

Breached bail in her pyjamas

A YOUNG woman released on bail with a 7pm to 7am curfew condition was in breach of it when police officers found her – lying drunk in the road in her pyjamas at 2am on Wednesday. The officers allowed her to dress before taking her into custody, and Nicole Walls (20) of 40 Rose Street, Lesmahagow, admitted breaching the bail condition when she appeared at Lanark Sheriff Court later in the day. The curfew had been imposed as part of bail granted on August 9, but she was also subject to other bail orders from July and September last year, and March this year.

Officers had found her on Abbeygreen Road, and the court was told that she had been heavily intoxicated and had not responded to the police initially, then had told them that she was breaking her curfew.

"Is it time for this lady to go to prison?" Sheriff Alastair Brown asked. Her solicitor said that he hoped not. "She was found lying on the roadway early this morning, dressed in her pyjamas," said the solicitor.

"She had been drinking with her brother and had left the house to be sick outside, rather than being sick inside; she wanted some fresh air." And he added that the police had kindly allowed her to go back into her home, dress, and have some coffee before she was taken into custody. He added that Walls was no stranger to the court, and a number of other cases had been deferred until September 29, in the hope that she could attend a 12-week fitness course.

Now, back in court facing a fresh charge, she was in a very serious position. Walls was also subject to a bail supervision order from July and probation, with a condition of alcohol counselling, and her solicitor added that she had alcohol issues and bereavement issues.

"People have been bending over backwards to give you chances, and you had the chance to apply for a course which might have turned your life around," Sheriff Brown told her. "That is the only reason I am not going to send you to prison.

He deferred sentence on the latest offence also to September 29, telling her to be of good behaviour, and urging her to apply for the course.

Punched man five or six times

Immediately after leaving court Carlisle man Stephen Gould got into trouble, by assaulting a friend of his girlfriend.

He punched Andrew Russell repeatedly in the face, causing so much injury that the victim thought his jaw had been broken.

Back at Lanark Sheriff Court on Wednesday Gould (22) of 12 Islay Gardens, Carlisle, faced two charges. His plea of not guilty was accepted to a charge that on June 13 in Hope Street and elsewhere in Lanark, on a train and then on land between the station and Unitas Crescent, Carlisle, he tried to incite Laura Brown to breach bail conditions which prevented her from contacting him.

But he accepted that on the land near the station he assaulted and injured Andrew Russell, her sister's boyfriend. The court was told that Gould had approached the group but his attentions were unwanted, and Mr Russell had remonstrated with him. "Without warning, he punched him in the face about five or six times," depute fiscal Gary Dow told the court. Mr Russell was later found to have soft tissue damage to his right eye and cheek as a result.

Sheriff Alastair Brown was aware of some of the background, as he had some weeks earlier seen cases brought against both Gould and Ms Brown, with both subject to bail conditions not to contact each other.

And the new offence took place as Laura Brown was leaving the court; she did not want Gould approaching her because of her bail conditions.

He deferred sentence for background reports.

Groups' chance to win £6000

THREE South Lanarkshire-based community projects have the chance to win awards of £6000 each as part of new Royal Bank of Scotland initiative CommunityForce.

Charities and groups in the area which could benefit include those in Carlisle, Lanark, Forth and Lesmahagow, by applying at www.rbs.com/communityforce before September 4. An online public vote will then decide on the three winners, ensuring the projects which are recognised are those which local people feel will benefit the community most. The winning projects will become part of a local online network giving them greater visibility.

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Another hearty walk

JUST a few short years ago a heart condition left Lanarkian Leith Mulvaney with hardly enough energy to take a slow stroll once around Lanark Loch; this month he strode around it 14 times.

And he wasn't alone as friends and family joined him for the third annual sponsored walk around the loch in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

Three years ago Leith planned to walk the 14 lap equivalent of a half marathon around the Loch, sponsored for the charity by way of a

thank-you for the bypass operation which restored his health.

Before he knew it, pals, relatives and even total strangers joined in and it has quickly become a major event on the Lanark charity fundraising calendar.

On Saturday there was the best turnout yet and he hopes to have topped last year's near-£1000 total once all this year's sponsorship has been totted up; the tombola stall run on the loch shore raised £80 alone.

FAMILY AFFAIR: Leith Mulvaney with wife Jan, sister Joyce, brother-in-law Dougie Jardine and granddaughters Jessica and Olivia plus Pippin the dog during their hearty walk round the loch in aid of the British Heart Foundation

'Allo, 'Allo again!

By Ron Harris
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THE last time two elderly Frenchwomen returning to Lanark next month saw the town it still had four kirks, three cinemas, two railway stations, a thriving racecourse and a Provost and town council.

Having said that, there were no Lanimer celebrations for the then childhood pals Jacqueline Vicart and Marie-Paule Sergeant to enjoy during wartime ... and sweeties were strictly rationed.

It was a very different Royal Burgh they left near the end of World War Two; even their home here for four years, the Smyllum Orphanage, has gone, transformed into luxury flats.

Their trip will rekindle memories of an almost completely forgotten but heartwarming episode in Lanark's wartime history, a story that can now be told thanks to an old photograph stirring the curiosity of an outsider.

That person is 71-year-old Bill Forster, an independent publisher in Hertfordshire whose late father, Lieutenant William Forster, found himself, in 1940, on a Royal Navy destroyer, taking part in the desperate evacuation of allied troops and civilians just ahead of the invading Nazi juggernaut.

That ship, HMS Venomous, was decidedly creaky, but anything that floated was being used to get those in France to the relative safety of Britain and this included a party of 27 French schoolgirl waifs and the nuns caring for them from an orphanage near Boulogne.

The sight this desperately relieved party made was not one you usually saw on the deck of

one of His Majesty's warships and so a member of the crew snapped a couple of pictures. These eventually cropped up over half a century later when Bill published a book about his dad's old ship.

"I was intrigued by these photographs of children and nuns on the deck of a warship the day before Boulogne was captured by the Germans and wanted to find out who they were and why they were aboard HMS Venomous.

"I contacted a reporter on a local paper in Boulogne and he published two articles, asking for further information on the incident."

The result of this appeal was beyond Bill's wildest dreams and started a history trail that led all the way from the wartorn coast of France to Lanark.

Two of the girls – now elderly ladies – in the pictures got in touch namely Jacqueline Vicart and Marie-Paule Sergeant.

"It turns out that the girls and nuns were from an orphanage being run by the same Order which ran the Smyllum Orphanage in Lanark.

"They tell me that they had a very happy time at Lanark and everyone was wonderful to them; they have very fond memories of the place and its people and have decided to make a return visit in September," said Bill.

There is one final, poignant footnote to this tale.

Says Bill: "Actually, one of the French party which arrived in Lanark back in 1940 is still there! It was one of the nuns, who was, in fact, English by birth, who'd gone to serve in the French orphanage and found herself coming to Smyllum and decided to stay on their after the girls and the Sisters returned to France after the war. She spent the rest of her life there and I hear she eventually died and was laid to rest in Lanark."



Orphans of the storm...schoolgirls on the ship leaving Boulogne



Almost last out...heading for Britain as Boulogne fell

Macaroni deal comes to the boil!

THE final go-ahead has been given to save Lanark's historic stone market ring by converting it into a 128-seat restaurant, creating up to 50 new jobs.

As reported in the *Gazette*, the growing Italian-themed family restaurant chain Toni Macaroni plans to plough £2.5m converting the redundant landmark building into its fourth branch, joining those already open in Glasgow, Motherwell and Livingston.

On Tuesday South Lanarkshire Council granted planning permission and Listed Building consent for the conversion, a step which should end a five year-long row over the fate of the hexagon-shaped auction ring on Hyndford Road, left surplus to requirements when the market moved to the new Lanark Agricultural Centre near the Racecourse.



Table for two...in the future

The owners of the site, County Properties, had guaranteed to find a new use for the building before creating its adjoining Braidfute Retail Park but could find no-one suitable to take such a venture on; Lanark's community council has been sniping at the property

company and South Lanarkshire Council ever since over the increasingly delapidated state of the structure.

Now, however, the way is clear for restaurateur Sepp Marini to make what he said was a "four year long" dream come true.

In granting planning permission, the council rejected a trade objection from several existing Lanark businesses, claiming that the town already had over 30 eating outlets and needed another one "like a hole in the head".

Council planners said that objections on the grounds of commercial competition were not valid, while qualms over lack of parking spaces around the building were answered by an agreement allowing the restaurant use at night of the Retail Park car park.

Residents across Hyndford

Road worried about customers' cars lights shining through their windows late at night have been assured that landscaping will shield their houses; noise limitation conditions are to be attached to planning conditions and the area licensing board will monitor any complaints in the future.

As for the old building itself, the council planners said that they were unconcerned that the plan includes building a modern extension which will double the floor size; this, they say, has been sympathetically designed and will not affect sightlines of the building's unique feature, that landmark hexagonal roof, practically on the gateway to the centre of Lanark.

No opening date has been given but that could be some time away, given the amount of work that will be needed.

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