

STRATHARD NEWS

THE VOICE OF YOUR COMMUNITY

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TV Chef to open Aberfoyle Mushroom Fest

Restaurateur and TV chef, Antonio Carluccio, star of the highly-acclaimed BBC2 series on Cooking in Italy is to open the 3rd Aberfoyle Mushroom Festival and launch his new book on picking and cooking with mushrooms, 'The Quiet Hunt', at the Scottish Wool Centre, Aberfoyle on Wednesday, 22 October at 1230 hrs. Members of the public are invited to join Signor Carluccio for a tête-à-tête on cooking, over a glass of red wine and a fungi risotto. The Festival, which is sponsored by local company Stirling Mushrooms from Callander, will be featuring a whole range of gastronomic events, including cookery demonstrations by Italian master chef Costanzo, proprietor of Ristorante



Caprese in Buchanan Street, Glasgow on the Saturday and Sunday in the Trossachs Discovery Centre in the village. Fungus forays are also a feature on these two days, organised by Forest Enterprise from the David Marshall Lodge and from the village by the National Park Rangers Service.

Every year the Festival features Regional or National food. Last year it was the Indian Sub-Continent, this year it is Ireland in recognition of Aberfoyle's close links with two Irish rural communities in Co Mayo and Co Armagh.

Highlights of the 5 day programme:

Wed 22nd October 1230 hrs

- Festival Opening-Scottish Wool Centre

Thurs 23rd October 1930 hrs

- Victorian Theatre - Scottish Wool Centre

Friday. 24th October 1930 hrs

- Fiddlers Rally & Candlelit Waterfall Walk - David Marshall Lodge
- Dinner Dance featuring Ireland's Trevor Dixon Sound - Inchrie Castle Hotel.

- Shenanigans Irish Night - Clachan

Sat 25th October, 1930 hrs

- Mushrooms and Shamrocks, A Feast of Irish Food, Drink and Music featuring Irish Dancers 'Celtic Cousins', The Trevor Dixon Sound, & Mad Murphy - Forth Inn.
- Shenanigans Irish Night - Clachan

Sun 26th October, 1830 hrs

- Songs of Praise with the New Scotland Singers - Gartmore House
- The Fruits of Erin - Altskeith Hotel
- **2200 hrs Closing Ceilidh** Waterfall Bar, Altskeith Hotel

Events during the day over the weekend include a Pike Fishing Competition on Loch Ard, a Duck Derby, two Family Dog Shows, a Charity Golf Match, a wood-turning display, an Afro-Latina Charity barbecue, a picture gallery of Old Aberfoyle, and Strathard Country Pursuits exhibition.



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Proposed footbridge at Manse Road Community Consultation

A public meeting to discuss the proposals for the siting of a footbridge over the Forth will be held in Aberfoyle Memorial Hall on Tuesday 21st October at 7.30pm. Plans of the suggested sites will be available for public viewing in the Trossachs Discovery Centre during the week preceding this meeting, from 14th to 21st October, where comments can be submitted. Following the public meeting and taking into account views expressed at that time and views expressed during the exhibition, plans for the design of the bridge will be submitted to the community for comment.

Fly & Moss.....Top Dogs!

Local Shepherd Peter Martin has put Inversnaid on the map by winning 'The Scottish National Sheepdog Trials' at Annan in Dumfries & Galloway in July 2003 with 'Fly (8yrs) & Moss (3yrs)'. This was for 'The Brace' where 2 dogs work in conjunction to herd and eventually pen 2 separate sets of sheep. (think of 1 man and his dog) Then in September this enabled both Shepherd & Dogs to go forward and represent Scotland in 'The International Sheepdog Trials' held at Castle Kennedy near Stranraer between the 11th & 13th of September 2003 - where they achieved a very respectable 4th position.

After a tremendous show at 'The Scottish Nationals' and 'The Internationals', Moss will in future be working with his new American Lady Owner and will hopefully achieve the same success with her as he did with Peter.



50 Years of Forestry!

The Trossachs Queen Elizabeth Forest Park celebrated its 50th anniversary this August with a range of events for visitors spread over the whole month. This culminated in a visit from the Scottish Forestry Minister, Allan Wilson to the David Marshall Lodge Visitor Centre.

He stated that the Queen Elizabeth Forest had an important role to play forming, as it does, a large part of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. He said that well managed, attractive woods and forests can contribute much to the visitors' experience of Scotland and can improve the prosperity and well-being of the local people.

He was pleased to see how much had been achieved, ranging from the creation of Scots pine woodland and riverside native woods to the construction and upgrading of footpaths, car parks, toilets and picnic sites.

During his visit Mr Wilson unveiled a cast-iron sculpture of two native roe deer outside the Visitor Centre by Artist John Hopkins. The Cowal and Trossachs Forest District Manager, Hugh Clayden, said that the sculpture was intended to reflect, in visitors' minds, that the forest is not solely pretty scenery but is also a home to the many diverse forms of wild life of the region.

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EDITORIAL

This is one editorial that I wasn't looking forward to writing. Our editor, Jimmy Campbell, has sadly resigned from his post at the Strathard News.

As most of our readers will be aware, Jimmy was born and bred here at the Kirkton in Aberfoyle. His knowledge of local characters and events both past and present made him the right person to head up the Strathard News Team.

The Strathard News, which was once a thriving paper, sadly faltered and ceased publication a few years ago. In June 2002 when the Strathard News was re-launched Jimmy was appointed as its new editor. Since then the paper hasn't looked back and has gone from strength to strength.

So, on behalf of the team at the Strathard News, we would like to thank Jimmy for all his effort and hard work put in over the past year.

I would also like to thank all the rest of the team at the paper for all their effort and hard work as well, for keeping the Strathard News running smoothly over the past year.

John Clow
Vice Editor/Chairman

Strathard Delegates at Irish Festival

The Kinlochard Ceilidh Band and Scottish Highland Games champions entertained crowds, estimated at 30,000 people, when Depute Provost of Stirling Margaret Brisley and local Community Futures Chairman John Epps attended the "Country Comes to Town" festival in Portadown, County Armagh. Future tourism tie-ups between Strathard and two Irish communities were high on the agenda. The dance and music of Scotland and Ireland compared very favourably when Fergus Wood's famous Ceilidh band, featuring local fiddle virtuoso Eilidh Campbell, played countless Jigs, Reels, and Marches at an Irish Ceili. The Scottish team tied with their Irish hosts at the social arts of singing and Guinness drinking, though not necessarily in that order!



The Kinlochard Ceilidh Band performing at a concert in Portadown Town Hall.



Guest of Honour Dame Mary Peters DBE on the left, Depute Provost Margaret Brisley centre and our host Craigavon Mayor Ignatious Fox on the right, in the company of local ladies in traditional costume

The centre offers a multitude of activities to groups and individuals. All activities are under the supervision of qualified staff, and all necessary equipment can be provided for a safe and enjoyable day out.



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Strathard Country Pursuits Art & Craft Exhibition

Sat. 25th Oct. 12noon - 5 pm

Sun. 26th Oct. 11 am - 4 pm

In the Memorial Hall, Aberfoyle

- Local Arts & Crafts
- Demonstrations
- Children's Competition
- Tombola

Entry £1 including refreshments
Exhibitors should bring their work to the hall between 4pm and 9pm on Friday 24th Oct
Exhibits should be labelled appropriately



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Aberfoyle Parish Church

Church Services: Unlike other organisations Sunday worship has not had a summer recess. We have continued to meet each Sunday at 11.15 am, having enjoyed the company of many visitors. For those of you who have taken a summer recess it will be great to see you back in the congregation filling the pews vacated by the holidaymakers. The Church needs you – we cannot rely on tourists to fill our pews. We understand that there are many reasons for people not attending but without your presence we may have a permanent recess!

Activities:

Saturday 4th October: Sponsored walk in aid of the Boy's Brigade and the Brownies. Balleich to Clashmore and return. Meet at Balleich at 11 am, wear suitable footwear and clothing, bring a packed lunch.

Sunday 9th November: Remembrance Day Service. Meet at War Memorial at 10 45 am.

Boy's Brigade:

Anchor boys meet every Friday at 6.30 pm. Junior Section Boy's Brigade follows on at 7.45 pm. Contact Rev Danny Gibb on 01877 382 391 for further information.

Brownies:

Meet from 6 pm to 7.45 pm every Wednesday in Church House. All girls aged 7yrs – 10 yrs are welcome to join us. Contact Jackie Gerlach on 01877 339 942 or Tricia Roberts on 01877 382 705 for further information.

The Guild:

Our theme for the session – 'Dare to Care with Courage'

Monday 27th October:

Guest Afternoon - Mr Tom Findlay – 'Mercy Ships'

Monday 17th November:

Project Conveynor – Miss Cynthia Johnston

All meetings take place at 2 pm in Church House. Do join us, you will be made very welcome.

Sunday Club:

We would welcome new faces at the Sunday Club. So if you are aged between 3 yrs and 11 yrs please come along on a Sunday morning at 11.15 am, and bring Mum and Dad with you. They can always wait for you in Church. Church Service and Sunday School meet at 11.15am every Sunday morning. You are more than welcome to join us.

Reverend Danny Gibb



The Ranger's Corner

As the dark nights edge ever closer, this can only mean one thing: the season of the witch is upon us!

On All Hallows Eve, The David Marshall Lodge opens its doors to the creatures of the night. As in previous years, entry is very strict. Only those who crave human blood or regularly haunt graveyards are invited. Anyone attempting to enter the premises wearing a cross or a garlic necklace will be subject to ritual sacrifice and put in the soup.

We dare you not to be there as "The Old Man of the Forest" recites his ghostly tales by campfire. All you spooks, ghouls and vampires had better bring an appetite with you. Can you afford to miss out on Liz McGregor's legendary batburgers and crunchy frog toasties?

Zombies, werewolves, urisks and trolls

And other assorted lost dead souls,

Ghost your way into a feast of fright

On this, the very darkest night.

Nocturnal pleasures and prizes galore

Is a basic idea of what's in store.

So come out of your holes and out of your cages;

This Hallowe'en party is open to all ages!

N.B. Extra coffins will be laid on for those wishing to avoid the sunrise.

Cowal & Trossachs Forest District



The Trossachs Trek

Despite the abysmal weather some 50 plus dedicated folks turned up to take part in the Trossachs Trek on Sunday 14th September. The 15 mile circular walk was organised by the Anthony Nolan Trust to raise vital funds for leukaemia patients. Amongst the intrepid walkers was Natashya Hanch and Robbie (*woof woof*) from Inversnaid. Natashya thoroughly enjoyed the walk, despite the wet weather, and would like to thank all those who helped her raise £160 for the fund. A definite date in the diary for next year.

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Community Council Report

For the September meeting we returned to the Outdoor Centre at Inversnaid, now known as the Bunkhouse, and had a chance to admire all the changes made since Scott and Marion took over. As ever planning issues was the main topic of conversation. We were very pleased to welcome Andrew Grant from Scottish Water to answer our queries regarding an application for a replacement waste water treatment plant at Inversnaid Hotel. The current facility is not coping and SEPA have reported increasing effluent levels in Loch Lomond. Councillors expressed grave concerns about more public money being spent on the new plant when the existing one is not very old. We hoped that an investigation into the reasons for its failure would prevent a recurrence of the problem. However the present situation cannot be allowed to continue for environmental reasons and the application was approved.

At an earlier meeting the application for quad-biking at Ledard had received approval, but only providing noise and environmental effects were monitored and noise levels remained as measured at the time of the application. I have since received several comments raising questions as to the wisdom of introducing motorised sport in such an area, and, after receiving a couple of letters on the subject, the planning department postponed their decision

until the planning committee had had time to consider these. I have since heard that the application has been given approval for one year only, during which time the impact can be assessed. I understand that neither of the letters received was from the correspondent to the Stirling Observer who wrote on the subject, using a name and address neither of which will be found on the electoral register.

A lot of time is spent at our meetings discussing, not just the non-existent road repairs, but also requests for better signage, footpath repairs, hedge-cutting, etc. Other road matters were raised at the public meeting about the changes to the car park and Main St. pavements. To clear all these questions up it was decided that we should invite Colin McNicol of the Roads Dept to attend our next meeting. He is not available in October, but will be happy to come to the Kinlochard meeting in November, on the 6th. I look forward to a good turnout to put forward all your favourite road rages!

A reminder now to those of more senior years - the annual Christmas Dinner for our senior citizens in Strathard is already being planned. We think that we have a comprehensive list of everyone entitled to an invitation, but a lot of people have had birthdays, or have moved here since last year, and we don't want anyone to miss out on a

really great night out! So if any ladies over 60 or gentlemen over 65 would like to make sure that they are on our list, please check with me at the Post Office. Aberfoyle Traders present their annual Mushroom Festival from 22nd to 26th October and the Community Council like to show their support by making a contribution to the events planned. This year, on Sat 25th and Sun. 26th, we would like to present an exhibition of photographs of Strathard from earlier times, hopefully using both Aberfoyle and Kinlochard Primary Schools for the purpose. There is a wealth of local history, as the Lochard History Group has already shown us, and anyone who would be interested in helping or contributing will be welcomed with open arms! Please let me know if you can help in any way. Perhaps you have memories you could share. It might be possible to record these during the exhibition. Come along and let the photos jog your memory!

And a final reminder - applications to stand for the Community Council elections must be submitted to Stirling Council by October 22nd. Kinlochard in particular needs representatives. Support your community by joining us. There's always plenty going on and you'll get a great cup of tea!

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Community Pays Tribute to Headteacher

A large company of the community met together on Saturday 20th September in Kinlochard Village Hall to mark the retrial of Mrs Margaret Neufeld from Inversnaid Primary School. She had been Headteacher there for over 21 years and former and present pupils, together with parents, friends and colleagues had gathered to wish her their congratulations on her successful teaching career.

Mrs Viv Dougall, former head teacher of Kinlochard Primary School welcomed the company and recalled how she and Mrs Neufeld had worked together on so many happy projects with their schools and what a great support Mrs Neufeld had been throughout these years.

Mrs Isobel McGuire as a visiting teacher to Inversnaid over the years, paid tribute to the excellent teaching that went on in the one-teacher school, so remote and yet providing such comprehensive and up to date education.

Dr Ann Lindsay spoke of Mrs Neufeld's extensive contribution to the interest of the whole Strathard community, and especially Inversnaid and of her personal integrity in all that she did.

Mrs Neufeld was presented with a framed photograph of the Arrochar Alps and a cheque from her colleagues and friends as well as other gifts.

Mr Greg Dougall provided a musical programme and a memorable evening was had by all.



Loch Lomond
& The Trossachs
National Park

National Park News

Pàirc Nàiseanta Loch Laomainn is nan Tròisichean

The September meeting of the National Park Authority took place in the Kirk Hall, Callander and I took the opportunity to again highlight "The Litter Problem". I am happy to say that the Park's Litter Squads will be operating for some time after the season ends. There had been some concern that there had been a lack of liaison with Stirling Council to co-ordinate the dates and times of collection with the potential for the corporation bus syndrome to materialise. I am assured that there are ongoing discussions with Stirling Council to avoid double running. Furthermore, where there are particular problems with litter as often happens on holiday weekends please phone the National Park HQ at Balloch (Tel. 01389 722600) and every effort will be made to arrange an emergency cleanup. Clearly the intent is to keep the Park tidy and with your help I will watch to ensure that that intention is fulfilled.

As you may be aware the National Park Authority is surveying the provision of transport throughout the Park and to this end we have set up discussions with operators both inside and outwith the Park. Various schemes are being examined in the hope that we can introduce not only a co-ordinated system but also ensure that the best practices of green transport are operated. The exercise is looking at not only the movement of people but such dreaded subjects as timber haulage etc. Some transport assets have been transferred from the Councils to The Park Authority. Of interest to Strathard is the pier at Inversnaid which is now a Park asset.

A major means of moving people within the Park is the West Highland Way. Of its 155 kms almost half, 73 kms, are in the Park with the next biggest slice in Highland. At present the management and maintenance of the route is

undertaken by a group of interested parties and the Councils through whose areas the route meanders. It has been suggested that there is the need to appoint a manager to oversee all aspects of the route and the Park Authority is in agreement. So if you fancy the job, watch out for the advertisement in the national press.

On 22nd September the Planning Committee met at Lochgoilhead and among the matters arising was the application for a quad bike track at Ledard Farm, Kinlochard. Of concern here was the potential for environmental damage and noise pollution, particularly the effect on the neighbours. After much discussion it was decided that permission be given for a trial period of one year. A number of conditions were imposed including restricting the hours of operation, the number and types of bikes to be used. Park officers will regularly monitor the operation and, of course, will respond to any complaints.

The Community Futures Area Network Meeting will be held in the Memorial Hall, Aberfoyle on 7th October at 7pm. A crèche will be provided. If you have been involved in any of the previous area meetings you will have had a personal invitation. However, anyone is welcome so please do try to come along.

If you have any points to raise on The National Park I can be contacted as follows:

by Owen McKee

Post - Taigh Na Bhuth, Lochearnhead, FK19 8PR

Phone: 01567 830214

email : owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk

Road Block at Inversnaid

A fallen tree caused chaos on the Inversnaid Road on Saturday 20th September. The tree creaked and came crashing down across the road between the Primary School and the Bunkhouse, narrowly missing a photographer from the Photography Centre. Police, Local Council and Hydro-electric Workers were called to the scene. Coach parties heading for the Inversnaid Hotel had to dismount the buses and be ferried by cars to the hotel. Telephone lines were brought down and homes and businesses were without telephone coverage for two days. The road was blocked for several hours while local volunteers worked hard to clear the way.

Aberfoyle Youth Club Memorial Hall Fridays 7.30 - 9.00pm

We are keen to continue the above group which enables young people from P6 upwards to meet their friends in a relaxed atmosphere. However, in order to do this we need to ensure there are:

1. *Enough children in attendance to cover hall costs (previous cost was 50p per child per night)*
2. *Sufficient adults to provide supervisory cover to ensure the safety of the children.*

We would therefore like to invite all interested adults and children to the Memorial Hall on **Friday 3rd October at 7.30pm** for a social evening with a view to reopening the club at the start of November. Hope to see you then.

Janet Stewart & Carolann Macadam

P.S. If you are interested in the Group, but unable to attend that evening, please telephone Janet on 01877 382736

Forest Theatre Company Excels!

Saturday 20th September saw the cream of local acting and singing talent in the area come forth for the Songs for The Show evening. This was held as a fundraising event by the Forest Theatre Company for next year's musical, *Oliver*. The evening raised a bit more than £1,100.

Suave compere Alan Williamson led us through the evening, introducing most songs on the programme. The show kicked off with two couples singing *There's no business like Show Business*. They were soon joined by a host of other singers from the company who brought the introductory song to a resounding fortissimo ending. This set the scene for an evening of high-quality performance, ranging from rambunctious cavorting songs to long, emotional melodies.

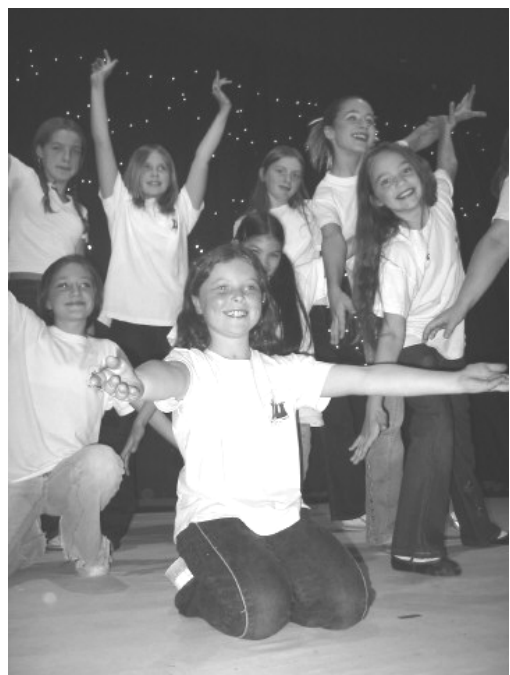
Anna Harrison and James Cowderoy pulled off a slick performance of "Anything you can do" (I can do better) from *Annie Get Your Gun*. More than well acquainted with the pair of them, I can say it was an apposite piece. Vicky Glasse-Davies gave a fine rendering of *Wouldn't it be Lovely* from *My Fair Lady*, followed by a strong performance of *My Favourite Things* by Lynn Sunderland. The lads (Derek Morrison, Kevin Friel and Peter Orr) came on with no introduction to romp through *There's Nothing Like a Dame*, with one of the fellows taking occasional peeks in his sailor boy hat to check the lyrics.



Memory, sung by Susan McCamley and *Maybe* from the last year's musical *Annie* were two further excellent solos, the latter by Samantha Williamson with her commanding stage presence. Cara Wilson gave a beautiful rendering of *Can't help Loving That Man*. Yours truly spent much of the time staring at her dress. Er, seen it before, I had. Of course, it belonged to that *Anything You Can Do* lady. (What a man, eh?)

A large cast next burst on to the show with a lively and punchy rendering of *Summer Loving* from *Grease*, that milestone musical from the seventies. It was refreshing to see all those 40 - somethings jumping about like college kids, showing that there must be something invigorating in the air here. Well done! We want another run of this one next year.

The show ended with a couple of preview songs from next year's musical *Oliver* and there'll be great expectations (ho ho) for a superb show next year as well.



Many thanks from all to Jacquie Speirs and her fellow musicians for their professional accompaniment on violin, cello, bass, piano, drums and guitar. Long live the Forest Theatre Company!

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LETS is a way of exchanging goods and services without cash. Gartmore and Strathard Community Futures groups are currently investigating how to set up a local scheme. If you would like to get involved please contact John Epps in Aberfoyle, tel: 01877 382276 or Judith Gardner in Gartmore, tel: 01877 382642. We would particularly like to here from anyone in Kinlochard or Inversnaid who would like to join our steering group.

Don't worry if you don't know much (or anything) about LETS, neither did we but we are aiming to find out a whole lot more. Everyone has something to offer, even if you haven't discovered what it is yet! Why not join in developing this idea in your community.

Nigel Brooks
Community Agent

(on behalf of the embryonic Strathard/ Gartmore LETS group)

Aberfoyle Village Enhancement Scheme Update

Thanks to the many people who took the trouble to inspect the proposals for the scheme and to pass on their comments. These were discussed at the public meeting on 26th August and as a result some changes are being made to the plans.

These are:- more picnic benches will be provided: more bicycle parking will be provided: there will be improved pedestrian links across the car park: the pavement may be extended along in front of the Amusements. The proposal to provide a bus bay outside the TIC and therefore to narrow the carriageway for other vehicles, together with the removal of the roundabout, is being reviewed. There are opposing views in the community on the benefits of this and also some concerns about the value for money of this element of the scheme. The final decision will take account of the concerns expressed.

If you would like to get involved but don't want to join a specific Community Futures Action Group please let us know. Occasional help is needed to distribute flyers, posters and with other admin type tasks. The commitment is on an occasional ad hoc basis and is not burdensome. The Community Futures programme depends on its success on keeping people informed and involved in the process. If you would like to help please contact Nigel Brooks, Community Agent on 01877 382093 or drop a note to Ros in the Post Office.

Stirling Council Public Notice

Notice of Community Council Elections October/November 2003-09-28

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that elections to the undernoted Community Councils will be held in October/November 2003 in accordance with Stirling Council's Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

Public Notices of Election for each of the Community Councils will be posted in each Community Council area.

Anyone wishing to be a candidate at this election should submit a duly completed nomination paper to the Returning Officer at the undernoted address. To qualify, candidates must be over 18yrs of age and resident within the Community Council/Ward area for which they wish to stand. **All candidates must also be on the current Electoral Register for the Community Council/Ward area in which they wish to stand.** Anyone wishing to confirm which Community Council or Ward they are eligible to either stand or vote in should contact the Elections Office on 01786 443306.

Nomination Forms can be obtained from libraries and local offices or from the Elections Office, Room 15, Old Viewforth, Stirling. Forms can also be obtained from the Stirling Council website at www.stirling.gov.uk All forms must be duly completed and returned (on paper, as electronic copies will not be accepted) to this office by 4pm on Wednesday 22nd October 2003. Any candidates being elected will serve until the next general set of elections for Community Councils in October 2006.

Any candidate submitting a valid nomination form who subsequently wishes to withdraw their nomination should do so on the appropriate form, which is also available from the above office, by 5pm on Wednesday 22nd October 2003.

R.S. Jack

Returning Officer

Schedule of Community Councils

Arnprior	Cambusbarron	Gargunnoch	P o l m a i s e
Balfron	Cambuskenneth	Gartmore	Port of Menteith
Bannockburn	Causewayhead	Killlearn	R a p l o c h
Balquidder	Cornton	Kilmadock	R i v e r s i d e
Buchanan	C o w i e	Killin	S t r a t h a r d
Borestone	C r a i g s	King's Park	S t r a t h f i l l i n
Bridge of Allan	Croftamie	K i p p e n	S t r a t h b l a n e
Broomridge	Drymen	L o g i e	T r o s s a c h s
Buchlyvie	Dunblane	Mercat Cross	T o r b r e x
Callander	F i n t r y	P l e a n	Thornhill & Blair Drummond

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Prophecies & Sayings of Aonghas Parlane MacGreegor

(An introductory selection from *The Prophecies & Sayings of Aonghas Parlane MacGreegor of Gleann Dubh, Vol I-VI*; translated from the original Strathard Gaelic by Trad.)

Of all the dark and romantic tales associated with our beautiful Strath the best-kent concern themselves with fairies and Rob Roy - but how many of those of us lucky enough to have had the foresight to live here can honestly say we have even heard of the Highland Rogue's mysterious kinsman, Aonghas Parlane MacGreegor, the Mystic Meg of his day, who ought surely to be one of the Strath's most lauded sons? Hopefully the following excerpts from a timely new publication will change all that.

Aonghas Parlane MacGreegor was born in the shelter of a single rowan on the slopes of the Bruach Caorainn Burn, near Comer. No one can say quite when. Research indicates some period after The Reformation - certainly he had knowledge of the early subjugation of the Highlands which followed, although the source of this is open to conjecture.

The little we do know we owe to what is, almost exclusively, an oral tradition. The night he was born, according to local legend, vivid lights lit up the sky over Aberfoyle, milk turned sour in the udder, and fiddles by the hearths of cottar and chief were heard to play without human hand. For the greater part of what appears to have been, even for the period in question, a regrettably short - if busy - life-span, he was considered an idiot. Eventually, after years of being largely ignored, he was hung for gross and reckless idiocy in prophesising (he had prophesised a number of events which would take place on the Sabbath) from the same tree which too-few years before had offered the infant seventh son of a seventh son what comfort and protection it might. *

**I am grateful to Dochie "Dochie" MacGreegor of Callander (who himself claims descent from Aonghas Parlane) for much of the above.*

The Prophecies

Community Futures

There will be a time far-off, when the ancient house of MacGreegor*¹ of Strathard shall fall*² and the land around will be coveted, sold, bought, partitioned, privatised and poisoned. Mourn ye now the Fabulous and Deceptive Security Arrangements (costing more than it takes to keep a village in some parts of the world fed, clothed, educated and healthy for a year) which will bar the foot, nor less the heart, of Everyman from the land of his birth. In sorrow shall a Great and Pervasive Sitkaness fall upon the land and no bird shall be heard in the glen for the sound of quad-bikes, jet-skis and tills ringing; wool will be of more interest, and warmth, than people. Weep now, my brethren, a past pillaged for marketable worth. Lives forgot. More do I see: Trout, Heron and Otter, all will be gone; the stories and songs on the lips of the young and the old of Strathard shall be joyless, tawdry things chasing the night silence from the loch opposite Forest Hills - and though this time shall be a thing of Great Good for the Traders, the people shall not share its Bounty, kenning it ever eftir as "*chlncrrn nnnannnnnaarr*" ("the Time of the Park") till the oil runs oot and hell freezes owre. Again*³

* 1. Note the unconventional spelling - a different branch of the family.

* 2. "Into the cloying hands of a nice yung (sic) couple from the Sowth (sic)" according to one earlier (unattributed) translation

* 3. Some scholars believe MacGreegor here refers to the coming of "the black rain" (summer? Midges? Tourists? Glaswegians?)

The Children of the Strath*

I foresee a time they shall be crammed into Strange Chariots to be driven weary miles down twisting, pot-holed, poorly-maintained, winter roads to learn how to live without knowing all of who they are, because a community educating itself in a wee school the bairns can walk to isnae "Fit for the 21st century." And the fine sons and daughters of the Strath shall be thrust into the Darkness of Portakabin to teach them the absence of light. Who knows what they'll find.

* The specific nature of the prophecies contained within this section has led one local authority to attribute their vision to a later seer.

Culture and Transport

From Lomond to Menteith, in sheep-fank hostelry, gift-shop, Co-op*, mill, gift-shop and surgery, gift-shop, kirk and school (mibbe) and gift-shop (definitely) people shall Gather and Meet to do honour to the fact of their Contemporaneous Existence. As indication that this thing is coming to pass a multitude of extremely tiny signs, proclaiming: "*Nothing of This Earth is PRIVATE, but is held in COMMON and in TRUST, come in*", will appear throughout the Strath in the shape of a Key visible from Ben Venue and the window seats of passing aircraft. The people shall build a Wondrous Yellow Ark for no particular reason. It's Gaelic will be spoke for sure. O aye. Lovely.

* Elsewhere MacGreegor gives an indication of the potency of his powers, quoting exact prices for a number of everyday items on display on the 23rd Dec. last - including some still in-date in the reduced trolley section by the tills. Remarkable.

When a traveller can pass, dry-shod, in the time of The Great Peril from Aberfoyle to Inversnaid without dunting a wheel-rim, meeting a tourist-bus or recourse to the ditch when the life-style 4x4's flash by doon the middle o the road...ach I'll believe it when I see it.

Sustainable Social and Economic Community Development

A Great Beast, its eyes covered with publicly-funded siller, shape ever-changing, will darken the Strath, devouring all in its path; by hearths in homes at the lower end of the market its terrible cry - "JOBS (pays nat. min. wage)" will be repeated solemnly long into the night. Truly we are not worthy. The day will come - weep ye now, I say - when the old and the indigenous shall be cast from their crumbling doors, and the feet of the young blister upon the road in search of shelter. Horrid sounds, absurd commuting plans and a surfeit of crafts and voluntary effort shall issue from beneath every lintel.* In village hall and hostelry strange and hungered tongues will pontificate upon that of which they know next to nothing but their own interest, though none shall spik sae eloquent as the Silence in their midst. The Community Future Interim Development Authority Governing Coouncil'll meet the first moon of the month (unless the roads are oot). Ach well.

* MacGreegor later refers to the Local Housing Plan by name.

Note: MacG's life-time reluctance to offer any notion of time-scale for implementation of many of his prophesies (anticipating perhaps both the modern politician and local tradesman) in addition to the bent of the similarly chronologically reticent but more widely-known "Braham Seer" (Coinneadh Odha,) is evidenced with particular effect in relation to his premonition regarding a time when "Many skies shall have darkened unwondered at before the abolition of 2nd home council tax relief." Itself an odd remark, seemingly out of kilter with much of the prophet's work (in one of many humorous asides peppering his seminal work, Cultural Genocide, Little Hampshire and The Burnt-Oot Vehicle Motif in the Poteen Induced Drawings o Yon Dilettante Gobshite MacGreegor o Gleann Dubh, Prof. Whitesettle of Drum Lean University draws attention to MacG's "prescient brand awareness strategy" in contrast to the Braham Seer's idiosyncratic approach:

"Heads lie lopped off in the heather, limbs are severed and lost, mercy has altogether deserted mankind while brother savages brother.... The roar of the great guns has woken the dead in hell while the living weep in the glens. Children rise up against children, old men cut out the hearts of their companions Let me die before that day, oh let me die... The whole country will be utterly desolate and the people forced to seek shelter in faraway islands not yet known.... Weep for the mountains and what they will see in that day; weep for the wilderness of the Gael."

Lochard Local History Group

With this Group it is all good news to report! We are now in our fifth season and proving more popular than ever. We have a growing membership across the area who often have a wealth of local history knowledge.

Events take place from September through to April each year and are usually held on the first Monday of the month in Kinlochard Village Hall starting at 7:30 PM. This is normally a talk given on topics of interest by knowledgeable persons in their field (and gifted amateurs!). The talks have ranged from the Aberfoyle Slate Quarry to the Royal Forest of Glenfinglas, the National Park, and the Duke of Montrose's Estates to the local water supply. The Group also has an interest in 'Oral History' which is the recording of people's memories, the living history of everyone's unique life experiences and personal reminiscences.

Sometimes the Group has outings, such as to the Regional Archives at Stirling which always proves popular. In May this year, the Group staged a very successful showing of the 1953 film

version of 'Rob Roy', which was largely filmed locally; other such events may well be staged in the future.

This season's programme got underway on 1 September with a fascinating lecture from Michael Jodeluk, a teacher from Stirling with an immense knowledge of the local rail network through the ages. We next meet on Monday 6 October 2003 (time and place as already mentioned) when the topic will be 'The built heritage of the Lochard area and the work of the National Park in conserving and enhancing Cultural Heritage'. The cost for visitors is £2 per lecture and for one year's membership it is £5 - new members and visitors are always needed and welcomed! Come along and learn more about your local area and perhaps share some of your knowledge too!

See you...

For full details of this year's programme, please contact either the Secretary, Mike Fraser on 01877 382113 or the Chairman, David Miller on 01877 387249.

Strathard STRAP'd

STRAP is short for the Shamrock Thistle Rural Action Partnership, a group of three Gaelic communities of which Strathard is one, the other two in Co Mayo and Co Armagh in Ireland. The aim of STRAP is to bring the three communities together to help share and resolve common problems. One of our first initiatives is a Tourism Project: I have tried to contact as many of the local B&B operators that I know of to gather a team of 6 Strathard businesses who would like to be a part of it. If we are successful in raising funds, the programme will begin with three modules of training - workshops would be a better description - to define a project which the 18 businesses in all wish to take forward. Each module will be 4 days long, one in each country, the series to be completed over the coming quiet season this winter. This article is aimed to reach anyone "out there in SN land" who is running a B&B and I haven't managed to contact, or anyone who is planning to start a B&B in the coming year and would like to be considered in the group's plans. If you are interested and haven't already registered, please contact John Epps on 01877 382276 or email crannaighouse@aol.com

Aberfoyle Medical Centre Emergency Trolley Fund



There will be a Fiddlers Rally with the Stirling Caledonian Reel and Strathspey Society in the Memorial Hall on Friday 5th December at 7 30 pm. This concert is in aid of the Emergency Trolley Fund. Tickets: Adults £5 Children £3 Please give us your support.



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Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme

RSVP continues to expand and develop, we now have members stretching from Callander to Alva involved in a wide variety of activities to suit the skills, talents and time of our members.

We now have over 20 people who help out in Primary Schools. This is a project our members are thoroughly enjoying and find worthwhile and rewarding. Although our main objective was to be an extra pair of eyes, ears and hands to help the teachers, we find that some schools are looking for other skills, such as cooking, gardening, computing etc. We are now looking at how we can help the Young Enterprise Scheme where young people at school set up their own companies for six months and need business people to advise them.

Our volunteers are also looking to see how we can help in the Primary Care area. We already have members visiting long stay hospital wards and befriending patients, and are looking at a number of other suggestions, including a transport project.

The knitting 'Needles' project now has over 70 members who are producing material which is distributed to 13 different organisations, including SRI, Falkirk Royal Infirmary, Yorkhill Hospital, Woman's Aid, Homestart and the local Dogs Home. They have produced over 1500 items. A section has already started in Callander and we are looking to develop a section in Alloa.

Our members are helping in numerous other voluntary groups and have some wonderful ideas which they would like to develop. This age group have a wealth of talent and energy which can be put to good use in their communities. If you are interested in hearing more about RSVP, or have ideas you want to develop please contact me at the address below.

Stan Sanderson
Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme
4 King Street
Stirling FK8 1AY
Tel: 01786 475800
Email: rsvpscotstirling@csv.org.uk



Scottish Country Dancing in Aberfoyle

You need nothing but a sense of humour to join the fun at The Memorial Hall every Wednesday at 7.30 pm, from 1st October. At least half the people in the photo could hardly dance a step before they joined. Now look at them!! Unbeatable value at only £1. For more information phone Ann Ralston on 01877 382847 or ask Ros Dingwall at the Post Office Shop.



The Garden

by Wellie Boot



Well, that is August over. I think it is my least favourite month of the year in the garden. Everything is getting so overblown and blousy. Still there is lots to do. This is gathering time. Gathering fruit and gathering seeds. Do go and examine your herbaceous plants as well as your annuals. You will find lots of seed heads bursting with the potential of new plants. Most perennials grow better from fresh seed, although delphiniums germinate better after a spell in the fridge. Keep the seed dry in, preferably, paper bags-*labelled!* Sow them in January or February indoors. You don't have to sow masses of seeds in large seed trays; I use the little plastic trays you get strawberries in from the Co-op. They even have a little lid to keep the moisture in when germinating. Keep them warm in a greenhouse or the spare bedroom windowsill.

This is also a good time to prune your summer flowering shrubs, particularly this year as the weather is still warm and they don't get too much of a shock.

There are two schools of pruning-the clippers and the thinners. The clippers like to make their shrubs into neat mounds and the thinners like to keep them open and more natural looking. The clippers clip them as you would a hedge and the thinners cut some of the old branches right back and shorten the newer ones. This lets light and air circulate through the shrub. Not all shrubs, however, should be pruned. Now the spring flowers such as rhodies, azaleas, hydrangea petiolaris, etc., should be cut back as soon as they have stopped flowering. A lot of these shrubs set their buds for next year in the summer. If you prune them then in the Autumn you cut off all next year's buds and Oh dear, no flowers.

This is also a good time of year to split up your perennials. Taking the new growth away from the old heart of the plant gives you new healthy plants. When doing this, why not pot up lots of little pieces in old cream or yoghurt cartons? Keep them well watered through the winter in a sheltered place and come the spring you will have lots of lovely little plants to give to the organizers of plant stalls at sales of work. You will be ever so popular, I assure you, I know.

Now here is a quandary. I have a lot of *Alchemilla Mollis* at the edge of the bed falling over onto the path. Just now it is alive with lots of tits who love the seeds. Do I cut it back to make it tidy and stop it seeding into the path, or leave it for the birds? I think the birds win!

Good gardening!

Wellie Boot

p.s. If you have any questions about your garden please send them in to Wellie Boot, c/o Strathard News, Old Manse, Inversnaid, FK8 3TU, and I'll try to answer them.

Poet's Corner

It is hoped that **Poet's Corner** will be a regular feature in the newsletter. We believe there is a wealth of talent in the Strathard area and we would love to hear from you. C'mon now, don't be shy. Please hand your poems in to the Post Office, marked for Strathard News, or email to newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk

Impossible Dream.

At night a pretty primrose stood
Forlorn and lonely in a wood;
And looking at the sky above,
Quite mystified, it fell in love.
As one stars flirtatious blinking
Set the little primrose thinking:
"Of all the stars, which I can see
This one has surely chosen me!"
Thus with spectacular display
A gallant star was on its way!
But then – the universe it seems
Cast spells on wishes, stars and dreams
Like magic in the atmosphere
Without a trace to disappear
Upon a star it had relied
A primrose closed its leaves and died.

Sigrid.

Specialised and Emergency Equipment Fund

By now everyone is likely to have received a leaflet advertising the Emergency Resuscitation Fund and the associated E R Fund raising campaign. Patient Participation is one of the new buzz phrases: the Government is endeavouring to encourage individuals to become more involved in local health care in various ways. Rural medical practices have particular needs, all the more so with increased distances from hospital emergency services. Unfortunately the NHS cannot provide all possible equipment and facilities to surgeries. It was decided that it could benefit everyone in the area of the Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres if there were to be additional specialised and emergency equipment available. A fund-raising committee grew out of the original Aberfoyle Garden Committee and was established with representatives from the different villages involved. Initially, money is to be raised for an 'Emergency Trolley', including a defibrillator, for each Medical Centre, and also an ECG machine for each place. This equipment is potentially lifesaving, and having local ECG machines would also enable individuals to have key checks without having to travel to Stirling or beyond. It was agreed to have an intensive period of fund-raising this autumn and

that, among other things, each village would organise an event. Arrangements have been made to hold an adult Ceilidh, with a substantial supper, in Gartmore Hall on Friday 21 November (BYOB). Fergus Wood and the Kinlochard Ceilidh Band will provide the music. We hope that this, and the other events, will be well supported - we will be looking for help with ideas, food preparation, raffle prizes, decoration of the hall and fun on the night. To assist in our funding, we have already had 'Tea on the Garden', on 9 August in Buchlyvie. Other dates to mark in your calendar are:

10 October: when a Silent Auction will be held at Buchlyvie.

5 December: when a Fiddlers' Rally will take place at Aberfoyle.

During this fund-raising period it is planned to launch a charitable organisation, 'Friends of Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres', with a broad remit. There will be more information later.

There is sensitivity to the fact that not all residents belong to the Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Practice and individuals' freedom of choice is respected. However, everyone can be assured that if they need emergency help they will receive it.

*Kath Cosgrove and Mary-Lou Kerr
Representatives for Gartmore*

Duck a L'omond?

Aberfoyle's famous performing ducks are now to be featured on television to attract visitors to the National Park.

Filming recently took place on Loch Lomondside for a television advert to entice tourists to visit Loch Lomond and the Trossachs outside the main tourist season. The star role has been taken by the Indian Runner ducks who feature prominently at the Aberfoyle Woollen Mill. Introduced in 2001 after the outbreak of Foot and Mouth, the ducks have proved to be a popular attraction since then.

Filmed in various locations around the Loch, they should soon be on a TV screen near you.



Emergency and Resuscitation Fund
for
Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Surgeries

Ceilidh

with

Fergus Wood & The Kinlochard Ceilidh Band

in

Gartmore Village Hall
on

Friday 21st November 2003

8.00 pm – Midnight

Tickets £10

Fork Supper BYOB Raffle
Adults over 16 yrs

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- Walking the dog or feeding the cat

Would you like to volunteer for this very worthwhile scheme? Volunteering is fun!! Go on, make a difference!

Call the Project Manager now on **01259 722177** and help to change people's livesand your own!

Milton the Otter

Hello Children,

Have you noticed how big and bright the moon is at this time of year? Last month, just as the nights got longer and darker, we had the "Harvest Moon" to help the farmers finish their harvest. Now it is a "Hunters' Moon" shining up Strathard at night. In November it will be the paler "Poachers' Moon" lighting up Strathard at night. Look out for Mars, also known as the Red Planet. Mars is closer to the earth than at any time in the last 60,000 years - but it is still a very, very long way away, 37 million miles.

It will soon be Hallowe'en, known in the Highlands as Samhain - the one night when a crack in time appears between this world and the Spirit World. On this night spirits can travel freely through the hours of darkness! Some of these spirits are mischievous, others are naughty.....and a few are downright bad! So, it is important that brave youngsters of every community should go out and chase them away. This is called guising and guising is great fun.

Already the twins, Duke and Katrine, are each hollowing out a turnip to make a Hallowe'en lantern with a face on it. When lit with a candle, these lanterns will help us see in the dark and help frighten away the spirits of the night! And to make sure that none of the wicked spirits recognize us while we are out guising and come back and get us later, we cover up our identity by disguising ourselves! We'll all be going, even Grandpa Otter. With big Rory the stag and Mr Gibb, the minister, we should be quite safe.

People in their houses are only too willing to reward guisers. We will be given money, mince pies, hot drinks and lots and lots of sweets. Have fun but be careful - be very, very careful!

Bye for now,
Milton



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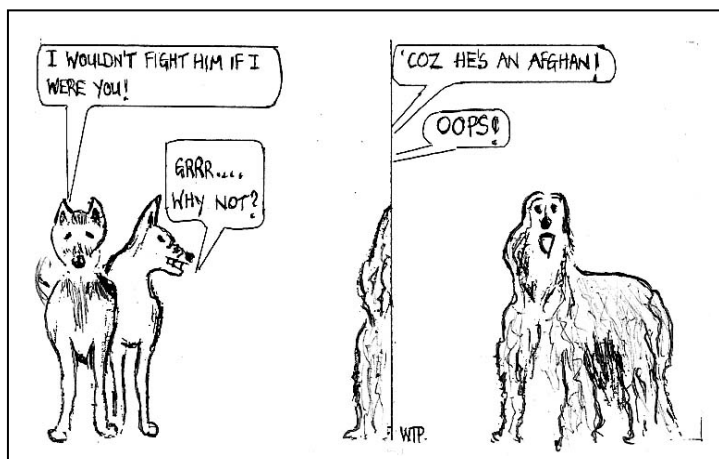
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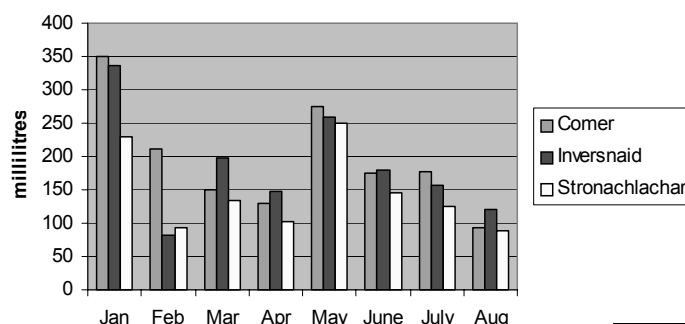


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Rainfall in Strathard 2003





Feed The Birds

When Sunday 12 October

Where National Park Gateway Centre

Help our feathered friends by finding out how to make tasty treats to help them through the winter. Take your feeders home to your own garden or leave them here for the birds at the Gateway Centre.

Time Drop in any time between 12 and 3 pm

Contact 01389 722199

Requirements Please bring clean used plastic milk, drink or yoghurt containers for recycling into feeders. All the other ingredients will be supplied.

By yon Bonnie Banks

When Sunday 12 October

Where National Park Centre, Balmaha

A gentle stroll with a Countryside Ranger on the eastern shores of Loch Lomond, introducing the history, geology and wildlife of Loch Lomond.

Time 2.30 pm to 4pm

Contact 01360 870470 or 0774 007 3282 for more information.

Requirements No need to book. Not an arduous route, but stout footwear and suitable outdoor clothing is recommended.

Autumn Leaf Crafts

When Monday to Sunday 13 to 19 October

Where National Park Gateway Centre, Balloch

Try your hand at making pictures or a mask out of leaves. Leaf crafts and other family activities

Time From 1 pm

Contact 01389 722199

Requirements No special requirements. Easy outdoor access for wheelchairs and buggies.

Autumn Arts

When Tuesday 14 October

Where National Park Centre, Balmaha

Arts and crafts activities using natural materials for children aged 4 to 10 years.

Time 2.30 to 4 pm

Contact 01360 870470 or 0774 007 3282

Requirements Please wear old clothes. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Apple Day

When Sunday 19 October

Where Cashel Forest for a Million Years, East Loch Lomond

Join National Park Rangers, Gartmore Primary School and Forth Valley Food Links for a fun day out for Common Ground's Apple Day. Learn all about why apple trees are so important, unique Scottish apple varieties, try recipes from around the world and much more.

Time Drop in between 10 am and 4 pm

Contact Adam Samson 01360 870502

Requirements None. Easy access to the centre for wheelchairs and buggies.

Halloween Crafts

When 25 and Sunday 26 October

Where National Park Gateway Centre, Balloch

Pumpkin carving - how spooky and scary can you be?

Time From 1 pm

Contact 01389 722199

Requirements Please bring your own pumpkin!

Ghostly goings on!

When 31 October

Where Killin

Join Countryside Rangers on a spooky walk that will make your hair stand on end.

Time Early evening

Contact 01567 830430 or email linda.winskill@lochlomond-trossachs.org

Requirements Booking is essential. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Wear warm clothes and stout footwear and please bring a torch. Meeting place and times will be confirmed when you book.

Announcements

1st Aberfoyle Brownies



Meet every Wednesday 6pm till 7.45pm in Church House. If you wish to contact a Guider they are:

Jackie Gerlach 01877 339942
Trisha Roberts 01877 382705

Thistle Threads autumn day and evening classes in patchwork and quilting start w/c 22nd September.

Please contact Clare Workman for details on 01877 382924

or clare@thistle-threads.co.uk

Internet Classes

starting

Wednesday, 22nd October

for 8 weeks

7.00-9.00pm

Inversnaid Primary School

For further information contact:

Moirra on 01360 441608 or

Angela on 01877 331766 or

Community Resource Centre on 01786 432311

Community Learning and Development Service
in partnership with Clackmannan College



Strathard Community Council meets at 7.30pm on the 1st Thursday of every month. Next meeting 6th November in Kinlochard Village Hall.

Kinlochard Toddlers

Fridays in Kinlochard School Building
(or the Hall next-door)

10-30 a.m. till 12.

PLAY, CHAT, LEARNING & TOAST

All welcome

(Bring a parent)

Open Café

4 Renagour, Aberfoyle

Morag MacMillan is holding an Open Café at the above address on

Friday 7th and Saturday 8th November

in aid of

Ward 4c Gartnavel Hospital (part of The Beatson)

Teas, coffees and home baking 10am-12noon and 2pm - 4 pm

Soup and sandwiches 12noon-2pm

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to all our

Advertisers and Contributors

The next issue of the Strathard News will be the Christmas Edition. The committee are planning a bumper edition for the Festive Season, with your help. Please let us know of any special offers, activities or plans you have as soon as possible. Without your input it may be a damp squib.....but based on past experience you won't let us down! You can hand copy in to the Post Office, clearly marked for the Strathard News or email to newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk If you would like help with adverts please contact Marion Back on 01301 702970 or email advertising@strathardnews.co.uk

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Local Telephone Directory

AMENDMENT FORM

covering

ABERFOYLE, GARTMORE, INVERSNDAID, PORT OF MENTEITH and STRONACHLACHAR

The Local Telephone Directory is almost 5 years old and there is a need to create a more up-to-date version.

Please fill in this form only if your entry in the previous directory is

1. wrong ☐

2. omitted ☐

3. you wish to be ex-directory ☐

Surname: Initials:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Telephone Number:

Email address (optional):

We regret it is not possible to enter fax or mobile numbers except in advertisements. However, if you would be interested in a supplement with email addresses at a later date, please tick here. ☐

**All completed forms should be returned to Margaret Neufeld, Schoolhouse, Inversnaid. FK8 3TU
or put in the boxes provided in the local Post Offices.**

If you wish to take out a subscription please complete the information slip and post it to:

**The Treasurer, Strathard News, Glencleland House,
Lochard Road, Aberfoyle FK8 3TJ**

Cost of subscription £10

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