

The Voice of Your Community

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Aberfoyle man, Norman Quirk, has been appointed to head up Glasgow's latest radio station SAGA 105.2fm.

The new station - which will go live in the autumn - will bring a unique mix of music and talk to its listeners. Positioning itself as a lifestyle station, SAGA 105.2fm uses the strapline 'From Frank to Hank and Bing to Sting' to underline the diversity of its playlist.

SAGA 105.2fm - which is primarily aimed at people aged 50 and over - is differentiating itself from existing radio stations and seeks to give underserved listeners a station that is firmly rooted in their tastes and interests.

Formerly Executive Director of Scottish Ballet, Norman also has a distinguished track record in radio beginning his



career with Radio Clyde as Financial Controller from 1974 to 1985.

In 1994, he became a Director of Central FM, the independent local radio station for Stirling and Falkirk; he later became Chairman of the company.

In 1996, Norman was appointed as Managing Director of Scot FM and a year later he became Chairman of the Independent Radio Group of Scotland, where he was responsible for overseeing new licence applications and representing the group within

the business community in Scotland.

He continued to play a key role in managing the company's Scottish assets until they were bought by The Wireless Group in 2000.

He was also a foundation investor of Kingdom FM, of which he was also a Director.

Norman said: "The launch of a new radio station is a very exciting time and I am very proud to have been appointed as Managing Director and to have the opportunity to bring something different for listeners in Glasgow and the west of Scotland.

"We know we have a pool of potential listeners just waiting to find a vibrant radio station that understands their needs and complements their lifestyles.

Our listeners may be older but they are not old in attitudes."

Next Issue

End of
August

Deadline for
submissions

27th August

Sewage in the River

In response to concerns raised about raw sewage and other linked debris in and around the River Forth at Aberfoyle, Scottish Water issued the following media statement on June 22nd. A Scottish Water Spokesman said: "We are currently looking at carrying out work which would reduce the amount of sewage discharge to the Forth at Aberfoyle. However, this is just one part of

a larger project which is at an early stage. The project is due to be carried out in the current Scottish Water capital programme up to 2006. Among the aspects of the project we are looking at to benefit the environment at Aberfoyle are screening the sewage overflow to reduce debris and increasing storage to reduce the number of spills from the overflow pipe."

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Aberfoyle: The Brand!!

Aberfoyle needs a new Brand Image to use on Village Signs, Leaflets, Web-site, Headed Paper – all sorts of things and everyone who would like to contribute ideas is asked, please, to get in touch. You can either simply contribute ideas or join the community group being set up to produce the brand image. Everyone has their own feeling for Aberfoyle, whether they are residents or visitors, about what makes it special to them. But, how would YOU encapsulate it in a logo or on village entrance signs?

The economy of the whole village is dependent on a vibrant tourist industry. In recent years the Traders Association has worked hard to promote events and activities that are attractive to locals and visitors alike. To further capitalise on the benefits brought by, for example, the Mushroom Festival and Tramping Through The Trossachs, it has been suggested that the idea of village branding and signing should be developed.

This should draw on local heritage and culture, presenting a bright, positive image that shows what is different and special about Aberfoyle.

The National Park would like to work with the community on such a project. It is seen as essential that any proposals would have community backing so if you would like to be part of a group working to bring forward ideas please contact:

Nigel Brooks Community Agent
01877 382424
or 01389 722004

nigel.brooks@lochlomond-trossachs.org

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Letters to the Editorhave your say!

Dear Editor,

I feel that I must write and defend the youth of the village in terms of their right to Innocence before being proven guilty re your front page Issue 14 June 2004.

I can confirm on a weekend walk on a Saturday with my family (Youth Included) the new benches were noted at the corner of the path, only to see on the Sunday the graffiti as shown on your front page. I agree this act shows no respect to the village and concur fully with the start of your article but disagree with your last sentence which is inappropriate. S.N have already apportioned blame for this act. Surely you must be sure that the culprits are local before going to print. I feel an immediate appology is in order to the children in the village until the facts are to hand.

However I would call on all parents to interview their children to ascertain the truth on this matter, as not all, *if any*, of the children of the village are vandals.

Yours faithfully
Neil C D Stewart

What do you think? If you have something on your mind, let's hear it. There's no better way to reach all the residents of Strathard than through the Strathard News. Send your comments to The Editor, Strathard News, Schoolhouse, Inversnaid FK8 3TU, or email: editor@strathardnews.com

Riverside Walkway & Car Park Improvements

Please give us your comments by 14th July

Now that the works are completed – except for the alleyway between the Forth Inn and Guyana, which WILL be done but has been held up until the drainage is fixed – we would like your comments on the finished project and also any comments you have on how the works were carried out.

The community representatives on the steering committee are having a meeting with the funders and contractors on July 14th to review everything and, hopefully, to learn lessons for future projects

We hope you will send us positive comments as well as constructive criticism!

Please send your comments to any of the following:

Phil Crowder: phil@forthinn.com 01877 382 372

Ros Dingwall: rositrossachs@aol.com 01877 382 231

John Epps: CrannaigHouse@aol.com 01877 382 276

Lesley Quirk: lesley@quirk.co.uk 01877 387 210



The Makkers Arts & Crafts Group

Following a second successful pilot weekend at the David Marshall Lodge, The Makkers Tryst have defined some group objectives and booked two more weekends to showcase local creative talent. Dates for your diary:

**"Makkers - David Marshall Lodge
17th/18th July and 7th/8th August".**

Local member of Forestry staff at DML and Aberfoyle resident, David Wilkie, says that it's really great for local people to demonstrate their skills and show visitors their talent. After seeing The Makkers skills, visitors are showing greater interest in the goods offered at the Forestry gift shop and the wider aspects of life in the countryside! Strathard Community Futures Action Group leader John Epps told SN that many people seem reticent to take the plunge with something new, but The Makkers Tryst is now receiving new

interest from people wishing to take part almost every day. If any SN readers would like to take part or if you have a venue where our seasonal visitors gather in healthy numbers, just let John know by e-mail to crannaighouse@aol.com or telephone 01877 382276. Future events now at the planning stage include Farmers' Market days in Falkirk and Community Open Days in the area; if enough support is forthcoming, John's plans include a National Park sponsored trade show in the Autumn so that the producers and retailers of the National Park can meet face to face. The object is to ensure that our visitors take home a value-added piece of Scotland rather than Taiwan and to keep more of the money our visitors spend within the local economy.

Kinlochard Hall

The community in Kinlochard are looking into the development of their Village Hall and Old School Building. An action group has been formed chaired by Fergus Wood. To date the ownership of the land and buildings has been clarified and with the help of Stirling Council a bid is being prepared to fund a full survey of both buildings. This will inform future discussions on development of the buildings.

The land leading down to the loch is currently rented by the community and steps are being taken to increase income from this valuable facility.

The next meeting of the group will be
**Wednesday 11 August at 7.30
in the Hall**

All interested parties are invited. Further details from either Fergus Wood 01877 387219 or Nigel Brooks, Community Agent 01389 722004 or 01877 382424

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NEW HOT CAR WASH & HOOVER

The Black Holes of Middle Earth*

By Dougie MacPherson



Not *another* diatribe on the state of our roads in **HOBBITON**, I hear you say. Not quite. That we do have problems with the numerous potholes on our roads throughout the region is beyond question. Yet is that the only safety hazard for traffic? What of the road markings, or lack of them, for example? Outside of the villages, and of the fair city of Stirling, the once-familiar road markings are virtually non-existent. Where are the solid white lines that used to be prominently displayed down both sides of certain stretches of highway denoting no stopping or parking at any time? On the fast sections of road such as the A81 crossing Flanders Moss or out towards the Port of Menteith they have almost disappeared. And what of lane markings on many of our country roads? They, too, are fading fast. There seem to be no plans as to their upkeep. Agreed, such road markings don't look pretty but they surely promote *some* measure of road safety and that *must* be an important consideration in our Council's itinerary. Well....isn't it?

Another perceived drawback in the absence of such road markings and which might affect the tourist trade are those people who arrive in Strathard by the coachload for a weekend of line-dancing. No lines, no dancing - or am I missing something? Which brings me back to the potholes. Alas, they seem to be a permanent fixture in many parts of the **SHIRE**. Incidentally, have you noticed the

LAND OF MORDOR (*Where The Shadows Lie*) is quite unintentional.

You must surely agree, though, it is hardly a fair balance of the books, of what is necessity and what is purely fun.

Guess where Council priorities lie. Perhaps, though, while we do have the potholes we should seize the opportunity of maximizing them, using them, as an asset. Indeed we should consider utilising them as a possible tourist attraction. It would need very little input from the Council, (nothing new there then).

For example, some of the new brown and white tourist board signage could indicate the more permanent holes; we could print leaflets extolling the joys of the **Potholes of Stirlingshire, Both Ancient and Modern**; or a Heritage Trail brochure showing the **Black Holes Of Central Scotland** with accompanying map displaying the best holes and how to see them yet avoid them and damaging the car. A *must* for thrill seekers!

We could even engage the power of the press by, say, having competitions to guess the best repaired hole (Well, can *you* tell the difference?); or, perhaps, the deepest hole. That one could be dodgy, though. How could we prove it? I'm not sure if there is enough rope or headlamps in the whole of Strathard.

In the meantime, we drive the rocky road to freedom with the slogan: 'See Stirling Council? See road safety?'

* For **MIDDLE-EARTH** read *Central Scotland*. But you probably guessed that already.

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editorial

I must say I am delighted with the response to our front page article in the last issue about the graffiti on the new benches. Although there is only one letter I have also had telephone calls and am reliably informed that the youngsters are certainly discussing the issue, which is all to the good. I do, however, agree with Neil Stewart (see "Letters") that an apology is in order. We did not have proof that it was locals who were responsible and should have made sure of our facts before going to print. I apologise for any offence caused.

I have great faith in the youth of today and am sorry that, as so often happens, all are tarred with the same brush when only a very small minority is involved. Politicians would call it a "knee-jerk reaction" due, I feel, to the writer's disappointment on seeing such blatant vandalism.

In this issue, I am pleased to see the return of the Clubs Page. I realize that many of the organizations are having a break for the summer but hope that we will see news of forthcoming events in the next issue. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our advertisers. Without your contribution we would not survive. You will be pleased to note that we are increasing our print run for the summer so you get more for your money!

But where are our poets? We are missing you. I know many of our local young people, as well as those of more advanced years, have a real talent in this area - and do not manifest it on benches! We would love to hear from you again.

Remember, if you have any comments, suggestions or new ideas please contact any of the committee members listed on the back page.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Margaret

Aberfoyle Medical Centre



Some Simple Facts:

1. When you wish to register with a new doctor just take your medical card along to the surgery, fill in the relevant parts and hand it over. If you can't find your card go along to the surgery and fill in a form. When you have been accepted by your new practice the Health Board will automatically send for your medical notes. At the same time a new patient appointment will be made for you to see the Practice Nurse, Allison or Linda.
2. We do not have an appointment system to see the Doctor in any of the morning surgeries; only in the afternoons do we have appointments.
3. If you are going on holiday and think you might need travel vaccinations, please pick up a travel form from the surgery, fill it in, preferably at least eight weeks before travelling. Allison will then decide what is needed and an appointment will be made for the vaccinations.
4. We have a 24 hours answer phone for repeat prescriptions, the number is 01877 382990. We would appreciate at least 24 hours notice.
5. We have a treatment room for blood tests, removal of stitches, dressings, ear syringing etc. Please make an appointment; this will usually be with the District Nurse, Kate Alcock
6. If you would like to know the results of blood tests etc, please phone in the afternoon as all of the results do not arrive until midday.
7. Child clinics are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.
8. Podiatry clinics are on 1st 3rd and 5th Wednesdays of the month
9. The physiotherapist has clinics on Mondays and Friday mornings, but this can sometimes change, so please check with the surgery.
10. If someone is staying with you and they become unwell, please phone the surgery and they can register with us as a temporary resident, all we need is name, date of birth and their home address.
11. If possible, please phone before 10am for patients too ill to attend surgery.
12. Our half-day closing is Thursday.
13. If you cannot attend an appointment please phone and cancel.

Aberfoyle Surgery 01877 382421

Thank You!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the pupils, ex-pupils, staff, parents and friends for all their cards, flowers, gifts and best wishes during my recent illness. I am slowly making progress and hope to be back in school in the not too distant future.

Janette C Bond

CHRISTIAN AID 2004

The Aberfoyle Area Organiser would like to thank all those who contributed by giving and collecting money in Christian Aid Week and making it such a success. This year we raised £1878.64p

Thank you to everyone

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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Sylvia Jackson MSP Writes.....



Now into July and the school holidays. I am sure, like me, you are hoping for good weather and the opportunity to spend more time out of doors.

The summer months definitely give us the chance to lead a more active and healthy lifestyle.

Indeed, I was glad to hear that Scotland is taking health improvement very seriously. The Scottish Executive's policies to improve the nation's health by encouraging physical activity and promoting healthy eating recently won the endorsement of the WHO Assistant Director General, who believes that the strategy should be followed across the world.

One of these strategies directly affecting the Stirling area is the Scottish Executive's plan to ensure that all children receive two hours physical education per week. The new measures will also see the recruitment of 400 new PE teachers in Scottish schools and will increase the range of activities open to pupils.

On another health matter, I have been seeking the views of various

organisations and businesses across the Stirling area on the Executive's current consultation on smoking in public places. Legislation is clearly an option. As you may know Stirling Council agreed at its last Council meeting to ban smoking in all Council buildings. As we hear more and more instances of workers developing cancer, linked to passive smoking in their work place, we really do need action. I would be delighted to hear your views, and if you would like more information on the smoking in public places consultation it can be found at www.scotland.gov.uk/smokingconsultation or by telephoning 0800 027 7127.

Moving away from health matters, the Forestry Commission has recently given me an update on the discussions around strategic deer fence proposals in the Katrine catchment area. I know that a great deal of work has gone on behind the scenes since the last open meeting at the Covenanters Hotel last October. The Forestry Commission have fully revised their original proposal and will discuss it with the RSPB and the Woodland Trust later this month. A second open meeting is to be arranged for late August/ early September. I will keep you updated as I receive more information.

Also in a few days time, is a meeting of the Loch Katrine Advisory Group which has representatives from community groups, the National Park, and other stakeholders concerned with the long term management of the Loch Katrine area. These are important meetings as Scottish Water continue to develop their changing role. This will mean a substantial change but also an exciting one in that this should lead to more community involvement in both local tourism and land management generally.

The year has been an active one, especially for all the Community activists whether it be through the Community Council, the Community Futures or the many other groups both statutory and voluntary which contribute to making Aberfoyle and the surrounding area the vibrant place it is. I would like to wish everyone a very enjoyable but at the same time relaxing, summer.

As always, my colleague Anne McGuire MP and I can be contacted at:

The Parliamentary Office
22 Viewfield Street
Stirling, FK8 1UA

Tel: 01786 446515 or by e-mail at Sylvia.jackson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk or mcguirea@parliament.uk

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The Loch Ard Sailing Club was pleased to welcome back the British Isles Flying Fifteen Association to

Loch Ard on the 19th & 20th June for their Scottish Championships having held the same event there in 2002. A fleet of 29 boats, of which 21 were visitors, enjoyed a pleasant weekend of sailing with generally north-west winds varying from force 0 to spells of force 4. There were two races on both days with the Silver and Classic boats racing together separately from the main fleet. Photos taken of the fleet racing will appear on the club website www.lochardsc.org.uk very shortly.

Steve Goacher and Phil Evans from Royal Windermere once again gave a copybook demonstration of how to sail, winning all four races and consequently bagging all the silverware at the prize-giving on the Sunday evening.

Tonight (16th June) we said goodbye to our Snowy Owl (Jackie Gerlach) and Bright Owl (Trish Roberts). Jackie Gerlach has been a wonderful guider for the past 12 years. Trish Roberts has also been an outstanding guider for 4 years. Tonight Jackie was given a beautiful paperweight with a Snowy Owl on it, a lovely cake, a bunch of flowers and a card made by Rachel Spiers with the Brownies' signatures on it. Other people gave lovely cards and gifts. We shall miss Snowy Owl and Bright Owl, but are looking forward to having Tawny Owl (Cairsti Steel) as our new guider.

Rachel Spiers, Henrietta Bowie and Stephanie Betts



STRATHARD
Community Council

At the AGM held on 1st July, 2004, the following office bearers were elected:
Chair: Ros Dingwall
Vice-chair: Paul Owens
Treasurer: Norman Quirk
Secretary: Pamela Abraham
Minute Secretary: Maureen Campbell
Roads Officer: John Clow
Environmental Officer: Frances Wood

The Silver series was won by Giles Passmore and Stephen Gibbon from Keilder Water and the Classic was won by Graham Lamond and Scott Train from South Windermere Sailing Club. Loch Ard members, Colin and Ann Boyd and Murray McKenzie with Jim Reape upheld the reputation of the Club, coming second and third respectively in the Silver class results. Once again, the visitors enjoyed a meal with club members in the hall at Kinlochard on the Saturday night and also once again, were favourably impressed with both the local accommodation that many of them had booked into for the weekend. The Club has received congratulations on the way the event was organised and it now appears that this means that we will be once again asked to host an event for BIFFA in the future and rumour has it that it might be even bigger!

Aberfoyle Brownies Fashion Show

The other night some of the Brownies had a fashion show. Danielle Buchanan, Victoria Steel and Rebecca Williamson were the ones that organised it. We raised £17.60. We have sent it to the SSPCA. We thank all the parents for giving up their time to come and see it, and for the donations you gave us.

Danielle, Vicky and Rebecca



Brownies

At the business meeting which followed, the meeting heard that a decision on the plan to extend Forest Hills had been deferred pending a site meeting prior to the next planning committee meeting to be held in Aberfoyle on 16th July.

Aberfoyle Bowling Club

As reported in the Stirling Observer dated August 18th 1955, 'the cutting of the first sod had taken place the previous Tuesday'. After 5 years of fundraising and hard work the Green was officially handed over in 1959 and then opened for play for the 1960 season.

Today the green is much underused and after all the work put into acquiring the amenity for the community it would be of benefit for the continuation of the club if more members could be acquired from the village and surrounding areas.

If interested, please come along on Sunday 1st August 2004 at 2pm. You will be made most welcome. Tuition can be given. Bowls are available. Suitable flat footwear should be worn. If unable to come on that date yet are still interested, President W. Steele can be contacted on 01786 462164 or Secretary Irene Finlayson on 01877 385278, Mobile 07724441244.

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Rangers

A View from the Lodge!

The Heritage Heart

*"As doubt played a part as to where the stone was kept
Acquired from the abbey as the nation slept,
Could it have lain, for a time, within
The building known as the Covenanter's Inn?"*

Fact or fiction, the stone of destiny story remains a powerful image, and this particular Trossachs landmark is deserving of its place in the annals of local and national folklore, despite its curious inability to settle on a name for itself. The McArthur family, former owners of Kirkton in the mid-nineteenth century, was farming the land and resided at Inchrie House. As generations passed, the country house became the Inchrie Hotel in 1935 and remained so until shortly after the second World War.

An historic event took place within the hotel in 1949. The second Scottish National Covenant was devised, which pledged the signatories to attempt to secure a Scottish Parliament with legislative authority for Scottish affairs. Two million people signed the covenant. As a direct result of this, Inchrie Hotel was renamed The Covenanter's Inn. Extensive renovations in the latter part of the century included the conversion of the house known as Middlecroft, owned by the Blair family, which was joined to the main building by means of a walkway.

All these changes have not denied the visitor the pervading sense of history which appears to seep through the very walls as you make your entrance through the oak doors. This, to me, remains its abiding attraction. The present day structure is now known as The Inchrie Castle Inn, with the dining area renamed The Covenanter's Restaurant. Despite the confusion with titles, as far as the locals are concerned, it will always be affectionately known simply as "The Covvies".



Forest Code



Guard against all risk of fire.
Protect trees, plants and wildlife.
Leave things as you find them, take nothing away.
Keep dogs under control.
Avoid damaging buildings, fences, hedges, walls and signs.
Leave no litter.

Did you Know?

The Stone of Destiny is a 336lb piece of yellow sandstone said to be the stone that, in Biblical times, Jacob slept upon and had a visionary dream of angels and God's promise to the descendants of Israel. The stone made its way to Ireland by Princess Tea, a daughter of Zedekiam. Subsequently, Irish kings were crowned upon the stone. The Irish believed that, if a true Royalist sat upon the stone, it would groan.

This stone was brought to Scotland by Fergus MacEarca, the founder of Dalriada. King Kenneth took it to Scone in 843AD, where the coronation of many kings took place.

It was taken in battle by Edward 1st, King of England, in 1296AD. The stone remained under the Coronation Throne on which every British monarch was crowned.

On St. Andrew's Day, 30th November, 1996, the stone was returned to Scotland with the stipulation that it be returned to the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey for the crowning of future sovereigns of the United Kingdom.



*"So the telling tale unfolds
Of kings and queens
And days of old
And those who would make a claim
By aggression
Then the tyrant army came
And took the stone away again.
They never knew the promise of succession."*

Myths & Legends



Loch Venachar is definitely not a place where you want to find yourself alone at night; for within its waters lurks one of the more unsavoury inhabitants of The Trossachs - a malignant creature known as *The Kelpie*.

The kelpie is not altogether too selective as regards potential victims, as its arrangement with Satan secures the right to feast on the human remains once the souls have been dispatched to the netherworld. It will appear, at first glance, to be a beauteous thing, fashioned as a horse with a striking mane and therein lies its appeal to the innocents among us. It will draw on this resource to lure the guiltless into a watery grave in a heartbeat!

*"Of course this story may have been written on a whim
But if you do decide to go for a swim
You may just encounter your ultimate fate
And up just a piece of bait!"*

Ramblings

Contributions welcome. Contact David Wilkie at DML on 01877 382258 or email david.wilkie@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Wildlife Watch

Monday 14th June: "In the Company of Ants"

I had heard tales of such things, but somehow the notion of anthills in The Trossachs appeared alien to me.....yet they ARE here, and in abundance!

The opportunity to observe 'the wood ant' in its natural habitat was too powerful to resist and, with this thought in mind, I persuaded one of our better-looking forest rangers, Katy Freeman, to act as my guide which she did willingly despite the fact that it was her day off.

As we traversed the paths into Loch Ard forest, dome upon dome came into view and it gradually became obvious we were witness to something very special indeed. The domes, fashioned from pine needles from the forest floor, were clearly visible from the roadside and exhibited an extensive array of tunnels. Despite our intrusion, we were not even considered a distraction as each and every ant moved with a singular purpose. Katy's keen eyes pointed out a lone weevil which had the misfortune to wander into uncharted territory, surrounded by thousands of potential predators. The weevil, amazingly enough, looked good odds to make its escape; as we left the scene, only one



brazen individual was clinging to its back end with admirable bravado.

The next site visited revealed a small grub being transported towards the dome by only two ants. I was puzzled why both these incidents did not invite a more chaotic response, until Katy pointed out that within the dome would be a communal larder in which all food supplies are gathered and distributed in measure for the benefit of the whole community.

I have always felt that one of the more curious aspects of human nature is the range of phobias attached to insects. Whilst understanding that, for some people, these fears are very real, my big adventure in search of the Loch Ard anthills provided me with no further clues on these issues. On the contrary, the society of the wood ant is clearly based on an overwhelming sense of unity and has an organized structure which humans could do well to learn from.

Notice Board

David Marshall Lodge July/August
Saturday 17th / Sunday 18th July 11.00am - 5.00pm
"The Makkers Tryst" (see article by John Epps)
A truly unique gathering of creative minds, with skills and attitudes to match. Miss out at your peril.
Saturday 24th July
"Bat Watch" 9.00pm onwards
An evening in the company of Katy Freeman who will provide a fascinating insight into one of the world's most misquoted species.
This event is bookable and numbers are extremely limited.
Sunday 25th July 11.00am - 5.00pm
"Wild in the Woods"
Forest rangers will be on hand as The Lodge plays host to an extensive array of activities on a wildlife theme for all the family to enjoy.
Sunday 1st August 2.00pm - 4.00pm
"Heelster Gowdie"
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Saturday 7th / Sunday 8th August 11.00am - 5.00pm
"The Makkers Tryst"
The group returns to create further artistic wonders.
Throughout August every Sunday 10.00am - 5.00pm
"Hedgerow Herbs"
Cameron Kennedy will be on hand to demonstrate potting and planting procedures in tandem with an extensive selection of outdoor plants for sale.

The Ranger's Corner



Have we ever seen a bluebell display such as this spring?
Have we ever heard so many woodland birds sing?
Have we ever seen the forest so alive and proud
As the kites and ospreys threaten to crowd?
It is always a chore to leave such images behind
As summer breezes in, with different agendas in mind.
At this time our emotions go under the knife
As nest sites everywhere breathe new life.
The Great Birds are here, nocturnal animals abound,
Our senses are stretched, recalling each sight and sound
I, for one, pay homage to all life that exists
Right here and now, within our midst.
Sadly, however, there remains but one issue to approach
As, amongst others, the insects encroach.
In this respect, I apologise with all propriety
If there is such a thing as the Midge Preservation Society

Schools' Report



Inversnaid Primary

We all remember that phrase "Could do better". Well, the only thing I can apply that to is the weather up at Inversnaid! The children have worked really hard, risen to all challenges and shown me what a wonderful place it is to be.

I have tried to summarise a few of the events that have made this term memorable for us all.

Walks with the RSPB:

This term we have been out on two walks with Duncan Cameron of the RSPB.

In May we walked up the Snaid Burn behind the school as far as the sheep fank. We saw plenty of birds and plants and the children loved using the telescope, but the highlight of the walk for Mrs. Woods and Mrs. Carter was the close up sighting of two billy goats. In June we walked down to the Inversnaid Hotel then along the shore of Loch Lomond. We were looking at the effects of overgrazing on young saplings in the woods. We then walked up to the RSPB control area that shows what would happen if no grazing took place. The children were amazed at the height of the trees! Unfortunately we weren't able to linger and discuss at length as someone had told the midges that we were around. Even with a range of repellents liberally applied we were still enveloped by clouds of wee beasties. What brave children they were! They didn't let millions of midges deter them. There they were, standing still with binoculars and cameras and taking turns at looking through the telescope. It was the adults dancing around and wafting arms about in a useless attempt to disperse the clouds!

Ben Ledi Sponsored challenge:

On Saturday 5th June a team from Inversnaid Primary School climbed Ben Ledi to raise money for playground developments. This was part of the sponsored walk organised by the Rotary Club of Callander. Ben Ledi posed little challenge for Primary 5 and Primary 6 boys, Mathew and Thomas. We heard only a few quiet mumbles and complaints on the way up and when Mrs Waugh's caramel shortbread was mentioned they changed gear and beat the adults to the summit! It was a great walk and they raised around £200 between them. Well done boys (and support team!)

Ben A'an Sponsored Challenge:

Inversnaid Primary School Team 2: Ross, Eilidh, Mathew and Jamie climbed Ben A'an on Saturday 19th June and raised around £150 for playground developments. The children walked amazingly well – they had to keep waiting for the adults! It was another great day out. Well done to all the children.

Music Project with the RSNO:

The Usher Hall in Edinburgh was packed with children as we made our way to our seats. This was a totally new experience for the younger children. The hall buzzed with atmosphere and we were treated to an exciting performance by the RSNO. We also took part in the Premiere of 'Top Secret' – a complicated composition about James Bond. This concert was the culmination of a whole Expressive Arts project based on Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition.'

'UFOs over Inversnaid??'

A while ago a visitor found part of a parachute up on the hill above the Bunkhouse. Scott kindly passed it on to us and we had great fun imagining who it had been attached to and what had happened. Scott then discovered that it had been attached to a rocket set off by a group of enthusiasts. Mrs Woods got on the trail which resulted in the children receiving a visit from Andie Norrie and John Bonsar, two of the enthusiasts. As we had all been studying 'Space' last term, the Inversnaid children invited P5 from Thornhill to come along for lunch and to share the 'Rocket Experience'. The children had no idea what the two gentlemen were bringing. It was great to see their excitement when they realized that not only had they brought a few rockets to show them but they had also brought a set of

rockets for the children to launch. What a lot of fun they had! We even had people stopping at the roadside to watch. Some rockets were observed from the car park by Rob Roy's Viewpoint. The children had a great time but they also really did learn a little of 'Rocket Science'

Strathcarron Hospice Go Yellow Day:

On Friday 18th June the children all attempted to wear something yellow to raise money for Strathcarron Hospice. As yellow is not a particularly popular colour at the moment there was a certain amount of creativity took place! We also found time to fit in Swimming Lessons and School Trips, visits from the art teacher, a performance by visiting musicians, a visit to Aberfoyle School to sample a session during their Creativity Week.....The list goes on. When I look back I wonder how we fitted it all in! But we did, and we also fitted in the usual work that goes on in a school.

Well done to everyone involved with Inversnaid Primary School. We've had a **great** term.

On a personal note:

My family and I arrived on 4th January on a very cold and slippery day not knowing how things were going to work out. We have found a wonderful community of helpful and caring people who have made us feel very welcome and have helped us to settle in any way they could. Thank you very much.

Aberfoyle Primary

Now that the summer holidays have begun I thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to update everyone on the school's achievements over the last term.

Firstly may I thank everyone who helped and supported the School Sale this year. Your generosity raised the wonderful total of £1251.00.

This money has enabled us to purchase new maths, reading and ICT resources for the school. As always our local businesses and community came together to ensure a wonderful day was had by all.

Earlier in May we arranged to have a creativity week in the school. During our week we were delighted to have had visits from Gordon Jeyes, Director of Children's Services and Margaret Doran, Head of Schools, who were able to see all the super work on display. The week produced some beautiful work that we were able to display at the school sale.

The feedback from the pupils has been overwhelmingly in favour of this becoming an annual event so may I thank all of you who gave your time, resources and patience to ensure that everyone had such an enjoyable and valuable learning experience.

Moving towards the end of term, setting a date for the school sports day is always a little worrying regarding the weather! This year we were fortunate enough to have a glorious sunny day and were able to have a truly fun filled afternoon.

Finally may I take this opportunity to thank all of the staff for their hard work and continued support and wish them, the pupils and parents an enjoyable summer break and look forward to an exciting new term in August.

*Carol A Omand
Head Teacher
Aberfoyle Primary School*



Kirk News

We are now hoping to enjoy a period of good weather for every one going on holiday, and for those coming to visit us.

Aberfoyle Kirk is having a Joint Songs of Praise with the Port Kirk. The first one is on Sunday 10th July at 6 30pm in Aberfoyle Church and all will be made welcome.

Gartmore Kirk are holding their Flower festival over the weekend of the 17th & 18th July with Evening Praise on the Sunday Evening; why not give them your support.

The Reverend Maria Plate will be conducting worship at Port of Menteith and Aberfoyle on the 11th and 18th July, and the Reverend Angus Stewart will be available in the case of Pastoral Emergency (Tel. 01360 850117)

Aberfoyle Guild. The annual Guild Sale will be held on Saturday 14th August at 2p.m. in the Kirk Hall and will be opened by Mrs. M. Neufeld. There are the usual stalls including home bakes, bric-a-brac, garden produce, books and toys. Admission is £1.50, which includes tea or coffee and home baking. Bring a friend along and give us your support. *Let us give according to our incomes, lest God make our income match our gifts.*

Travel safely and enjoy the wonders of Creation.

With every Blessing.
Rev. Danny Gibb



St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church

In The Trossachs and Strathendrick

June Was A Great Month!

Life in St Mary's is getting better and better as our new Rector, Richards Grosse and his wife Melanie and daughter Victoria get settled into the Rectory at Aberfoyle and start their life of Mission in Strathendrick and the Trossachs and in the parish of St Andrew's Callander.

The induction Service was held in St Mary's Church on Tuesday 29th June and was a huge success with over 130 worshippers being present. It was led by Michael Henley the Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane and the Rural Dean, and supported by clergy from all over the Trossachs as well as a deputation of twelve from his previous parishes in Lincolnshire. It was a truly Ecumenical Service that brought worshippers of the Lord together to celebrate the occasion.

David Miller, the Chairman of the Vestry of St Mary's, Colin Newman the Chairman of the Vestry of St Andrews and Margie Steven the Lay Reader who, as part of the Vacancy Committee, presented Richard as Priest to the Bishop saying that they had chosen Richard to be the Minister. They asked him to licence and institute him as Rector. The Bishop agreed and after more commitments by Richard and the congregation Richard became our new Rector.

St Mary's church looked its best for the occasion as Davie Henderson has done great work in the garden. Everyone is welcome to come and see the Church which is being redecorated and more items of interest are on display. The next big event will be the dedication of a special memorial to the Slate Quarrymen who were responsible for the building of the church here in Strathard. It was their Christian Faith and determination to have their own place of worship that enabled the church to be built.

More of this event will be made known in the future and all families who live in Strathard or beyond who are related to the Slate Quarrymen and the founders who have been identified are welcome to contact Margaret Johnson or Peter Joynson to check the list of names.

Sunday services will be at 11.00 am for the time being as the service times have not yet been finalised to the satisfaction of both parishes. All are welcome to attend who would like to see what a Scottish Episcopalian Service is like and all who are baptised are welcome to take communion. The Sunday school is held on the second Sunday of the month.

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The second year of the Park Authority nears its end and with that comes the nervous wait for the Scottish Executive's confirmation of the Council nominated appointments to the Board. There will be at least three changes as Catherine Organ (Stirling Council) and Ronnie McColl and Provost Alistair MacDonald (West Dunbarton Council) are standing down. The new appointments come into force on 8th July.

Our June meeting, held in Crianlarich, saw us revisiting our proposed bye law for the control of sea planes on Loch Lomond. When we first considered the Sea Plane Bye Law we were awaiting a planning application for a sea plane operation on Loch Lomond and we were reviewing the existing Loch Lomond bye laws. However, over the last month or so there has been a considerable increase in the sea plane activity on Loch Lomond. Furthermore because of the lack of clarity in what permissions are required both in respect of planning and aviation regulations, it was decided that we would give priority to a Sea Plane Bye Law for Loch Lomond. In doing so we have changed the emphasis of the Bye Law.

We propose that: The National Park Authority will consider applications for the use of Loch Lomond by seaplanes in relation to the four statutory National Park aims and in particular will operate a presumption against such a use unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated by an operation that there would not be either immediate or long term cumulative impacts on the special qualities of Loch Lomond.

I would stress that the proposed bye law is intended for Loch Lomond only and will not apply to any other of the National Park waterways. Furthermore there is a statutory process for the introduction of a bye law a part of which is that a consultation takes place. So you will get your opportunity to influence the situation.

Consultation and planning again pop up. Inevitably we had a number of consultation papers to attend to but one which I have referred to in previous issues again raised its head viz Rights of Appeal in Planning. I am glad to say that "noises" now coming from the Scottish Executive seem to indicate that they are listening to representations. Although it has not yet been ruled out it seems that the third party right of appeal has been put on the back burner at least.

Not on the back burner but subject to some delay is our plan to have a permanent administrative office in Callander. It had been hoped that in the relatively near future we would have an admin office in the centre of Callander where staff would be present to deal with planning applications, objections and the like. Unfortunately the promised premises will not now be available for some considerable time and consequently we are negotiating for space at the McLaren Leisure Centre while we search for a more permanent base in the centre of Callander. I will keep you posted on this.

A little more success has been achieved in The Apprenticeship Scheme. We now have Careers Scotland fully involved and the final tranche of funding, £6000 from Leader +, is in place to progress a feasibility study with the hope of getting a pilot project up and running in each area of the Park. I fervently hope that this project proves successful. A great deal of effort has already been invested in it and there is considerable good will from the training agencies. So here's hoping.

As always, I can be contacted as follows:
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By email: owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk

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Inversnaid Reserve



With the breeding season in full swing, it has been a hectic period on and off the reserve. The nest boxes on the reserve had 7 great tit, 7 blue tit, 11 unidentified tit species and 7 pied flycatchers using the boxes at the time of my inspection on the 2nd June. An unusual occurrence when inspecting nest boxes is finding pipistrelle bats using the empty nest boxes as emergency roost sites but only two individuals bats were recorded this year. A great spotted woodpecker also nested near the nature trail. The workshop at the Garrison farm has nesting starling, one pair of swallow who fledged three young and three pairs of house sparrow; we only had two pair to start with! Young sparrows are flying around but presently I have been unable to get an exact count on how successful they have been. The sparrows are nest building again for a second brood so the more the merrier as far as I am concerned. A pair of twite were inspecting the old Garrison walls but

decided to move on elsewhere but I have now recorded a female twite with a single fledged youngster in the Garrison farm area. On Loch Lomond, the mute swans appeared at the hotel car park with five cygnets and there are thirteen active house martin nests on the front of the hotel. A new record for me at the hotel car park was a magpie, I had heard from a shepherd further north that he had seen a magpie in Balquhidder Glen but magpies are an unusual record in the Inversnaid area.

The heavy rain combined with the thunder and lightning in May, not only affected all the phones and computers in the area but also reduced the breeding success of most of the ground nesting birds. The breeding bird survey on the Garrison side of the reserve has shown an increase in territorial pairs with snipe up to ten pair this year, skylark up from three to five. The curlew sadly failed but it was interesting to note we had two pair recorded at one time. Also increasing was pied wagtail, redpoll,

stonechat and whinchat, mistle thrush and song thrush, wheatear and two successful pair of dippers. Meadow pipit have mainly been washed out and although I have found a few nests with eggs and young there has been little evidence to show that they have had much success from the first brood. Three male cuckoos have also been recorded in the survey and a skirmish between two males over a female was quite entertaining to watch. Best sighting of all was female golden eagle hunting over the reserve being mobbed by hooded and carrion crows.

Finally, a visit from Inversnaid school pupils to the renovated sheep fank was very entertaining with two of the boys being shepherd/collie rounding up another boy with the girls helping herd him into a pen! They missed an excellent view of a male cuckoo doing this but it was good fun and they did let him out again. All five pupils, teacher and helper all made it back in one piece, although slightly wet!

*Duncan Cameron
Conservation Assistant*

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Milton

Hello Children,

Yippeeee, school holidays are here! This is the time of year I like the best. The exams are over and my marks were not too bad, except for French and maths. My sister, of course, got better marks than me in all her subjects. Then she is a swot! The twins, Duke and Katrine, are too young to have real exams yet, but their time will come.

Now it is playtime. Our first great adventure was a visit to Rob Roy's Cave at Inversnaid. This is a very famous cave; even Robert the Bruce hid in it almost seven hundred years ago. Early one morning, with Braeval and the twin kits, we set off up the River Forth to find George and Rory. Rory was grazing in a field at the Kirkton and George was sitting under a gorse bush, out of the way of large birds of prey who would like to

eat him for breakfast! It's not easy being a hare in the Trossachs. It could be hare today - gone tomorrow!

At the top of the Forth, where the water rises in a grove of ancient sacred trees, we stopped for lunch. While the Otter family tucked into a picnic of trout and tadpole sandwiches, Rory and George munched the long, luscious vegetation. Everything is growing wild and unchecked since the sheep were cleared off the ground. It is strangely quiet without them.

Then it was over to Beinn Uamha and down Loch Arklet to the Snaid Burn. In no time at all we were amongst the oak trees on the RSPB reserve - and keeping a careful eye out for the famous Inversnaid goats. In 1306, the local goats saved Robert the Bruce from certain capture and death.

We saw lots of different birds, West Highland Way walkers, dogs and even a badger going to visit Marjorie at Inversnaid Lodge Cottage - but no goats.

Less than a mile from the hotel, down over a jumble of rocks, close to the shore of Loch Lomond, we found the cave. C A V E has been painted in large white letters! Out came a family of goats, who did not care for being disturbed, and wandered away up the lochside. We explored the very small cave for a while; then we climbed up the hillside to find another cave. We camped the night in this snug cave with a pool of fresh water, telling stories and singing songs till we all fell asleep.

Bye for now,
Milton



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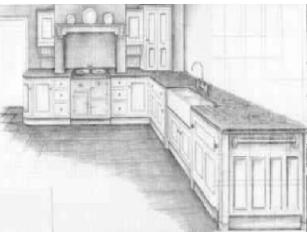
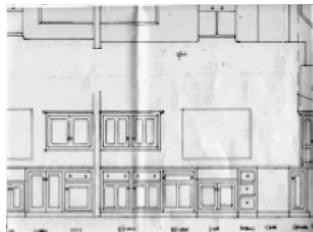
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RSVP Expand their Schools Project

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme launched its Schools Project in Stirling last year and it has proved to be a great success. Over 30 volunteers are now helping in a number of Primary Schools. They are mainly helping with reading, writing and numbers in the classroom. Some of the schools have also come along to ask for more specific talents such as playing the piano at a school show, teaching simple healthy cooking or teaching youngsters how to knit.

They also bring a bonus, the experience they have accumulated over a long life time. Several volunteers have said that deciding to help in the schools was the best step they have made since retirement.

All of our members are finding this activity great fun and very rewarding. They usually volunteer to do one morning or afternoon a week and the schools benefit from their skills, the long experience of life our members have, plus it is good for the volunteer.

We are now expanding the project into the rural areas and would welcome anyone who has a few hours to spare and who enjoy working with children. No qualifications are necessary just a sense of humour and a little



patience. We already have people from Doune, Callander, Killearn and Crianlarich who have become members.

Our members are involved in a wide range of activities from helping at the Oncology Clinic to Riding for the Disabled, from Footpath Inspecting to helping those recovering from mental ill health, from knitting premature baby clothes to delivering library books to the housebound and more. We are also looking at new projects such as Reminiscence Boxes and Telephone Befriending. If you would like to know more about the project or have some time to spare and do not know what you want to do please contact

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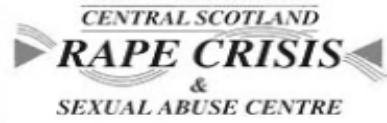
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strange but

*"'Tis strange-but true; for truth is always
strange; stranger than fiction."*

Byron (The ither wan)

There is the story of the lady who telephoned looking for bus times to Glasgow. She had an Irish accent, but that is surely incidental. She certainly was charming.

'Tell me,' she asked, 'when is the first bus to Glasgow?'

'Nine o'clock,' she was told.

'And when is the next one?'

'Ten o'clock,' was the reply.

There was a pause and then she said, 'Is there one in between?'

(The actual bus times have been changed to protect the innocent).

Seen on the side of a van travelling up the A82 by Loch Lomond:

'Bloggs and Brown - Plumbers

Oban, London, New York - mainly Oban'

Then we have a cautionary tale, admittedly from further afield, from the shopping paradise that is Glasgow to be exact. One of our locals had the unalloyed pleasure of accompanying his wife to sample the delights of the city recently. During the visit he had occasion to visit the gents' toilet within one of the more fashionable stores.

Whilst standing there, quietly attending to his business, he heard a man's voice (naturally) coming from the only cubicle: 'Yes, I'm in the toilet in John Lewis at present!' the man said - and not in a subdued voice either.

Our local man left, shaking his head with sadness. It would seem that even the gents' room is no refuge if your wife is hunting for you. Well, we trust it was his wife. Well, who else could it be....?

On the day after the England/Portugal match which ended badly for the former, there arose the tale of a middle-aged English couple up here on holiday. The couple are in one of the tourist offices within the National Park and approach the assistant behind the counter.

After some general 'holiday' information they then ask, in a jocular tone, 'Could you tell us if we are in Britain or Portugal?'

Bemused (Well, maybe not so bemused), the assistant asks the reason for the question.

'Well,' he is told, 'we were in the local last night and the whole pub was watching the match and cheering on Portugal.'

'Not to worry,' they continued in good humour, 'we told everyone we were Australians!'

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announcements

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Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month at 7.30pm. The next meeting is 5th August in Kinlochard Village Hall.

Aberfoyle Brownies

Meet every Wednesday at 6pm till 7.45pm in Church House.

Kinlochard Toddlers

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