

AABS Newsletter- November/December 2014

The Scottish **Poppy** Appeal- by Donna Amstrong

I was very proud to be asked to be the Area Co-ordinator for **Poppy Scotland** in our village as the usual person was elderly and needed to “hang up her collection tins” for some well earned rest after 20 years of doing the job.

I met with the regional co-ordinator who showed me a downward trend in the collection amounts over the past couple of years.

As the only fundraising activity had been static collection boxes in the village shops, he suggested that I think of other ways to increase the contributions, especially in such an iconic year.

I got together with my children and we decided that this would be a bumper year for the **Lochwinnoch Poppy Scotland Appeal**.

As Caitlin had made and sold biscuits at her school last year as an individual fundraiser for **Poppy Scotland** and people had begun asking for the shortbread poppies again, she decided to sell her biscuits at the village post office and Farmers Market shop daily for a full two weeks before Remembrance Sunday (she has moved on to High School this year, so could not sell them at the Primary School). She would add this to the village total.

To date she has made £150 from selling shortbread poppies and Empire biscuits.

Last week her Head Teacher had been notified of this and he called her in to ask her to bake 50 per day to sell at school this week – she has done so and has raised a further £100, she has also had, believe it or not, orders on Facebook and has had to post her biscuits as far as England and Wales making her a further £40.

She is baking approximately 100 biscuits a night and is finishing after midnight every day – exhausting work for a 12 year old, but a real labour of love.

She also rented a stall at a village craft fair last Sunday and baked 100 cupcakes topped with fondant poppies (she found the tutorial for this on You Tube) her aim was to sell 100 cupcakes to mark the 100 years anniversary of the start of WW1. She also sold wristbands, poppies, wooden memorial crosses and shortbread at her stall which was beautifully decorated with **Poppy Scotland Bunting** and balloons. She also used her pocket money to purchase items from the online **Poppy Scotland Store**, got a basket from the charity shop and persuaded our local florist to make up a raffle hamper for her, the raffle will be drawn on November 11th.

Caitlin did not manage to sell all of her cupcakes so put a message on Facebook after the craft fair, reducing the price by 10p and offering to deliver cupcakes anywhere in the village – by 7pm they were all sold out as she ran all over the village in the

pouring rain delivering cupcakes – most people donated much more than the asking price!

Her cupcakes raised £120.

My 15 year old son Gregor decided to do a street collection selling poppies at the village cross every Saturday for the 3 weeks preceding Remembrance Sunday. At the time of writing he still has one more Saturday to go but has sold **200 poppies** with extremely heavy collection cans. The weather has been dismal so he has been using his umbrella to keep his poppies dry rather than himself!

My oldest son, Rowan, 17 is selling wristbands at school over the next couple of days to do his bit to fundraise for the **Poppy Appeal**.

On Tuesday night I was approached by a lady at a social group I attend, she asked if she could have a word with my daughter and myself. She told us that she had just joined an art group and her task was to paint a poppy in oils and then gift the painting to someone that it would have real meaning to. She then had to return to her class and tell them who and why she had gifted her picture to. She said that she would like to give the painting to Caitlin and myself due to our efforts for Poppy Scotland. We were extremely touched and will treasure this gift always.

I am very proud of Team Armstrong and look forward to counting all our contributions at the end of the campaign.

