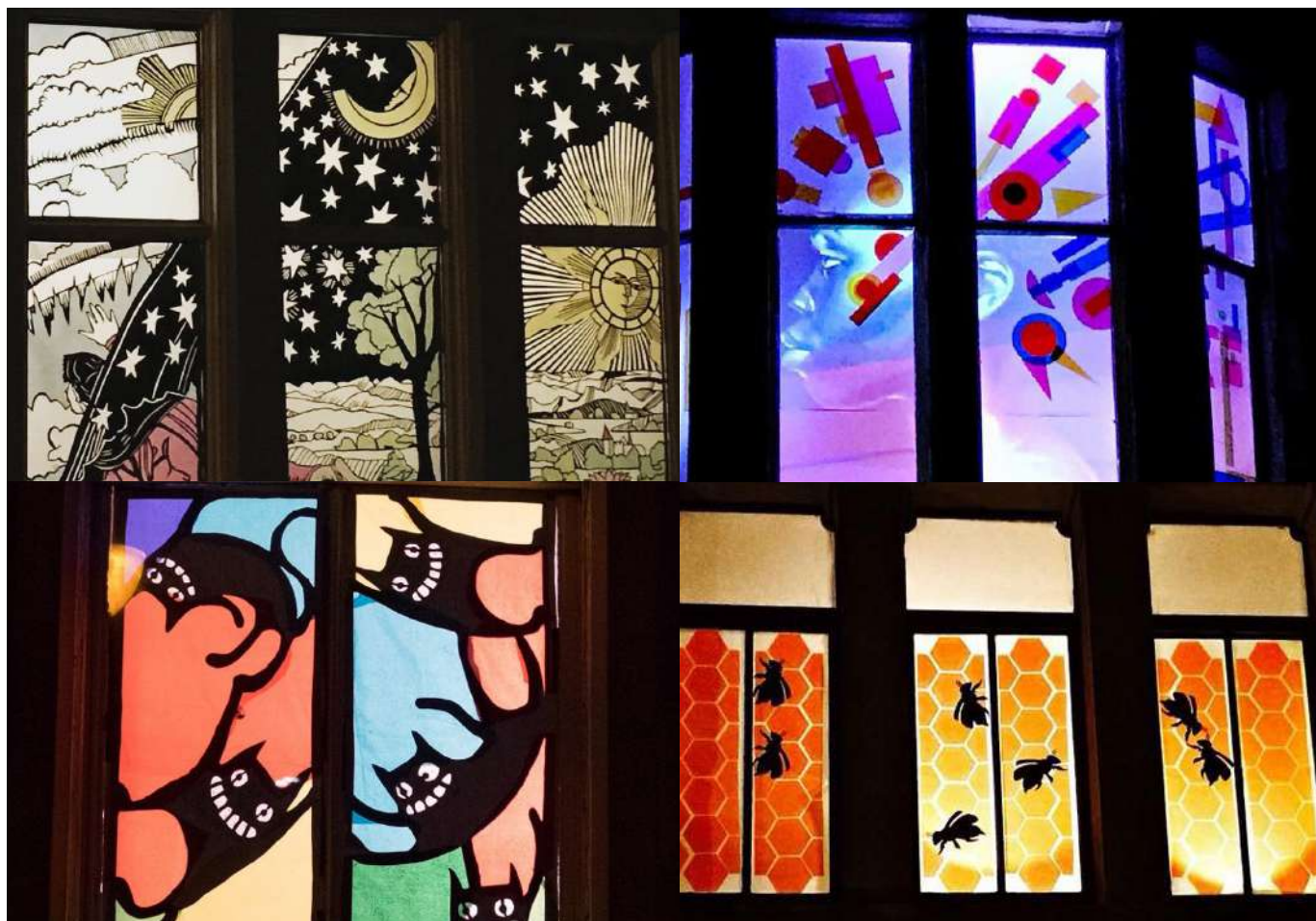
STRATHBUNGO NEWS

The Strathbungo Society

A quarterly newsletter
February 2020

WINDOW WANDERLAND 2020

Plans being hatched, ladders extended, neighbours plotting, rumours rife...



Saturday night sees the return of Strathbungo Window Wanderland for a leap year special! Journalist Peter Ross, in *The Observer*, described last year's event as 'a glorious psychedelic playground... a retina-shredding explosion of pop culture' and this leap year special promises to be just as incredible, transforming our streets into a spectacular outdoor gallery for all to enjoy.

As ever, the success of the event is down to your incredible efforts in creating the most wonderful window displays! But if you're new to the area or haven't yet planned a display, please don't be intimidated!... a display could be as simple as a string of fairy lights or an image in your window. Or, as some do, you could stage an all out performance in your front room. Simple or spectacular... it's entirely in your hands!

There are rumours of the return of the house-sized human juke box, a 1920s speakeasy, a marching band and, of course, we're all wishing for a leap year proposal! Don't miss Pollywood's hidden garden cinema; Brass, Aye? who will once again bring their own take on New Orleans funk to the Bungo

and Jangling Space, who join us for the first time, creating our very own Strathbungo street view-inspired stained glass window.

Each year, as word of the event spreads, increasing numbers mean that the streets become incredibly congested at points. We ask again, that residents please kindly park their cars outside the Strathbungo area in order for people to move more freely through the streets. We also strongly request that people avoid driving in Strathbungo on Saturday evening and ask visiting friends and relatives to please use public transport to get to the event.

And, as with all Strathbungo events, we require volunteer stewards to allow these events to continue... if you are up for donning a high vis jacket for the night and supporting the event, please email chair@strathbungo.co.uk

Have a wonderful night!

Saturday 29 February, 6-9pm, free and everyone is welcome!

NETWORK RAIL UPDATE

Network Rail have gone quiet despite a promise that we would be kept up to date with regular meetings to explain plans and hear Strathbungo feedback.

A letter arrived saying rail management work was taking place at Muirhouse Junction. Was this the proposal to remove trees and spray glyphosate all along the track? It turned out to be engineering work.

Interestingly, an article was published in The Herald on 10th January headlined: "Network Rail battles to save badgers". It was a determinedly upbeat item which even quoted the member of staff who is working on the line through Strathbungo saying: "It is part of Network Rail's considerate approach to the protecting its lineside and to supporting wildlife and habitats on and around our infrastructure and another example of how we have and will continue to promote biodiversity and the wider environment through our work." It seems that Network Rail are keen to demonstrate unchallenged their concern for biodiversity by sending a press release. Their heroic actions (avoiding disturbance of

badgers and obtaining licences to do works) simply means they are complying with the law.

The Strathbungo Society has given feedback to Network Rail via The Tree Council asking for an approach that protects biodiversity and has contacted our elected representatives again to secure meetings and continue the pressure. As Glasgow prepares to host world leaders for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26), it seems perverse for Network Rail to carry on destructive business-as-usual management of trackside biodiversity.



NITHSDALE BRIDGE

The potential electrification of the East Kilbride railway line has implications, both positive and negative, for the pedestrian and road bridges at the end of Moray Place.

The Strathbungo Society understands that both are too low for cables to run under them. The line could potentially be lowered or the bridges raised. We are seeking assurances from Network Rail that, having spent large sums of money renovating the pedestrian bridge, they would not now contemplate removing it.

The road bridge provides an opportunity. The Strathbungo Society is concerned by the barriers erected as a cheap and "temporary" option to protect the pavements. This was necessary because the pavements are significantly weaker structurally than the central part of the bridge and could collapse under the weight of an HGV lorry. We would like to see a permanent solution which is appropriate for a conservation area and it should then be possible to re-design the road making the bridge safer for cyclists. There is concern too about the future of the station building which was Susie's. Until now, improvements have been constrained by the lack of money. If electrification were to go ahead, we would expect a significant sum of additional budget to be made available...

The Society is exploring this through the Pollokshields Area Partnership. An excellent presentation at the last meeting by a member of council staff detailed the issues and challenges with upgrading our bridges. Current discussions between the council and Network Rail about strengthening the bridge at Shields Road would enable the "temporary" barriers to be removed. Legal responsibility for upgrading bridges is a shared but complex matter! Watch this space.



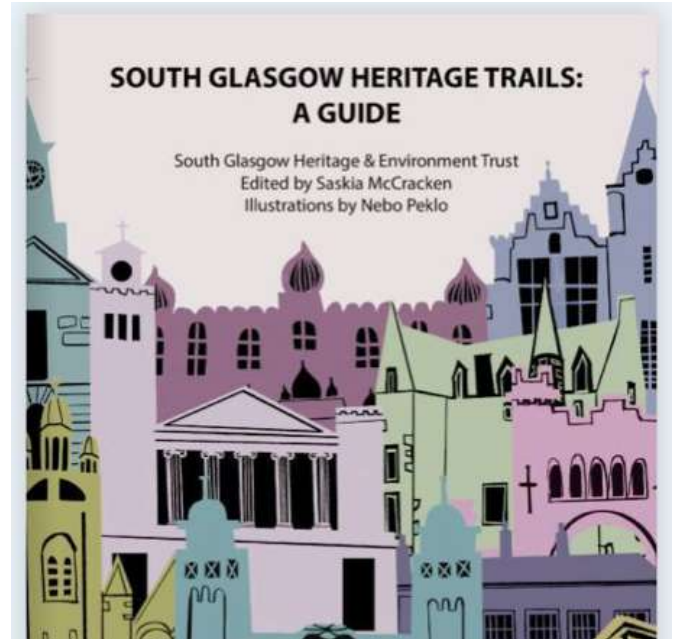
SOUTH GLASGOW HERITAGE TRAILS: A GUIDE

Fancy a wander around your local neighbourhood, and seeing places in a different light?

The South Glasgow Heritage Environment Trust (SGHET) have recently published a new walking guide to the Southside.

The heritage trails included range across seven areas of South Glasgow, including of course one for Strathbungo and Shawlands, and map out the vibrant mix of industrial, architectural and multicultural heritage south of the Clyde. Taking in villas and tenements by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, public baths, mosques, libraries, synagogues, castles, old cinemas, parks and more, each chapter brings the heritage of the Southside into focus as never before.

See the homes, grand civic buildings and artworks connected to actors, sports people, politicians, artists, philanthropists and other local characters. Enjoy stunning archival photographs of the Southside in every section along with handy tips about hidden local gems. Learn all about the people, places and events that make South Glasgow the fascinating place it is today.



The book costs £10 and can be purchased from the SGHET website, <https://sghet.com/product/south-glasgow-heritage-trails-a-guide/>

BEYOND BYGONE BUNGO

Former Strathbungo Parish Church

Words by Neil Murphy, Deputy Director of Glasgow City Heritage Trust

'Tucked mid-block between Allison and Calder Streets on Pollokshaws Road and framed by tenements is the surviving fragment of the former Strathbungo Parish Church built in 1886 by Glasgow church architect William Gardner Rowan (1846-1924).

While the Thomsonsque style of Rowan's earlier churches, the former Pollokshields Free Church on Nithsdale Road (which survives as Nithsdale Lodge) and St John Wesleyan Church on Sauchiehall Street (a site now occupied by Glasgow Royal Concert Hall), was dictated by their congregations, by this date Rowan, gaining in confidence, was exerting his own taste exploring late Scots Gothic with the occasional Norman detail.

Rowan's motto was 'Art for Art's sake' and, as his health was poor, he focused on smaller competitions where his talent would shine. As a result, he never secured bigger commissions and had to manage on smaller budgets contenting himself with schools and churches – bread and butter work for larger practices.

Nevertheless, working within these economies, Rowan always went the extra mile to deliver his vision, covering his drawings in explanatory marginalia and sketches to help

craftsmen on site. Thus, ordinary painter work would be transformed into decoration through use of lettering such as Rowan's Puginesque 'Te Deum' ceiling, still visible in the sanctuary of his Arts and Crafts meets Hispanic flavoured Eastbank Parish Church in Shettleston.

Rowan's love of ornamental detail explains the delightful carvings in the arch of the Norman doorcase addressing Pollokshaws Road where you will find doves, interlocking dragons, winged beasts, the Venerable Bede and... the devil!



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING COMES TO POLLOKSHIELDS AND STRATHBUNGO

In the last 18 months Glasgow City Council has tested out a new method of allocating public funds via community voting - called participatory budgeting.

Pollokshields Ward 6 (that includes Strathbungo) was one of four areas chosen for the pilot, and a process was established – overseen by a group of local residents – that invited local organisations to submit proposals for projects that would benefit the local community.

These ideas were then voted on by local people, culminating at an event at the beginning of December at Pollokshields Burgh Halls, where the following organisations were awarded funding: Pollokshields Community Council - Polish the Shields; Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre - BME Women Building Communities; Merry-Go-Round - Expansion of Events Programme; Youth Community Support Agency - Pollokshields Streetwork and Outreach; East Pollokshields Out of School Care - Out of School Care Activities; Glendale Women's Café - Creating An Inclusive Community; The Quad - Play, Learn, Build, Meet Mark Makers Community Common - Tools For Community; Pollokshields Trust - CCTV Camera, Maxwell Square Park; Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice - Gardening Equipment, and Titwood Bowling Club - Accessible to All.



All these projects and organisations will help make our area even better, and we look forward to seeing the results. Participatory budgeting is here to stay, and Glasgow City Council (like other local authorities across Scotland) will be continuing to use this method to make community choices about funding, so watch out for future opportunities to get involved.

ALLISON ARMS

The friendly staff at the Allison Arms pub have been serving Strathbungo residents since 1885 (so it's about time they got a mention in this publication)!

Manager, Babs, and her team pride themselves in welcoming all sections of the Southside community and participate in local events such as the Southside Fringe Festival.

The Allison Arms recently picked up a Best Bar None Glasgow Gold Award to add to its extensive collection of accolades. Teams of regular customers participate in local area darts, dominoes and golf leagues and welcome new members. Saturday night is karaoke night and there's a regular quiz on Thursday evenings from 9pm – although you'll need to arrive early if you want to get a seat.

Dogs are welcome, with complimentary treats and water bowls provided. Sports including football, rugby and racing are shown on the TV screens, but no football colours are allowed.

On a recent visit, I got chatting to a regular who I had not spoken to before. I told him that one of the things I like about the Allison Arms is that I feel safe going there on my own. He replied "You're not on your own, you're with me." That's the kind of pub it is.



NEWS IN BRIEF

A round up of all things Strathbungo: this quarter's bite-sized Bungo business!



BRIGHTER BUNGO

In Glasgow bulk uplift of most items is easy to arrange and free, but the lanes belong to the residents, not the Council, so we have to clear them up ourselves. That's what Brighter Bungo is all about. Many thanks to the wee gang who turned out on Sunday 19 January; they did a great job. But there was so much work for so few people. If you are able, come and help next time - at the very least please clear your own patch of lane to save volunteers cleaning up after you.



SCOTT HUTCHISON MURAL IN ALLISON STREET

A mural depicting Frightened Rabbit frontman, Scott Hutchison, is now a bright and colourful fixture in Allison Street. Designed by local artist, Alex Coyle, the artwork features three different versions of Hutchison's face in red, blue and green. It includes the name of the 'Tiny Changes' charity – established in Hutchison's memory. Tiny Changes aims to educate and raise awareness of mental illness in young people. Hutchison tragically took his own life in 2018 at the age of 36 after a long battle with depression. However, his songs continue to inspire the many people who love them and continue to listen to them. Visit the tinychanges.com website for more information about the charity.

WANTED - ALTRUISTIC COMMUNITY MINDED STRATHBUNGO RESIDENTS

Great to have your attention. Obviously, having chosen to live in the independent and vibrant republic of Strathbungo, we all have all of those attributes. But it takes a special sort of Strathbungo resident to take a step further. Step forward and volunteer for your local community. You must be aware of the events like Bungo at the Bells, the campaigns about Network Rail plans for the area, and the regular community clear ups. These are all the work of a small band of cheery, committed local people aided and supported by the Strathbungo Society. We are always looking for new people and ideas for the society and our many activities. It does not take a large investment of time, as we meet once a month in the convivial surroundings of the Bungo bar. However, a small investment of your time helps keep the community informed, entertained, and aware of the environmental issues in Strathbungo. So whatever your skills and interests as long as you have a bit of time and like meeting new people come and join the people who contribute to Strathbungo being special and the place so many love. Contact chair@strathbungo.co.uk for more details.



BUNGO AT THE BELLS

A group of about 100 local residents, along with family and friends congregated together at the corner of Queen Square and Moray Place to say good-bye to 2019 and welcome 2020 at Bungo at the Bells. There was music, dancing and lots of neighbourly greetings and good wishes for the year ahead. It was great to be amongst such a friendly and calm crowd where there were people of all ages marking the passing of a decade and the dawn of a new one. It felt optimistic, empathetic, respectful, collaborative and fun - all qualities I associate with Strathbungo

DUBAI NIGHTS

The changing, ever dynamic world of Strathbungo saw the space once occupied by the Dulux Centre on Nithsdale Street become Dubai Nights: a shisha lounge which stays open into the small hours every night. This addition to the neighbourhood has not been without issues in what is a very built up area – with tenements in Pollokshaws Road and Nithsdale Road backing on to the space. Late night hours running to 3am has produced considerable noise and disturbances with the operator not applying for planning permission to become a nighttime club and the building not included in the official 'nighttime economy' of the area. Last year local residents including the Strathbungo Society objected to their license to serve hot food after 11pm and Glasgow City Council Licensing Committee rejected their application. This one may run and run.



SHAHED'S FACELIFT

Shahed's take-away on Pollokshaws Road is looking bright and fresh following a major re-vamp. Favourite meals such as pizzas, curries and kebabs are available once again at very reasonable prices. Food can be collected or ordered for home delivery. Shahed's was established in 1974 and the menu has developed to cater for the culinary tastes of local residents. There are many vegan and vegetarian options available and pizzas can be ordered with a variety of toppings as desired by the customer. As well as offering take away food, Shahed's has a catering menu, which is ideal for parties or large family gatherings. The menu can be viewed on the Shahed's website at www.shahedoriginal.co.uk where customers can order online.

SAVE GREEK THOMSON'S EGYPTIAN HALLS

The Egyptian Halls on Union Street in the city centre are an outstanding example of the striking architecture and design style of Alexander Greek Thomson, arguably the father of Strathbungo.

As the halls are situated opposite one of the exits to Central Station thousands of people pass them on a daily basis - and for many visitors arriving in the city this amazing building, sadly hidden behind scaffolding for a decade, is one of their first architectural impressions.

The acknowledged authority on Greek Thomson, the late Gavin Stamp, who lived at 1 Moray Place (and chair of the Alexander Greek Thomson Society) recognised the Egyptian Hall's importance. Writing in 'Private Eye' he described them and their plight as 'Thomson's finest and most commercial building, which – very much thanks to masterly inactivity by Glasgow City Council and Historic Scotland – is empty, derelict, rotting and in severe danger.' These words were

written in 2017 and since then further deterioration of the building has occurred, leading to the halls addition in December 2019 to the long-list of 14 of Europe's most important - but endangered - buildings. The Alexander Greek Thomson Society has launched an online petition to demonstrate public support for the building with the aim to ensure its inclusion in the final short-list, which could aid efforts to save it. The long-list to short-list decision is made in March 2020 and the numbers and supporters are rising dramatically as we go to print. Read more about the Egyptian Halls on the Alexander Greek Thomson Society website and sign the petition at: <https://www.change.org/p/glasgow-city-council-save-egyptian-halls>



LOCAL LISTINGS

29 FEB

Window Wanderland

29 MARCH

Park Lane Market

19 MAY

Strathbungo Society Meeting

17 MARCH

Strathbungo Society Meeting

21 APRIL

Strathbungo Society Meeting

20 JUNE

Bungo in the Back Lanes

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