

# Floral Roundabout



Spring 2026

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### Deadline Dates

February Council	1 <sup>st</sup> February
May Council	29 <sup>th</sup> March
September Council	29 <sup>th</sup> August
November Council	29 <sup>th</sup> October

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## Chairmans Chat – Spring 2026



Hello and welcome to my first foray into writing for the Roundabout.

I do hope you had a great time over the festive season and are now fighting fit for our very busy year ahead. Despite the terrible snow, rain and gales we have had my snowdrops are blooming so

spring definitely is on the way, it just seems a long way off with all the drier weather.

This is a very important time for NAFAS, and I have twice been down to Leamington Spa, just south of Birmingham, for National Advisory Council meetings to discuss the way forward for NAFAS, and the NAFAS Board's plans to bring NAFAS into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A further meeting is planned for the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February.

This reorganisation will affect every member of NAFAS and therefore also ourselves in SAFAS. Files to help explain the reasoning and what is being suggested will be on the SAFAS website soon.

The new NAFAS CEO, Richard Abraham, is doing a tour of all the NAFAS Areas to help discuss what is happening and gather opinions from all twenty areas. He will be attending the SAFAS Council Meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

All Club Chairpersons have already been sent these files and should be discussing them with their members.

We do need your feedback and ideas, and we will keep you up to date.

So, on to our very full calendar and .....

Our first event this year will be our attendance at the Craft Fair in the SECC in Glasgow. This runs for 3 days Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> of March.

We are lucky enough to have a stand, and we use this as a way of contacting people interested in crafting, and to try and encourage them come to a flower club and learn the craft of flower arranging. We often do get new members from this, and we find having a hands-on workshop entices the prospective members to stop at our stand for a chat. If you are attending the show, please do come and say hello.

Our next big event is the SAFAS 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Flower Festival entitled Nostalgia, being held in Dunfermline abbey. The dates are Friday 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> of May

This is being led by our immediate past chairman Linda Soutar, and she tells me we have 30 clubs, and some individual members interested in making exhibits. As you all know we have many very talented flower arrangers in SAFAS so it will be well worth visiting Dunfermline. Beside the wonderful exhibits, there will be tea and cakes available in the small hall just along the road from the Abbey. Again, we look forward to seeing as many members as possible. Bring your friends and family and have a great day out. This event is free to attend but we would appreciate a donation to help cover the costs.

Our next event is our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Lunch in the Inchyra Grange Hotel at Polmont near Falkirk. FK2 0YB.

We will have a delicious two course lunch and then a floral demonstration by the very talented National Demonstrator - Jo Purdy from Scarborough. Her demonstration is titled" Mamma Mia -Tales From a Greek Island" and features music from the Abba Mama Mia Musical - apparently Jo has had ladies dancing round the tables at a previous demonstration so it's sure to be great fun.

Our final big event of the year is our biennial Competitive Show being held again at the Corn Exchange in Cupar. Staging is on the afternoon of Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> and the morning of Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> of October with judging on the afternoon of the 8<sup>th</sup> and the show will be open to the public on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October. Cupar is very easy to get to with good rail connections so another great day out. We will have the exhibits in the upper hall and teas and cakes and stalls in the lower hall. This is a great way of having a catch up with friends from other clubs.

Schedules are in the process of being printed and will be available at our Council meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

We are fortunate to have secured two National Judges, our own Lillas Hoskins and Sheila Rogers from Yorkshire, to do our judging.

Can I also remind you of the NAFS National President James Burnside's "Presidents Midweek Ceilidh" in Armagh in Northern Ireland. Dates for this event are

Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> of August and are sure to be great fun and along similar lines as the Highland Fling that our own Liliias Hoskins organised in Glasgow a couple of years back. There are not many places left.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a happy return to your club meetings and Keep Safe.

Yours in friendship and flowers

Shelagh

#### Editor's Message



Welcome to the first digital edition of the Floral Roundabout. Like Shelagh I am a bit fed up of all the rain and snow. It has also been extremely cold. I passed a small green area today which is absolutely covered in crocus. It is so uplifting to see flowers coming into bloom and trees starting to come out of their winter hibernation. You will see a Chinese theme through this magazine. This is to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

Yours in fun, friendship and flowers.



*Scottish Association of  
Flower Arrangement Societies*

**PLATINUM ANNIVERSARY LUNCH  
& DEMONSTRATION**

**MacDonald's Inchyra Hotel & Spa  
Grange Road, Polmont, Falkirk FK2 0YB  
Sunday 14 June 2026 at 1pm**

**Jo Purdy, Scarborough  
National Demonstrator**

**'Mama Mia – Tales from a Greek Island'**

**Tickets £48 available now, £20 deposit  
Don't wait – you'll be too late!**

**For further details contact  
Shelagh Melvin**

**Email: [shelaghmelvin.safas@outlook.com](mailto:shelaghmelvin.safas@outlook.com)  
Tel 07871 821294**

## **Auchincruive Floral Art Club .....**

### **Busy in the Community**

Normally the club would hold an Open Night in November, and all proceeds would go to charity. However, this year the emphasis has been on the Community, and we have been busy over the Christmas period sharing our friendship and love of flowers.

We were delighted to accept an invitation to provide a workshop at the Lochside Community Centre, Ayr for members of the Ayr North Exclusively Women's Group. Three Auchincruive Floral Art Club members went out laden with the materials donated by the club and enjoyed a wonderful 3 hours with the group. A standard mossed wreath and table arrangement were produced by those attending. A great time was had by all ..... we have even been invited to come back at Easter!







Every year our club members donate a present for an adult who might otherwise not receive much at Christmas time. For many years Auchincruive Floral Art club members have dressed parcels and given them to the local Salvation Army Centre, Ayr. Although numbers in the club have been decreasing, the generosity of members has not. Linda from our committee met up with Janet Gilmour, Corps Administrator recently and handed over the presents.



To raise funds for the Biggart Hospital Volunteers charity at the hospital in Prestwick, members have produced table arrangements/wreaths for patients, visitors and staff to buy. The fresh foliage, flowers, mechanics, picks, candles etc all supplied by club members free of charge. The coffee shop has been adorned with Christmas themed displays and people have donated generously to the charity in exchange for a floral arrangement.

The floral arrangements are reminding people of the season of goodwill, spreading warmth, kindness and friendship. Small arrangements on the coffee tables and larger items on the stands. Bright and colourful!





*PERTH FLORAL ART CLUB – ST MATTHEWS CHURCH,  
MONDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026*

Join us for an evening of floral fabulousness as one of Scotland's most exciting farmer-to-florist talents, **James Gemmell** of Ayrshire, showcases his award-winning flower demonstration live on stage. Whether you're a seasoned floral enthusiast or completely new to the world of floral art, this inspiring event offers something for everyone.

The evening will be beautifully enhanced by live piano performances from the talented **Michael Ellacott**, hailing from Perthshire—creating a truly memorable fusion of nature, creativity, and music. Don't miss it!

**Perth Floral Art Club** is an established and welcoming organisation whose members, of all ages, share a passion for floral art. The Club offers a varied programme of flower demonstrations, workshops, outings, and competitions throughout the year.

We are delighted to present this special evening of music and flowers, showcasing a refined and inspiring blend of floral artistry and live piano performance, complementing the award-winning work of James Gemmell.



Further details, including information on this event and our exciting **2026 programme**, can be found on the **Perth Floral Art Club website**.

The poster features a central illustration of a blue electricity pylon with three large, stylized flowers (pink, orange, and yellow) growing from its top. A colorful soundwave graphic runs horizontally across the middle of the poster, behind the title. The background is white with decorative floral elements in the corners.

## PERTH FLORAL ART CLUB

### "AMPLIFYING BLOOMS"

Enjoy a floral-inspired evening featuring award-winning Ayrshire farmer-florist James Gemmell, showcasing his floral art techniques live, alongside beautiful piano music by Perthshire's Michael Ellacott - perfect for everyone with a love of flowers and music

**ST MATTHEWS CHURCH  
PERTH MONDAY 18TH  
MAY 2026**

 [Link to Perth  
Floral Art Club  
perthfloralartclub.co.uk](https://perthfloralartclub.co.uk)

**Doors Open 7.00pm  
Start 7.30pm**

Tickets £15.00 available  
from [perthfestival.co.uk](https://perthfestival.co.uk)

 **Scottish & Southern  
Electricity Networks**

**SAFAS**  
**EDUCATION WORKSHOP**

**THURSDAY 30TH APRIL 2026**

**10.00AM – 3.30PM**

**ST ANNE'S CHURCH HALL,  
EDINBURGH, EH12 6JR**

**TUTOR**

**VANESSA WELLOCK**

**Cost £40.00**

**Tickets from: [irene m young@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:irene_m_young@yahoo.co.uk) or Tel: 01968 674064**

**Coffee will be provided from 9.45am Bring a Packed Lunch**

## **Stonehaven & District Floral Art Club**

**At our November meeting we had a hands-on workshop led by Annie Adams.**

**Annie showed us how to make a beautiful Christmas decoration using a posey pad. The members thoroughly enjoyed this evening.**

**One of our members, Jo Goldsworthy, provided ribbon and other Christmas novelties for people to use. This is part of Jo's ongoing mission to clear out the loft of her house before starting on the rest. Other member provided foliage and members brought along their own special decorations to use.**









*Gong Hei Fat Choy!*

## 2026 Chinese New Year Quiz & Trivia

1. What animal represents 2026?
2. When is Chinese New Year in 2026?
3. What is the main colour used for decorations?
4. What do children receive in red envelopes?
5. What is another name for the festival?
6. How long does the celebration last?
7. What do you call the traditional dinner on New Year's Eve?
8. What are used to scare away bad spirits?
9. Which animal is NOT in the 12-year cycle?
10. What food symbolizes wealth?



Xīnnián hǎo



**Main Ingredients**





SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION OF  
FLOWER ARRANGEMENT SOCIETIES

*Presents*

*A FLOWER FESTIVAL*

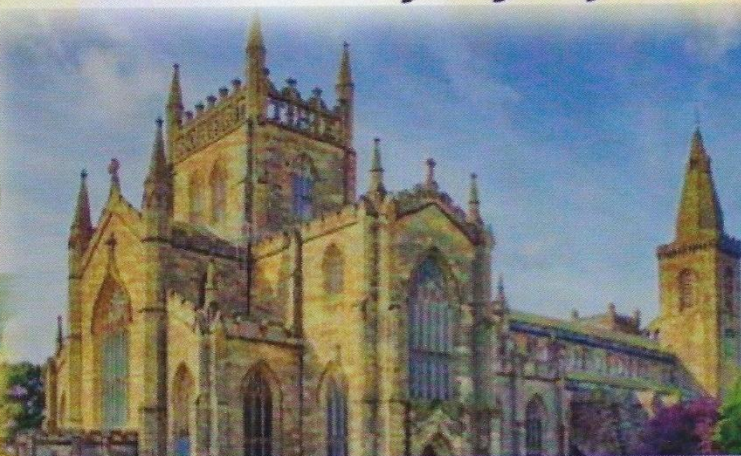
*'NOSTALGIA'*

*in*

*DUNFERMLINE ABBEY & NAVE*

*\*8th & 9th MAY 2026\**

*A Celebration of 70yrs of SAFAS*



**FREE ENTRY ~ DONATIONS WELCOME**

**REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE**

**TOMBOLA**

## **Sweet & Sour Chicken**

500ml soda water, chilled

140g self raising flour

25g cornflour

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts

Spring Onions finely shredded to serve

### **For the Sauce**

1 Red pepper, seeded and chopped into chunks

3 red chillies, 1 cut into chunks, 2 halved and deseeded (lower the number of chillies if you don't like too spicy)

425g Pineapple chunks, drained and juice reserved

4 Star Anise

50g Tamarind Paste

100g Caster Sugar

100ml Rice Wine Vinegar or Chinese Vinegar

For the sauce, put the red pepper, chunks of chilli and pineapple juice in a pan and bring to the boil. Cover and cook for 10 mins, then purée in a food processor.

Return to the pan with the pineapple chunks, chilli halves, star anise, tamarind, sugar and vinegar. Gently simmer for 20-30 mins until reduced and sticky. Keep warm or reheat to serve.

Fill a large pan 1cm deep with oil and heat until shimmering. Whisk the soda water and 100ml cold water into the self-raising flour with a little salt. Stir the batter well.

Tip the cornflour onto a plate, line a tray with kitchen paper and turn on the oven to low. Dust the chicken with cornflour, then dip into the batter.

One at a time, lower into the hot oil (about 5-6 every batch). Turn up the heat to keep the chicken frying, if needed, and cook for 5-6 mins, turning once.

When cooked, drain on the tray, and keep warm in the oven. Repeat with the remaining chicken.

Stack onto a plate with the warm sauce on the side and scatter with shredded spring onions.

To serve as a main dish, add rice. For any vegetarians, thinly slice some sweet potatoes, then batter and fry these before you cook the chicken.

You can also cheat with the sauce. You can mix the same amounts of Tomato Ketchup and Brown Sauce together. You can then add your cooked chicken or any vegetables to this.

I am assured by my Chinese daughter in law that this is what the takeaways do. I have tried it and it certainly tastes like any takeaway I've had.

## Dandelions by Gerda Stevenson

You clamour at my retina, a cascade  
of cartwheels, demanding paint  
from my palette, five noisy suns  
bursting from earth, like children let out  
when the school bell rings;  
your lion-teeth leaves scythe green rhythm  
all around each brazen face, a dance so bold  
even the old among you, that single downy head,  
seems eager to play a part – its hair might shake  
loose any moment, and poised buds could flare  
into flower before I know it. I swear I can smell  
the fierce tang of bitter milk coursing through  
your stalks.

My pen and brush dash  
across paper, splash,  
sweep  
and thrust, to catch your  
untamed life – anything  
but still.



## Quiz Answers

1. The Horse (specifically the Fire Horse)
2. February 17, 2026.
3. Red (for luck and driving away evil).
4. Lucky money (Angpao).
5. The Spring Festival.
6. 15 days, ending with the Lantern Festival.
7. Reunion Dinner.
8. Firecrackers and fireworks
9. A cat (legend says the rat tricked the cat).
10. Dumplings or noodles.



## What's On

### 2026

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 18 Feb    | SAFAS Council Meeting   |
| 5-7 Mar   | Creative Craft Fair, SECC   |
| 18 Mar    | SAFAS Executive Meeting   |
| 15 Apr    | SAFAS Council Meeting   |
| 30 Apr    | SAFAS Education Workshop. Tutor: Vanessa Wellock.<br>£40. St Anne's Church Hall, Edinburgh 1000-1530        |
| 8-9 May   | Nostalgia, Flower Festival, Dunfermline Abbey, SAFAS<br>70 Year. Details from Linda Soutar, 01383730462     |
| 18 May    | Perth Floral Art Club, St Matthew's Church 7pm.   |
| 20 May    | SAFAS Executive Meeting   |
| 29-30 May | Scone Palace Garden Fair  |
| 14 Jun    | Platinum Anniversary Lunch, Inchyra Grange, Polmont.<br>Tickets available from Shelagh Melvin. (See Advert) |
| 18-20 Aug | President's Midweek Ceilidh, Armagh, Northern Ireland   |
| 9-10 Oct  | SAFAS Area Flower Show, Corn Exchange, Cupar  |