East Dunbartonshire: Thirty Things you Might not Know!

1. Jo Swinson, the Liberal Democrat MP for East Dunbartonshire, is the youngest MP in the House of Commons. Elected in May 2005, at the age of 26, she beat the sitting Labour MP by over 4,000 votes. In March 2006 Ming Campbell appointed her to the post of Lib Dem Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland.
2. East Dunbartonshire is one of 32 councils formed in 1996 and covers part of the former county of Stirlingshire. The principal towns are: Bearsden, Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch, Lennoxtown, Lenzie, Milngavie, Milton of Campsie, Torrance and Twechar.
3. Lenzie was, at one time, pronounced "Lingie" and means "swamp land".
4. Bearsden has nothing to do with bears. The name derives from Old English meaning "boar's valley".
5. Milngavie marks the start of the West Highland Way. It is a popular long distance footpath stretching 95 miles to Fort William. The path uses many ancient roads including drovers' roads, military roads and old coaching roads. About 50,000 people use the path every year. Most walkers travel from south to north – to keep the sun out of their eyes.
6. Some say that Milngavie takes its name from "Gavin's Mill". There is an old mill in the corner of Tesco's carpark – now a Chinese restaurant but the mill wheel still works. Another explanation of the name is that it is derived from Scottish Gaelic and means "windmill".
7. The Antonine Wall crosses East Dunbartonshire and runs for 37 miles across Scotland between the rivers Clyde and the Forth. Built around 140/142CE, during the Romans occupation, it was abandoned and much of it remains almost two thousand years later.
8. The wall is sometimes known as Graham's Dyke. Legend has it that Graeme, chieftain of the clan Graham, drove the Romans out!
9. The Highest part of the Antonine wall is at Bar Hill near Twechar and provides an ideal lookout post. Recent excavations found another, smaller, fort underneath the Roman one and was probably built by native inhabitants before the arrival of the Romans.
10. The spectacular locks at Kirkintilloch are part of the Forth and Clyde canal as it passes through East Dunbartonshire. The canal is 35 miles long from the Clyde to the Forth. Started in 1768 construction of the canal began at the Grangemouth end and was officially opened at a ceremony at Bowling, on the Clyde, in the summer of 1790.
11. The railway station at Lenzie was initially called Kirkintilloch and then changed its name to Campsie Junction and then Lenzie.
12. To encourage development, the railway company offered free season tickets to commuters who built large villas near their stations.
13. In 1869 the "Board of Lunacy" chose Woodilee estate at Lenzie Junction, on the Edinburgh and Glasgow railway, for the building of an asylum. When it opened in October 1875 as the "Woodilee Lunatic Pauper Asylum" it was the most modern in the country housing four hundred "inmates". The facility was greatly enlarged to include a villa for handicapped children and a nurses' home. Woodilee became an NHS hospital in 1948, expanded and modernised. Following a succession of fires and vandalism, Woodilee closed in 2000 after 125 years of service. The main block and towers are category B listed but there are plans to develop the site for housing.
14. Lenzie Golf Club formed in 1889 – the same year the first Kodak camera went on sale, Charlie Chaplin was born and a US patent for a tabulating machine (an early adding machine) was granted. The history of golf goes back much further: the first written

reference being an Act of Parliament in 1457, during the reign of James 2nd, outlawing football and golf as the men should spend their time practising archery.

15. Gartshore Estate near Kirkintilloch once belonged to Willie Whitelaw who served as Deputy Prime Minister in the Thatcher government.
16. Baldernock Parish Church dates from 1795 and has a watch tower to guard against the "resurrection-men". (It was the church used for the funeral of Magnus Magnusson in January 2007).
17. The name "Bishopbriggs" may have its roots in the "Bishop's lands" or "riggs". The Bishop would have been the Bishop of Glasgow and his "riggs" the Scots word for his land. Over time the letter "b" has crept in leading many to assume that the word refers to the Bishop's "bridge".
18. Cadder churchyard was regularly raided by bodysnatchers from Edinburgh after the opening of the Union Canal in 1822. You can still see the metal mort-safes that were hired-out to make their job more difficult.
19. The origin of the name Kirkintilloch relates to the ancient second century fort and not the church. Derived from the Brythonic (Welsh gaelic) "Caer" meaning fort and the Scottish gaelic "tulaich" meaning hill, the settlement was known as "Caerpentuloch". The name "Kirkintulach" appears from the early 13th century.
20. The Temperance Movement was so strong that consumption of alcohol was banned in Kirkintilloch in the 1920's and remained so for fifty years.
21. In 1941 a Junkers 88 bomber crashed on Blairskaith Muir. It had been part of an attacking force on the explosives factory at Ardeer in Ayrshire.
22. The "Auld Wives Lift" thought to be a Druid altar stands at Craigmaddie Muir north of Milngavie.
23. Twenty-two miners lost their lives in Cadder №15 pit as a result of a fire in 1913. The mine belonged to the Carron Company of Falkirk. One man was found alive after 21 hours in the burning pit.
24. Lenzie Academy former pupils include Travis guitarist Andy Dunlop and former Secretary of State Tom Johnston.
25. Black Prince Narrow Boat Holidays offer one-week cruises on the Forth and Clyde Canal.
26. Cadder House is now Cawder Golf Clubhouse. Part of the building was designed by David Hamilton, architect and grandfather of Madeleine Smith, the infamous "arsenic poisoner".
27. The Lenzie to Milngavie Cycle route forms part of the National Cycleways network.
28. Baldernock Parish Church building incorporates an inscribed stone, said to have come from the Antonine Wall and originally dedicated to Jupiter.
29. Lenzie Moss is a raised peat bog containing some rare bog plants. There is also a wide diversity of medicinal plants and herbs. East Dunbartonshire Council has spent £2,000 for wildlife awareness, a new boardwalk path has been installed and currently EDC and Friends of Lenzie Moss are aiming, with the help of Lottery funding, to have Lenzie Moss designated as a Local Nature Reserve.
30. East Dunbartonshire hosts a walking festival in September with several routes graded for difficulty. 2006 was the third festival which included a gentle 2.5km walk around the Lenzie Moss Loop, an 11km walk over hilly sections and forest paths and a more challenging 16km hike along part of the West Highland Way. The next East Dunbartonshire Walking Festival is diaried for the weekend of 8th and 9th September 2007. There will be a choice of ten walks suitable for all ages and abilities. Leaflets will be available soon from Mugdock Country Park.
31. The name "Mugdock" may have come from the gaelic "mag-a-dabhoich" meaning "field or plain of ploughed land". Once the site of an ancient castle and then a country house, Mugdock Country Park offers the public access to over 750 acres of beautiful countryside and woodlands.