

# Strathard News

Free

Christmas Edition Dec 2005

Issue 18

## Local Children lead Curling Ceremony

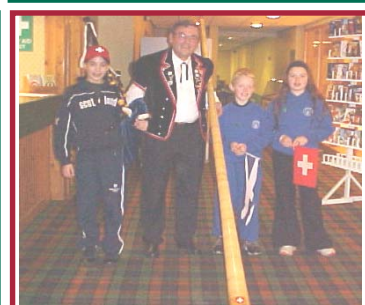
Aberfoyle Primary School was recently invited to select two children to be flag bearers at the opening ceremony of the Scotland /Switzerland curling match, held this November at Forest Hills. Mairi McLellan and Christopher Addison were the two lucky youngsters, and they were joined on the day by young Kinlochard piper, Annie Minnaar.

The Opening Ceremony began with Annie, Mairi and Christopher leading the two teams in a procession onto the ice, and closed later with a beautiful rendition of 'Amazing Grace' played on the Alpine horn by Swiss Musician Linus Auer, who accompanied the team. The children were then presented with keepsake medals by the Switzerland captain, Urs Muller. Many of the team members knew each other, as Swiss and Scottish teams take turns to tour each

others' countries every five years. This 2-week tour took the team to 18 ice rinks, from Inverness and Elgin down to Dumfries and Lockerbie.

On meeting the Scottish team, the children also recognised some old acquaintances; Sandy Shearlaw and Betty Montgomery, who have coached successive years of local school children at Forest Hills as part of the Curling Development Programme, and Irene Hird, who originally initiated the programme.

Irene is now the Scottish representative to the World Curling Federation, and the children were delighted to be invited to sit with her in the viewing gallery with some coffee and biscuits to watch the start of the match. An enjoyable and memorable morning for everyone, and back in time for maths in the afternoon!



Children with Swiss team(Top left), Mairi, Christopher and Annie with Linus Auer(above right), receiving medals from Captain Urs Muller (top right), Watching the match with Irene Hird(above left)

Merry Christmas

Christmas countdown has begun.  
We're obliged to join the fun.  
Now's the season to be jolly;  
Come ye faithful - spend your lolly.  
"Silent Night" for ever more  
Blaring out in ev'ry store.  
Ev'ry year our precious nearest  
Do become by far the dearest;  
Youngsters want a video game,  
Father, too - not quite the same!  
Aunt and uncle are quite safe:  
Talcum powder, after-shave!  
Christmas bells are ding-a-linging?  
No! The tills are madly ringing.  
Of all we may receive or give  
How materialistically we live;  
Lucky are those who reminisce:  
Once Christmas time meant joy and bliss!

Sigrid Armitage

### Important Notice From The Doctors at Aberfoyle Medical Centre HOLIDAYS

Please note that the Medical Centre will be closed on the following dates:

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

and

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2005**

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

It would be helpful if all repeat prescriptions could be ordered by  
**15<sup>th</sup> December**

All doctors and staff would like to take this opportunity to wish patients a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year

### Christmas Tree Price List



#### Norway Spruce & Lodgepole Pine

3' And Under 4' (0.9m – 1.2m)	£9
4' And Under 5' (1.2m – 1.5m)	£11
5' And Under 6' (1.5m – 1.8m)	£12
6' And Under 7' (1.8m – 2.1m)	£15
7' And Under 8' (2.1m – 2.4m)	£17
8' And Under 9' (2.4m – 2.75m)	£21
9' And Under 10' (2.75 – 3.05m)	£26
10' and Under 11' (3.05 – 3.4m)	£29

#### Nordman Fir

3' And Under 4' (0.9m – 1.2m)	£13
4' And Under 5' (1.2m – 1.5m)	£19
5' And Under 6' (1.5m – 1.8m)	£26
6' And Under 7' (1.8m – 2.1m)	£30
7' And Under 8' (2.1m – 2.4m)	£31
8' And Under 9' (2.4m – 2.75m)	£33
9' And Under 10' (2.75m – 3.05m)	£35



Forestry Commission  
Scotland

### Season's Greetings to All Our Readers

from Ian, Norman, Marion, Dougie, Margaret & David



### Christmas Quiz

- 1 Who declared that Christmas was 'humbug'?
- 2 Tar charms is coal. Who the dickens is that?
- 3 Christmas Island is in which ocean?
- 4 Can Christmas Day fall on Boxing Day?
- 5 What can be silent at Christmas?
- 6 Christmas Atoll is in which ocean?
- 7 A class Aunt can be which Christmas figure?
- 8 In which country was the Christmas card first designed in 1843?
- 9 Where is Christmas Ridge?
- 10 Where did the modern Christmas tree originate?

Answers on page 15

## DML Notice Board



### SAT 4TH/SUN 5TH DECEMBER

The first of three Christmas events weekends concentrates on children's activities: an opportunity to make your own Xmas cards and decorations, bird feeders and wooden pendants.

"Children's crafts" is on from 12noon-4pm both days. There will also be a wildlife walk each day in the company of our forest ranger, Katy Freeman (1pm -2pm). There is a small charge of £1.00 for both these events.

### SAT 11TH/SUN 12TH DECEMBER

As in the previous weekend, "Children's Crafts" will still be on the menu, with the added attraction of a Christmas Treasure Hunt. On the Sunday ONLY The Lodge is delighted to welcome back The Lomond Mountain Rescue Team for their annual Fun day, with all the traditional Christmas trimmings, including tombola, mulled wine and mince pies. There will also be an appearance by our very special canine friends from the local husky group.

### SAT 18TH/SUN 19TH DECEMBER

The David Marshall Lodge will be bursting at the seams on our Christmas Fayre weekend, offering the last-minute shoppers a chance to choose an unusual or special gift from the shop or the twelve craft stalls in attendance. Demonstration workshops will be ongoing and there will be a chainsaw sculptor displaying his skills throughout the Sunday. Carol singing by the local brownies can be heard between 1pm and 2pm. There is a strong rumour SANTA CLAUS will be paying us a visit around 2pm!!

## Macmillan Cancer Relief

The coffee morning, held in the Medical Centre on the 24<sup>th</sup> September in aid of the Macmillan Nurses, raised the magnificent sum of £800. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of all the people who donated money, baking and raffle prizes to this worthy cause.

The Medical Garden Committee sincerely thank all who supported the coffee morning and our special thanks go to the Surgery ladies who worked so hard selling the raffle tickets for two weeks; it is due to their efforts that such a large sum was raised. Thank you all.

*Margaret McKeand*

## New Owners of Kinlochard Shop Repeat History

Shona and Richard Baston follow once again in the footsteps of a not forgotten local hero - Donnie MacDonald. Donnie built the original "shack" on the grounds of the village shop and he and his wife, Margaret, ran a successful business from there for many a year. Soon after, he built Ardmore and life continued for him and his family in Kinlochard. When Donnie passed away, the Bastons purchased Ardmore from Donnie's sons and settled into their own life in a new view of the village. Not knowing that their previous tenant had originally built the shop, they moved back into the site and started trading in September 2004. So if you've ever wondered about coincidences and odd turn-ups, surely this has to be one of them. Were they guided or pushed? No matter, a warm welcome will greet you in the shop just as it did at the kitchen door of Ardmore. Pop in and see for yourself.

### Changes to our Waste Collection

During October/November all green bins will be replaced by grey bins. The process of emptying, uplifting and replacing the bins will take place in one day and involves three lorries - one to empty, one to uplift and one to drop off. The reason for the change is that the new bin lorries coming in November are designed to take the same style as the brown bin. As you can understand this will take a great deal of organisation. Please be patient with all the staff involved in this. They really will be doing their best to make it go smoothly but even a small hold-up, let alone a breakdown, can throw the timetable out. Once this is complete we should see a great improvement in the service.



## Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Kirk News Christmas Dates

**Sunday 19th December:** Carol Service - 10am at Port of Menteith and 11.15am at Aberfoyle.

**Friday 24th December:** Watchnight Service - 7.30pm at Port of Menteith and 11.30pm at Aberfoyle.

**Sunday 26th December:** Service - 10am Port of Menteith and 11.15am Aberfoyle.

Whether you are a visitor or a local resident each of our Churches extends a warm welcome to you, especially at this time of the celebration of the love of God brought to us by a child.

The Boys' Brigade will be on holiday from Friday 17th December and resume on Friday 14th January.

The Guild Christmas Meeting will be held in Church House at 2p.m. on Monday 20th December 2004.

May the joy and wonder of Christmas come into your homes, may the blessing of good health and successful endeavour be your reward in the New Year.

*Reverend Danny Gibb*

## Adult Learning Programme

January to March 2005  
delivered in partnership between  
Clackmannan and Falkirk Colleges

The classes starting in January are now being planned, and cover a variety of topics including Computing, Languages and Pottery. Brochures will be available from 1<sup>st</sup> December

**For a free brochure please  
phone 01360 441608**

## The Rob Roy Hotel

**Have you seen the changes on your own doorstep?  
The transformation needs to be seen to be believed!**

Why not come and try the *all new* bar menu, lots of favourites with the odd twist. We pride ourselves on making as much as we can in-house with local produce.

**Open every day, serving food till 8.45pm**

Steven Bundy our Head Chef and his team are producing some superb four course dinners in our non smoking Green Room Restaurant and from only £16.95 plus Tea & Coffee you can always find a "special occasion" to save you from the washing up.

*We also specialize in "Fair Trade" Teas and Coffees which you could always combine with some home baking.*

So come on in and have a look at what we've done and add us to your list of regular haunts.

We will be very glad to welcome you

**Tel: 01877 382245 Fax: 01877 382262**

*Aberfoyle, Stirlingshire, FK8 3UX*





# Huskies No More....!

Sadly and for the first winter in over 15 years, there will be no husky races in the Queen Elizabeth Forest.



There has always been at least one, sometimes more, events involving huskies in the Aberfoyle area.

That is not to say the sport is dying out. It has, in fact, grown in popularity over the past few years. This winter, for example, there will be 4 husky rallies held in Devilla Forest, Kincardine and 3 held at Forest of Ae, Dumfries and Galloway. Unfortunately, for our immediate area the forest trails have degenerated over the past 2 years so much so that 'mushers' (Husky drivers) are unwilling to risk bringing their dogs to compete on such surfaces.

It cannot be avoided. The Forestry have always been understanding of our needs but the necessary extensive harvesting has ruined the trails for the time being.

## The Digital Divide Is Narrowing!!

A fast internet connection is available to you now! Managed by local volunteers, not some faceless ISP. 25 homes are already benefiting from Satellite Wireless internet access.

If you live in Kinlochard or Aberfoyle and are tired of waiting for files to come and go, or want to use your phone when someone else is surfing, then call me for more info.

I'm especially interested to hear from you if you operate a business from home and would like broadband.

**Mary Phillips 01877 382 696**

What might be good enough for training our dog teams is not sufficient for a husky race, for obvious reasons.

The good news is that the Forestry have worked hard on our behalf this autumn and developed trails for training our teams. Unfortunately, at this moment in time, the race calendar for this winter is now full. We are hoping, however, that we might be able to run a longer distance event towards the end of the winter season. This area is still popular with many mushers from England and the north of Scotland, as well as being fairly local to a number who live in the central belt.

Another idea we are considering is to run a 2 day event to coincide with the Aberfoyle Mushroom Festival next October. It could be an added attraction, hopefully, and bring in some more visitors and competitors who would stay in overnight accommodation. This is something which we will discuss with the Forestry and with the Aberfoyle Traders once a definite date is set for next year's festival.

*By Dougie MacPherson*

## Guyana Charity BBQ

As part of the Aberfoyle Mushroom Weekend of the 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> October we organised a charity BBQ. This was very successful and well supported by the local Aberfoyle community and visitors to Aberfoyle. This raised an amount of £561.83 for CHAS. This was an increase on last year's excellent £353.82.

Many thanks to Donald and Elspeth for their hard work and time.

*Robert Figgis  
Director*

## editorial

Welcome to our Christmas/New Year edition. It looks really festive with the addition of colour. This, of course, is only possible because of the money raised by donations, regular subscribers and advertisers. Thank you for that. Remember, you can use the form on page 15 to receive your copy by mail or have it sent to someone you know has an interest in the area – an original Christmas present perhaps.

Talking of Christmas – and who can avoid it at this time of year- we seem to have an outbreak of peace and goodwill. People are managing to work in harmony to improve our community: the National Park is genuinely consulting, the work on paths and trails seems to be progressing without discord and the RSPB is working *with* the British Feral Goat Research Group. Perhaps we are learning to be less confrontational and more proactive or is this just wishful thinking?

In the run up to Christmas I hope you will all take the opportunity to shop locally for presents and produce. I have bought most of my presents in this area for many years now. It is ideal: we have a great selection of shops offering quality and unusual items, free convenient parking, activities for the children and excellent places to sit down and take a break – all without queuing for hours.

When that bit is all over, may I wish you all a very merry Christmas and all the very best for 2005.

*Margaret*

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# Community Futures Update

## Transport & Access Group Paths & Trails

It is now a year since the Transport and Access Group carried out the first stage of a consultation designed to help identify where people were currently taking access, either on foot, by bike or on horseback, and where they would like to see improvements and take responsible access in the future. Members of the local community joined the existing group to form a path group, together with National Park and Forestry Commission staff. The group would like to take this opportunity to thank Forest Hills Hotel for providing, free of charge, facilities for the group to hold meetings throughout the year.

Since the consultation, various combinations of group members have been out walking the routes and reporting back. We had to discard a few routes for practical reasons but, where possible, we worked out alternatives and added links, where appropriate, to create a cohesive network. Routes were marked on maps and from these the National Park have produced digitized versions of the originals which will go on public display as part of the second phase of the consultation process. Various landowners have been consulted, and where negotiations are still progressing this will be indicated on the digitized maps.

Several of the desired routes have tied in well with the Forestry Commission's own 5-year path-creation programme which was already under way. The Forestry Commission is constructing four footbridges in key locations, three of which should be completed by Christmas. These are: (1) across the Duchray Water below the new car park just south-west of Milton; (2) also across the Duchray Water approx 8km upstream to replace the former bailey bridge; (3) across the Achray Water approx 800m west of Loch Achray Hotel. The other bridge is to be over the Forth just south-east of Doon Hill, and should be completed early next year.

Public display of the maps produced by the National Park will take place at two afternoon drop-in sessions at Aberfoyle Memorial Hall and Kinlochard Village Hall on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February respectively (details to follow later). This will be the opportunity for people to comment on the routes, indicate their preferences and express any concerns before the project goes to the next stage.

## Historic Route to Inversnaid & Stronachlachar

With the help of the National Park and the Forestry Commission, the proposal to establish a traffic-free route through Strathard has been gaining momentum. This would involve restoring sections of old road, including the old military road between Inversnaid and Stronachlachar, and connecting them up to existing forestry roads and paths to form a continuous route from Aberfoyle, avoiding the B829 and the C68.

Although it was originally hoped the whole route would be available to walkers and cyclists, it has been decided for a variety of reasons that the section by Loch Arklet to Inversnaid should be for walkers only, and for the last mile or so to Inversnaid the route should deviate from the line of the old road and cross to the south of the Arklet Water.

Several letters expressing local support and encouragement have been received, and we have been promised funding from Leader+ and the National Park towards a feasibility study. Other funding applications have been made and we expect to appoint consultants shortly. They will advise on costs and determine the most appropriate route at key locations, notably where the existing public road and the Arklet Water are crossed.

An important preparatory stage will be an archaeological dig at three sections along the route. It is hoped this will take place in March 2005 and that local people will be able to visit the sites while work is in progress. The archaeological work will involve volunteers – we have already had offers of help, but anyone wishing to take part should contact me on 382636.

## Transport

There was a good response from Strathard as a whole to the National Park transport survey last summer, so we hope we have made our case for an improvement to our services once the results are acted upon.

However, after the luxury of two Trundler buses last summer, we are for the time being back to square one with no Trundler service at all through late autumn, winter and early spring. This means no service during daylight at the moment to Callander – the Addison evening service to Callander and back is still running, and the Postbus does an afternoon run just one way.

As regards the Stirling service, we are keeping our fingers crossed. Last summer we wrote to Stirling Council urging them to apply for a Scottish Executive Bus Route Development Grant for this service. The scheme will provide extra funding for new routes or under-used existing ones for up to three years, and would allow time for the routes to prove themselves viable if the level of service were to be improved. We have argued that the Aberfoyle-Stirling service is too infrequent to be a realistic option for many people, and we hope this scheme will be an opportunity to show there are many more potential passengers.

*John Digney*  
01877 382636

## Local Economic Development

### The Makkers Don't Bite

Most of us have become familiar with local arts and crafts group "The Makkers", perhaps at the regular David Marshall Lodge events or at the Memorial Hall during the Mushroom Festival, or perhaps at Hopetoun House during the Summer. What makes The Makkers different? In one word *fun!*

The basic tenets of the group are for talented folk to entertain and encourage people to take part in the creative arts whilst showcasing locally made products to wholesale and retail buyers. Unashamedly commercial in our objectives, past years' themes have been to help AILLST, our Area Tourist Board to offer locally made goods to our Summer visitors... then last season we sought direct access to wider sales opportunities. Many people will think of the progress thus far as an end in itself, but no - it's still only the beginning!! Some of our objectives are enough to make your hair curl!

If you have creative talent and would like to be a part of the future of "The Makkers", please contact either John Epps, group leader for Community Futures Local Economic Development, telephone 01877 382276, e-mail crannaighouse@aol.com or Eric Lewis, tel 01876 870295, e-mail siwelcire@yahoo.co.uk We don't bite, there really is a place for anyone who enjoys being creative in a caring and social environment, and if you like making money from your talent too, you can be sure you will fit in perfectly.



# Country Pursuits of Strathard

The annual Arts and Crafts Exhibition, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> October, was a huge success. It was well supported by local people as well as visitors. Thanks are due, in particular, to those who demonstrated a variety of crafts and provided an opportunity for the children to have a "hands on" experience.

The standard in the Schools Competition seems to improve every year. The judges were very impressed, often finding it difficult to decide who should win. In most categories it was very, very close. Thanks to those who brought such enthusiasm to this very difficult task.

## Results of Schools' Competition

### Calligraphy:

P1/2: 1<sup>st</sup> Rachel Johnson (Port of Menteith); 2<sup>nd</sup> Beth Whitelaw (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> John Gardner (Gartmore)

P3/4: 1<sup>st</sup> Ava Dinwoodie (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Duncan Maclean (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Seona Glen (Port of Menteith); HC Bethan Peddle (Aberfoyle)

P5/6/7: 1<sup>st</sup> Ebbe Galbraith (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Rachel Speirs (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Emma Buchanan (Gartmore); HC Tamsin Webster (Gartmore)

### Model Room in a Shoe Box:

Lower Primary: 1<sup>st</sup> Eslyn Craven and Colette Walker (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Emily Ross (Gartmore) and Eilidh Walker (Inversnaid); 3<sup>rd</sup> Aimee Cholerton and Holly Palmer (Gartmore)

Upper Primary: 1<sup>st</sup> Rachel Speirs and Ebbe Galbraith (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Emily Gardner and Emma Buchanan (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Tamsin Webster and Cameron Reid (Gartmore)

### Portrait of an Historical Character:

Pre-school: 1<sup>st</sup> Finn Manders (Kinlochard)

P1/2: 1<sup>st</sup> Paul Martin (Inversnaid); 2<sup>nd</sup> Eilidh Walker (Inversnaid); 3<sup>rd</sup> Nathan Martin (Inversnaid)

P5/6/7: 1<sup>st</sup> Henrietta Bowie (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Ross Walker (Inversnaid); 3<sup>rd</sup> = David Wallace (Aberfoyle) and Callum MacDougall (Port of Menteith)

### 3D Models

P1/2: 1<sup>st</sup> Annmarie Peerless (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> John Gardner (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Veronica Owen (Gartmore)

P3/4: 1<sup>st</sup> Duncan Maclean (Gartmore); Eslyn Craven (Gartmore); Megan Simpson (Aberfoyle); HC Elie Hall (Aberfoyle)

P5/6/7: 1<sup>st</sup> Rachel Speirs (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Tamsin Webster (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Cameron Maclean (Gartmore); HC Cameron Angus Reid (Gartmore)

### Creative Writing:

Upper Primary: 1<sup>st</sup> = Callum MacDougall (Port of Menteith) and Henrietta Bowie (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> = Christopher Addison (Aberfoyle), Laura McDougall (Port of Menteith) and Stephanie Betts (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> = Rory Anderson (Aberfoyle), Jamie MacDougall (Port of Menteith) and Lucy Brooks (Gartmore)

### Technology:

P5/6/7: 1<sup>st</sup> Lucy Brooks and Stephanie Betts (Gartmore); 2<sup>nd</sup> Henrietta Bowie, Hannah Reid and Ebbe Galbraith (Gartmore); 3<sup>rd</sup> Andrew Orr and William McIlheron (Gartmore)

**Strathard Cup:** (awarded to the best photograph taken locally):

Susan and Sandy Philips

Thanks are also due to all who exhibited, without whom there would be no show, and, of course, the committee which works so hard to put it all together.



## Jobseeker's Allowance

In 2003 the government reinterpreted the law regarding Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) for seasonal workers. This means that if you are a seasonal worker for more than one year you will no longer be entitled to JSA between seasons. Since most seasonal jobs pay minimum wage, or just above, this in effect halves the minimum wage. This puts a strain, not only seasonal workers, but also on local businesses struggling to find staff.

Most people taking on seasonal jobs do so to make ends meet, only to find they are worse off. This means they can't afford to take on jobs to help themselves, and the local economy. Our aim is to help people keep their jobs and not fall into this poverty trap, and to this end we (Loch Katrine Community Trust) have been corresponding with Anne McGuire for several months, are currently awaiting further discussions with her, and would like to see a change in the law to improve the situation.

If this situation affects you, or anyone you know, or if you just want to lend some support, please contact Mike Pearson (Director, Loch Katrine Community Trust) on 01877 386 279.

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## Cry "FREEDOM" at David Marshall Lodge

A woollen mill delivery driver came across a scene of mayhem in June: a Mallard escorting her clutch of day-old duckling across the road near Aberfoyle had been struck by a car... her offspring (still sitting by their cold mother) were gathered safely into a used delivery box and taken to the Scottish Wool Centre... within minutes they were under a heat lamp at Crannaig House - sharing a creche with some chicks which Ann and John Epps were raising. Below are the ducklings at 16 weeks old being returned to the wild at the DML pond, the event shared with visitor centre experts and a gathering of interested visitors... within moments the duckling were entirely at home, feeding and splashing in the water. Their wee legs were ringed before release, so if we learn where they turn-up in the future, we'll let SN readers know how they are getting on.



## FORESTRY MINISTER ANNOUNCES HELP FOR COMMUNITY LAND PURCHASE

Scotland's Forestry Minister today announced a public consultation on proposals to make it easier for communities to buy or lease national forest land.

Three key initiatives are being proposed in the paper entitled The National Forest Land Scheme. They are being dovetailed together to ensure the national forest estate works harder for the benefit of communities across the country.

The initiatives are:

- \* local people would have a range of options to get more involved in their forests including, for the first time, the flexibility to buy or lease national forest land where community control is in the public interest;

- \* housing organisations would be able to buy land at a reduced price for affordable housing; and

- \* communities would be given the first chance to buy national forest land when it comes on the market, ensuring they don't have to enter into a bidding war.

Speaking at the Scottish Forestry Forum in Loch Lomond, Forestry Minister Lewis Macdonald said:

"Our national forests contribute greatly to the economy and the environment, but also have a great deal to offer in social terms. We need to ensure that the national forest estate works harder for people in Scotland, and this new

consultation paper strives to put people and communities to the top of the agenda. It is part of our work in land reform to diversify land ownership and empower communities.

"The proposed National Forest Land Scheme has three parts: community acquisition, sponsored sale of surplus land, and land for affordable housing.

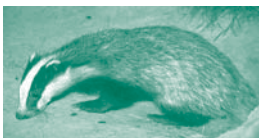
"Based on the principles of the Community Right to Buy Scheme, it will provide a more flexible route for the purchase or lease of land managed by Forestry Commission Scotland. If communities can meet the eight criteria, they will be able to apply to buy or lease national forest land. They will have to show that their proposals will bring increased benefits to the community, and be in the wider public interest.

"We are currently working with the Forestry for People Advisory Panel and the Birse Community Trust to explore how best the scheme can meet the needs of communities."

The public consultation on the proposed National Forest Land Scheme will run until Monday 7 February. For more information log on to [www.forestry.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/consultations). Hard copies of the report are available by contacting Sharon Robinson by e-mail on [sharon.robinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.robinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk), or by calling her on 0131 314 6486.

## Calling all Badger Lovers!

Scottish Badgers, the organisation responsible for Badger Conservation in Scotland, is hoping to form a local Badger Group in the Trossachs area of the Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park.



Badgers are still persecuted throughout Scotland and the more local groups we have, the more protection we can try and give these delightful creatures. The group will be responsible for collating information on Badgers in the area, carrying out surveys of Badger setts and monitoring Badger populations. You

don't need a vast knowledge of Badgers, the only qualification required is enthusiasm. If you are interested in becoming part of the group or simply require any more information, please contact Scott Ashworth on 01877 382034 or 07739 775050. For more information on Scottish Badgers visit [www.scottishbadgers.org.uk](http://www.scottishbadgers.org.uk)

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A good turnout in Kinlochard, and the main topic? Roads of course, the B829 in particular. It was no surprise to anyone that Stirling fared so badly in the latest road conditions survey. Time for more strongly worded letters to the Council. Since the meeting I have been contacted with regard to the Community Council's thoughts on how best to spend the £47,500 which the Forest Hills complex is contributing towards the upkeep of the B829. This follows their application for permission to build an extension to the hotel, more lodges and staff quarters. This amount of money will cover about 4km of road, so we want to make sure we identify the right stretch of road. The best thing about this time of the year is that we are planning the senior Citizens Christmas Dinner – a very enjoyable chore. One or two people have mentioned that they hadn't received an invitation, although they

now qualify by age, (60 for women, 65 for men). Please feel free to contact any of the councillors to have your name added to the list. We only go by local knowledge, guesswork, and sometimes by asking embarrassing questions, (and getting it wrong!). Apologies for any mistakes made.

You'll all have heard by now that Scottish Water have sold Glengyle and several other properties within the Loch Katrine catchment area. Our community council has been working for nearly two years now, alongside all the other community groups representing the catchment area to ensure that not only Scottish Water but also other agencies such as the Scottish Executive, National Park, Stirling Council, the Area Tourist Board and Forest Enterprise, are all aware of the importance of the Loch and the SS Sir Walter Scott, to our communities. We are dismayed at how small the remaining population is

and are hoping that current plans to set up a Trust to manage the tourism complex and the boat will help to keep the community viable. For this reason we attempted to have 3 of the smaller properties withdrawn from auction until we could establish what need there will be for affordable housing, though only one was withdrawn before the event.

As you will see elsewhere in this edition, our skip and re-cycling bins are to be removed from the car park in the near future, and we have been trying to find alternative sites, although it looks as though the skip will disappear permanently, due to new regulations on the management of these sites. Any thoughts on this development will be welcome. Please get in touch with ourselves, or with Stirling Council direct.

And finally.... It only remains to wish each and everyone of you A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A GOOD NEW YEAR!

*Ros*

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## Changes to Aberfoyle Civic Amenity Site

As some residents may already be aware, the Civic Amenity Site at the Wool Centre car park in Aberfoyle is changing. For a number of reasons, including fly-tipping at the site, Stirling Council has taken the decision to remove the skips from the site, and unfortunately is unable to re-site these in Aberfoyle. The recycling banks will be relocated locally, although a new site has yet to be agreed - residents will be informed before the banks are moved.

The initial plan was to remove the skips in mid-December, however after consultation with Strathard Community Council it has been decided that the skips should remain in place until after the New Year. They will now be removed on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005. This will give residents access to them over the Christmas period, traditionally a time when we all produce more waste than normal.

Before taking rubbish to the skip, please think about what you are throwing out and whether it can be recycled instead. Remember much of the additional waste produced over the festive period is recyclable, e.g. all those extra glass bottles and cans, not to mention Christmas cards and wrapping paper. These can either be put in the recycling banks at the Wool Centre, or in recycling boxes for kerbside

collection. For households who have a brown bin, all sorts of cardboard packaging can be put in this for composting (please remember to remove any other packaging materials such as polystyrene or plastic). Once the skips have been removed residents who have bulky waste to dispose of will have a couple of options. The closest Civic Amenity Sites are in Callander and Balfour, and waste can be taken to these sites and disposed of free of charge. Their opening hours are Monday to Friday 5pm till 8pm, and Saturday 10 am till 2 pm. Alternatively, for large items such as furniture, residents can contact Stirling Council's Contact Centre to arrange a special uplift.

There are a number of properties in the outlying Aberfoyle area who do not have a refuse collection service in place, and who bring their household waste to the civic amenity site. Waste Services will provide a regular collection service to these properties, and Officers are currently investigating this and contacting the households concerned. If you have not yet been contacted, please get in touch with Jennifer Elliott, Community Waste Planning Officer, on 01786 442696 or e-mail [elliottja@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:elliottja@stirling.gov.uk).

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## Stirling Area Local Learning Partnership Adult Learning Fund / Adult Learning Guide

Stirling Area Local Learning Partnership (SALLP), which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund, launched the Adult Learning Fund last year. The fund supports projects directly related to Adult Learning; e.g. supporting tutor costs where these cannot be covered from other sources; travel costs to adult learning events, courses or projects and meeting childcare costs to improve access to adult learning.

Groups who have benefited from the Fund in the past include **Lets Make it Better (LMIB)**, a self-help mental health users' group supporting its members via the Sunlite Café Project, the LMIB Walking Group, the Thursday Group and other social events. The **Adult Learning Fund** grant sponsored Jackie Turnbull, the Café Co-ordinator and Eileen Gunn, an LMIB volunteer through Falkirk College's Flexible Learning ECDL in order to extend the computer skills base within the project and strengthen the project's organisational, financial and administrative structures. The Café also produces the LMIB newsletter (bi-monthly), and the skills gained by Eileen and Jackie on the ECDL course will allow them to make the best use of their computer equipment and software.

A grant was also awarded to cover the costs of training in Stress Management for 24 carers at the **Stirling Carers' Centre**. The course was designed to help carers cope with the stress and isolation which often results from being a carer. The Centre will also benefit from further Adult Learning Fund grant money to run a course in Self Assertiveness for carers later in the year.

**Gargunnoch Songsters**, who perform to a wide range of local audiences including residents of local residential care homes, accessed the Fund to cover costs for workshops on singing technique, breathing control, diction and general musicianship to address the lack of formal vocal training amongst choir members. The Songsters performed 14 concerts in 2003 to around 1100 people as far afield as Kirkintilloch, Calander and Dollar.

The Fund is also paid for tutor costs for an Arts and Crafts class at the Hillview Community Centre in Culterhove. The classes covered basic arts and crafts techniques, as well as textile work. The application was made by **Culterhove Opportunities Partnership** after particular interest in this type of class was expressed by local people via an adult learning survey conducted in the area.

If you would like more information about the Fund, please contact Margaret McKechnie on **01786 448887** or by email at [sallp@btconnect.com](mailto:sallp@btconnect.com).

SALLP also produces the Adult Learning Guide, a virtual "Yellow Pages" of learning opportunities throughout the Stirling Council area. The latest edition of the Stirling Adult Learning Guide is now available at all Stirling Council libraries and community centres or direct from SALLP by telephoning **01786 448887** or emailing [sallp@btconnect.com](mailto:sallp@btconnect.com). The Guide is also available in electronic text format, suitable for screen readers for those learners with a visual impairment.

## Letters to the Editor .....have your say!

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, School house, Inversnaid FK8 3TU, or email [editor@strathardnews.com](mailto:editor@strathardnews.com)

### Carcass Transportation

Recently I had the misfortune to witness the sickening sight of a number of dead stags being trundled down Lochard Road in an open trailer behind a Forestry truck. The timing was even more unfortunate as the school kids were just leaving school. I know there appears to be a need for the culling of stags, but surely they can be transported in a less conspicuous way. It saddens me to write this article since the Forestry Commission do such an outstanding job in the community but I feel that this is a sensitive issue that should be addressed.

Ian Marshall



## The Ranger's Corner

### The Forest

*"A Place To Enjoy, Not To Own"*

The river crackles with the sound of small cakes of ice  
Floating with a speed full of promise.  
I wonder at their conversation, these tiny rafts  
And if their journey's end will bring contentment.  
Last year's grasses, now entombed in frost  
Display a stunning mosaic of spiders' webs  
Appearing like gossamer veils spun by the faeries  
Exposed by the early morning dew.  
In understanding The Forest, you must seek it out in all  
seasons And be familiar with its moods..  
That the flower falls in spring or summer..  
That the fruit and leaves fall and wither in autumn..  
And that, even in winter, the naked twigs  
Can appear more brilliant than in the fullness of spring.  
During the changing of seasons the landscape exudes  
floods of charm  
Offering an inexhaustible array of images and sounds.

As the hardness of winter is relaxed  
The spring advances, in spite of the cold  
Creating ghosts out of the early morning mists  
And whispering near silent dreams of intent  
For it is now that the light begins to appear  
And no strong wind or rainstorm will deny it.  
As the ice thaws..it brings expectancy  
Breathtaking hidden treasures await.

Our patience is rewarded with an explosion  
Of life and colour  
And changing contrasts of land and water  
And the scent..  
What can compare with nature's perfumes  
Intoxicating the cool breeze?  
With each passing day it appears as though  
An army of painters have been working through the night  
Feverishly dipping their brushes  
To add a new coat of paint to each blade and leaf.  
There is immense admiration to be found  
In the tenacity and greed of spring  
As it pummels its way into our lives.  
Surely there is no finer time to be alive.

But nature is unceasing, and there is no time to pause  
And though I never tire of its tonic  
The liquid dreams of spring  
Make way for the phenomenon that is summer.  
There is now an abundance of life to be found  
In the trees, in the meadows, in the hedgerows..  
In the sweet flowing rivers and lochs.  
The Forest now stands as proud as it can be  
As if there is no thought of duration  
It is intense..and pure  
And more..  
It is breeding season.  
As the woodland birds fledge their nests  
They display an arrogance in flight with little prompting  
Each sight, however glimpsing  
Of a raptor in the midst of summer  
Is an elixir to my eyes  
And a fountain of youth to my senses.

All too soon these sensations come to pass  
As the virtues of autumn provide new inspiration  
Bathing us in a kaleidoscope of scarlet reds,  
yellows and purple hues  
As the leaves escape their summer holdings  
They perform a merry dance on the forest floor  
As if to celebrate their freedom.  
If there is a coldness to be found in these times  
Then it comes in the shape of the evergreens  
In their dogged refusal to take part in the theatre.

New voices are to be heard with the coming of winter:  
The dry rustle of withered oak leaves underfoot,  
The thunderous applause of the waterfalls and rivers  
Basking in the melting of snow from the hilltops.  
Though The Forest appears to be passing away  
Its life will make way for another  
Stronger and more fruitful in its growth.

Each one of us perceives The Forest in our own way  
Of stillness, solitude or wildness..  
The one thing we can all be certain of, however,  
Is that the picture it paints today  
Will be different tomorrow..

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## Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

It has been a bit of a marathon but at long last the National Park Plan is edging towards the finishing line. The proposed plan should be ready in January/February and then begins the formal consultation time. This is when you see whether the contribution you have made is represented in the document - it is amazing how many people have contributed. It is also the time when you get the opportunity to comment on the content and make representations if you feel that adjustments are necessary. It would be a foolish man who would say that we will have a perfect Park Plan, although clearly a great deal of work and effort has been spent in achieving the best possible. When the consultation period has been completed and any necessary adjustments made the next step is to present the Plan to the Scottish Executive for approval and sanction. They too have the opportunity to seek amendments but when all is complete the really constructive work begins. After all the Park Authority has the duty to bring about the actions detailed in the Plan. And we will. Nonetheless the Park Plan is not set in stone. Inevitably new situations will arise which will necessitate adjustments. Consequently the Plan will be under constant review.

### strange but.....

**NOTIFICATION** of old age comes in many guises. It can result from the simplest thing. Only recently, one of our readers was reminded of this whilst watching a quiz programme on television.

The question was put to a young competitor: "What is a *companion set*?" He did not know the answer. Perhaps he thought it was something to assist lonely people. Our reader, in his anger, had a Victor Meldrew moment, jumping up and poking at the fire furiously, crying, "I don't believe it!"

Another duty falls to the Park Authority under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and that is to set up a Local Access Forum. The Forum is intended to bring together all parties with an interest in the development and management of access. We are all being encouraged to enjoy the countryside but, underlying that encouragement is the need to ensure that we all act responsibly, so that we do not adversely affect other people's enjoyment, livelihood or property. And equally we must ensure that the environment does not suffer as a result of our activities. We will have to involve a variety of interested parties and consequently adverts will appear in the edition of a' Phairc which will be issued about the same time as you are reading this article. In case you don't get your copy and you are interested in Access matters please contact Bridget Jones, Senior Access Officer at The Old Station, Balloch -phone 01389 722600. The Park Authority at our meeting on 13th December will be nominating two members to take part in the Forum.

The last month or so has produced some concern over temporary telecommunications masts which were being erected solely for the benefit of the

emergency services. There are some five such masts in position at present. These masts do require planning permission and the company concerned has been asked to make formal planning applications. Unfortunately the company had misinterpreted the regulations which allow in some circumstances the erection of a mast temporarily during an emergency caused by the failure of existing telecommunication masts.

Historic Scotland are conducting a survey of the built environment in the Park area so now is the time to get in touch with them about any structure that you feel is worthy of listing. Their address is Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH but please do ensure that you consult first with the owner of the property.

May I wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a New Year which brings joy, peace and a Park Plan which enriches all our lives.

As always I can be contacted as follows; email: [owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk) phone: 01567 830214

post: Taigh Na Bhuth,  
Lochearnhead,  
Perthshire,  
FK19 8PR

*IN* the 'Nowt As Queer As Folk' category, we recently heard tell of a Strathard lady who journeyed to the fair city of Stirling, that 'toon of bonny men and honest lassies' as the Bard might have said, to seek nylon chews for her dog. On entering the pet shop, she enquired if they had any nylon rings. She got the reply, "Roon rings? Hawd oan!" and the lady went through to the back shop to make enquiries, only to return seconds later and state, in a booming voice, "Naw, we hae nae roon rings." *Square* rings, perhaps?

*AH NOW*, the humour of the Irish, sure – a different way in looking on the world which can grow on you. One jovial Irishman (well, aren't they all?) marches into one of the local tourist offices in the Trossachs/Loch Lomond area, stating that he wished to go to Edinburgh. "How many miles to the west is it now?" he asked. When it was pointed out to him, that Edinburgh was actually in the east, he retorted quick as a flash, "Ah but, if I go in reverse I'll still be facing west now, won't I?" No arguing with that.

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# Inversnaid Primary

What a lot of exciting things we've done. We have worked very hard to keep our playground a 'Litter Free Zone'. When Adam Watson from Stirling Council's Litter Awareness team came he was very pleased to see that we were almost litter free.

Ross, Mathew, Jake and Thomas thoroughly enjoyed throwing themselves around the field every Wednesday morning and getting as wet and muddy as possible. They impressed our football coach, Paul, with their skills and motivation. They got muddy and wet but they also had a great time developing their skills. Since September we have been working on a project based on 'Ben Lomond' and 'Tourism in the Area'. This has been organised by Jo Mercer, a ranger for the National Trust for Scotland. We went on a visit to Rowardennan to interview some of the workers and to see what it is like round the other side of Ben Lomond. We have also been on a visit to Comer to interview Mrs Campbell, to find out what it is like living and working in the shadow of Ben Lomond. We are now editing our recordings and producing a film that will be shown at Inversnaid School in the New Year. On the 30th October Volunteer Stirling organised a team of volunteers to come and work at Inversnaid School as part of 'Make a

Difference Day.' This included Anne McGuire MP who gave up the whole day to help, as did the volunteers and locals. We had painted all the parts for our 3D mural with guidance from Bob Tindall, on wood donated by Russell McKeand and Mike Campbell. On the day the volunteers cut the parts out and screwed the



mural on to the wall. It looks bright and cheery and has really made a difference to our entrance. Also on that day we cut and laid a bark path from the playground to the climbing frame. This was really hard work but with all our great helpers we finished it on the day. On 22nd October we all went to The Trossachs School for the 'Yellow Woods Challenge' Presentation. We had collected old copies of

Yellow Pages in September and found that we had won first prize in the Scottish heat of the Challenge by collecting the most 'old' copies per pupil. At the Presentation we received a cheque for £300 part of which we spent on our bark path.

In November we continued with our playground developments. Jude Richardson came on Friday 19th November and worked with us to start our Willow Den. It was a really cold day and we had to keep retreating indoors to thaw out. This is a living den that will always be growing. Next year we will be able to weave the new shoots of willow and improve our den. It will be a great place to play Hide and Seek once the shoots have grown and it will also be a cool place to read in the shade. Our next playground project is our Orchard, which we will be planting very soon. We are looking forward to being able to pick and eat our own apples at playtimes as long as the deer don't get there first!

Christmas is coming and we're getting very, very busy. We wish everyone in the Community a very Merry Christmas.

*Thomas, Jake, Mathew & Ross*

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## Argaty Red Kite Project '1st Anniversary'

Following the huge popularity of the attraction over its first winter, Argaty red kite project has been extended into a year-round attraction. On guided walks this summer 79 species of bird and 16 species of mammal, with an array of wildflowers and other wildlife spotted. 23 red kite-breeding territories were discovered this summer in Central Scotland. Some of these were first time breeders that didn't quite make the grade this time round. However 17 of the pairs managed to fledge 32 young between them. Many of these young birds can now be seen at Argaty. Red kites are most abundant through the winter months, when they form large social groups. A purpose built hide offers great close-up views of the kites coming down to the daily feed. The birds themselves have become quite well



accustomed to visitors coming to the hide and as of the end of september we are already starting to see many of this year's joining

up with the older birds, with recent counts from the hide as high as 35 individuals delighting us with their aerobatics.

Lerlocks is very much a working farm so visitors are asked to **book in advance** by phoning **01786 841373** or email [argatyrekites@btopenworld.com](mailto:argatyrekites@btopenworld.com),

The viewing hide is accessed via an all abilities footpath from the car park. There is a small fee to visit the project, which helps cover the costs of providing these facilities. For more information please visit our website [www.argatyredkites.co.uk](http://www.argatyredkites.co.uk)

## Stirling Enterprise delivering Business Gateway locally

### Information Technology and Business Skills

A full list of training from March-October is now available on our Website: [www.stirling-enterprise.co.uk/training.htm](http://www.stirling-enterprise.co.uk/training.htm)

The following IT and Business Skills courses are running here at Stirling Enterprise during December.

**PowerPoint: 1st December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**Graphic Design Using Publisher: 2nd December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**Leadership & Teambuilding: 6th December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**Beginners Excel: 8th December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**Graphic Design Using Word: 9th December - 09.30 - 12.30**

**Negotiation Skills: 13th December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**Intermediate Word: 16th December - 09.30 - 16.30**

**The Web - Getting Noticed: - 09.30 - 16.30**

### Fluent In French? Make Money From Your Linguistic Talents With La Jolie Ronde

Are you fluent in French? Would you - or anyone you know - be interested in running your own business teaching young children French? Then here's an opportunity not to be missed.

Elizabeth Wilson, Licensee Co-ordinator for La Jolie Ronde, Scotland will be holding a prospective licensees meeting in Stirling on 29 January 2005. The meeting is designed to give potential licensees the opportunity to view materials and hear more about La Jolie Ronde before making any commitment to the organisation.

Founded in 1983 and recognised by the French Government, La Jolie Ronde broke new ground



in 1992 when its programme '1A' for 5 to 6 year olds was reviewed in the Times Educational Supplement. It complemented the dynamic and interactivemethod already catering for 6-11 year olds. In 1997, La Jolie Ronde won a special award from the DTI under the heading of Languages for Export. For further information contact Elizabeth Wilson on 01324 638503 or e-mail: [liz@wilsong.fsllife.co.uk](mailto:liz@wilsong.fsllife.co.uk)

### Sponsorship Sought For Rising Stirling Talent

John Reid of the Richmond Fellowship (based at Enterprise House) is proud of his son Calum's achievements. The Bridge of Allan youngster won the junior under-20 title at the racketlon world championships held in Vienna recently.

Calum made it through to the final without dropping a single game of table tennis, squash, badminton or tennis, which combine to make up the racketlon challenge, to defeat Australia's Christoph Krenn in the final.

Calum also took part in the men's elite competition, where he reached the quarter finals.

Anyone interested in sponsoring Calum and generating a bit of publicity for their business, can contact John, Calum's dad, on 07968 790698.

### French Student For Hire

21-year old, French student, Emmanuelle Rion, is looking for a 3-month work placement in either an importing-exporting or marketing department from February 2005. Any local business that feels it might benefit from the services of Emmanuelle should get in touch.

Interested? Then contact Caroline Brown at STEP, [cbrown@stirling-enterpriseco.uk](mailto:cbrown@stirling-enterpriseco.uk) or call 01786 463416 for contact details for Emmanuelle.

## Braeval Antiques Aberfoyle



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4. Help and advice on selling your antiques by auction
5. The location and purchase of that rare item you have always promised yourself
6. I purchase individual items
7. I purchase complete estate or house contents

*Every contact is made with total discretion, confidentiality and courtesy, at a time to suit the client. Properties cleared will be left secure, swept and tidy.*



The beginning of winter is the pruning time for a lot of shrubs – but not all: not the ones that form their buds in the autumn such as rhodies, azalaeas, hydrangeas etc. Check your shrub and if it has big fat flower buds don't touch it; if you do you will have no flowers in the spring. The best time to prune flowering shrubs is immediately after flowering. For shrubs grown for their leaves, now is the time to prune.

The main rule for pruning is cut the plant to the size and shape you wish it to be. However, it is also necessary to keep the centre of the shrub open to let the air and light in, to encourage new growth from ground level to keep the shrub healthy. Each year, look for two or three old stems and cut them right back to the base. This opens up the middle of the plant and keeps it looking a natural shape.

It is possible to clip shrubs, but this causes the bush to produce leaves on the stem ends only. As it gets bigger it begins to become woody and die back in the centre and, in time, it will die altogether. Having said this, there are shrubs which just love being clipped. These are the hedging kind and the ones used for topiary e.g. box, yew, certain hebes and the dreaded cupresses.

The rule is know your shrubs and they will repay you: prune at the wrong time and you might lose them – never prune when it is frosty. How would you like to cut your finger and then have it frozen? Ugh!

Hope the weather stays good for all this gardening you can do in the winter!

*Welly Boot*

## Canine Capers in Aberfoyle



Canine Capers, the fun dog show, was held during the Aberfoyle Mushroom Festival over the Saturday and Sunday at the Scottish Wool Centre. The event

was organized by the Alexandria and District Community Dog Training Service and sponsored by McCaskies Farm Supplies who provided £10 prize vouchers to the class winners. A & DCDTS provided rosettes up to 4<sup>th</sup> place. Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October started misty but cleared to a lovely day although conditions underfoot were a bit squelchy. There was a large turnout of competitors especially the girls from the Wool Centre who must have rounded up every Collie from the area. A large number of visitors gathered along the paddock fence for most of the day and were well entertained especially at the agility fun competition. It was just a pity more local people did not turn out to take part. The results of the competitions were as follows:-

### Best Fancy Dress

1. *Magnus* and Stephanie Irvine
2. *Buffy* and Haley Murray
3. *Ozzie* and Victoria Grosse
4. *Jill* and Jodie Cranmer

### Fastest Recall

1. *Melody* (Margaret Murray)
2. *Shadow* (Natalie Von Westarp)
3. *Archie* (Morven Palmer)
4. *Poppy* (Stewart Duncan)

### Midi-Maxi Jumpers (Agility)

1. *Melody* (Margaret Murray)
2. *Poppy* (Stewart Duncan)
3. *Val* (Margaret Bouttell)
4. *Floss* (Haley Murray)

### Prettiest Bitch

1. *Cabbage* (Siberian Husky) shown by Mrs MacPherson
2. *Dale* shown by Holly Palmer
3. *Ozzy* shown by Victoria Grosse
4. *Kate* shown by Amy Henderson

### Most Handsome Dog

1. *Jake* shown by Dawn Prentice from Lanark
2. *Magnus* shown by Robert Irvine
3. *Dino* shown by Andrew McLeod
4. *Archie* shown by M. Palmer
5. *Mutley* shown by Mary Ann Chidgey

### Wags and Wellies

1. *Val* and Margaret Bouttell
2. *Archie* and Holly Palmer
3. *Shadow* and Natalie Von Westarp

Unfortunately, on the Sunday the weather took a turn for the worse and the paddock was flooded but, by kind permission, we were allowed to use the Theatre in the Wool Centre. However, the bad weather scared away any competitors and the second day of events had to be cancelled. Instead, the Dog Training Service put on displays of obedience training for the visitors during the afternoon.

Thanks to all who took part and it is hoped that future events will see a larger turnout of local people as it is a family fun day-an event to have fun with your dog.

*Alistair Bouttell*  
Vice Chairman  
A & DCDTS



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## RSPB Inversnaid

Fieldfare and redwing were spread throughout the

reserve feasting on the rowanberry crop and the alarm calls of a flock of 250 fieldfare, next to the sheep fank attracted my attention. They were still alarm calling when a buzzard drifted above them but something was not right, as buzzards are not a direct threat to fieldfare. Suddenly, a female hen harrier came drifting downhill just above the trees and crossed the track next to the sheep fank. The sun was behind me as she passed within 30 metres and I had superb views as she continued to hunt over the Snaid burn being mobbed by four fieldfares. Later in the day

I spotted her again as she worked the slopes leading up to Beinn a Choin and a peregrine falcon was also over the ridge at the north end of the reserve. A waxwing was with a flock of fieldfare at Corriearklet, eight jackdaws flew low over Garrison farm, which is an unusual record for the reserve, and a small flock of twite (25-30) were in the trees near the sheep fank. Other birds have been 3 blackcock (male black grouse) displaying at the lek, bullfinch in small numbers throughout the reserve, kestrel, short eared owl, mistle thrush, long tailed tit, woodpigeon, sparrowhawk, raven, greylag geese, heron, greenfinch, robin, siskin, chaffinch, tree creeper, grey wagtail, dipper, house sparrow and dunnoek. The red stag rut has been in full swing with five stags roaring on the reserve, their accompanying hinds (30-40) seemed oblivious to what the fuss was about until they try to wander away from their group and are quickly shepherded back into line by the stag. Roaring could also be heard from the surrounding hills at Ardleish, Cruachan and even from across Loch Lomond. Walking along the West Highland way it was surprising for a doe (female roe deer) and her late fawn to be happily grazing whilst we stood watching from about 10 metres away. A Small Tortoiseshell butterfly was out in the November sun on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

As part of the ongoing development of mammal monitoring on the reserve, a special trip was made to review our

methods for monitoring the feral goat population. We were fortunate to have Tracy Livingstone of the British Feral Goat Research Group along to help advise and we discussed ways to improve the current method of goat counting. During the visit, we were lucky enough to encounter a group of goats rutting and mating on a remote crag at the north end of the reserve, a rare sight.

The feral goats at Inversnaid normally mate between September and November. The dominant billy will secure most of the matings. Other mature billies (normally aged 3+) will be present during this time, however, the only opportunity they will have to mate is if the dominant billy is

busy elsewhere and they can 'sneak in'. Young males normally socialise with the nanny (female) group until they reach a stage when they can prove their maturity with the other males (usually at about 2-3 years old). However, it must be noted that males become sexually mature anywhere from 3-5 months old, and females can kid within their first year.

The billies attract the nannies with a strong musky scent, which is excreted from glands behind their ears. This musk scent is combined with the very strong smell caused by billies spraying urine around their mouth/beard area, this then congeals to form a strong unmistakable 'billy odour'. The females find this very attractive during the mating season. If you are walking in Inversnaid during the rut, you will no doubt smell the billies well before you see them!

The nannies are pregnant for 150 days and the kids are normally born anytime between January and March. Nannies will give birth to a single kid or a set of twins. Triplets are extremely rare in the feral state.

There is generally a high mortality rate with kids during the early days of life. This is very common amongst feral herds. It is nature's way of singling out the strongest kids able to survive our harsh winter climate. If the kids manage past the first two or three months, then their overall life expectancy is good.

*Duncan Cameron, Conservation Assistant  
Tracy Livingstone, Scottish Area, BFGRG*



## Milton

Hello Children,

Well, winter is here at last. It was great to have hard ground to play on and very slippery ice to slide over! We have all been itching to take up curling again. Dad took us all up to the lochan on Beinn Dubh, between Loch Chon and Gleann Dubh – the Secret Glen. Dad and Grandpa Otter made sure that the ice was thick enough to play on. The little loch sits deep in a hollow, well shaded from the sun. The ice was quite safe and we had enormous fun sliding our stones – and falling over! I hope that it freezes again, and soon.

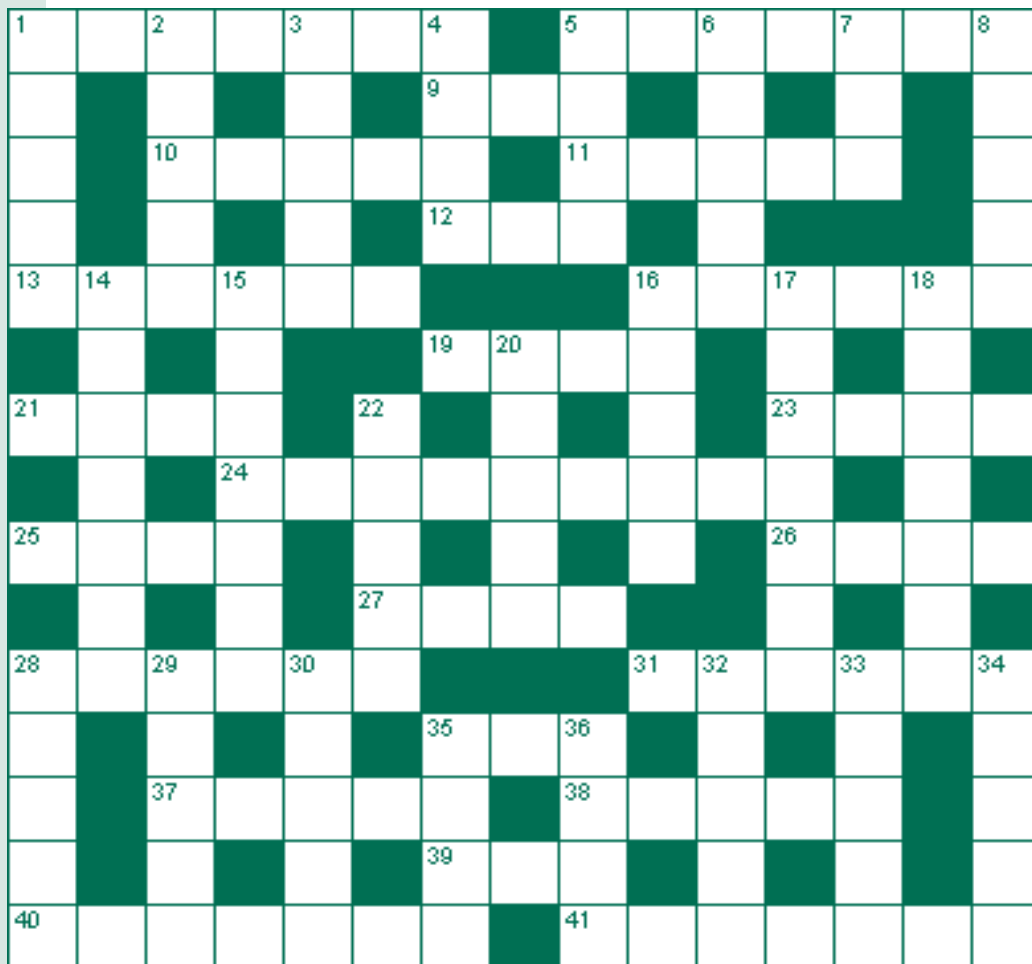
One of Santa's little helpers was here looking for Rory the Stag. Father Christmas was wanting to ask for his help pulling his sleigh over the mountains and through the glens of the Highlands. Our old friend, Hamish the Highlander, has been the team leader on the West Highland run for many years. This gives Rudolph a well earned rest in Hamish's paddock at Kilmahog. Every year people ask Santa for bigger and heavier presents. It is a wonder that the sleigh will move at all, never mind fly! The problem is nobody can find Rory. Everybody has been out searching but there has been no sign of him. It is a little bit worrying.

The twins, Duke and Katrine, are not helping Santa – their Christmas list gets longer every day! My sister, Braeval, has asked for one of those up-to-date mobile phones. I am not surprised that she needs a new one, her old one must be quite worn out with the use it has had. The only time it was not clamped her ear was at the curling – there is no signal in that part of Strathard! Braeval has even asked for a special ring-tone. She wants her new, hi-tech, ultra sophisticated piece of equipment to sound like – a real telephone. Now that's original!

My list was sent up the chimney last week. Top of my wish list is for Rory to turn up. I know that he is usually very busy around October time, but he doesn't disappear altogether! Even the faery queen has sent a big black cat into the forest to look for him. Let's hope for some news soon. Have a good Christmas and a happy New Year to you all.

Bye for now,  
Milton





**Across**

1. Young goose (7)
5. Normal contraction of the heart (7)
9. Vessel built by Noah (3)
10. Makes a loan (5)
11. Icon (5)
12. Young dog (3)
13. State positively (6)
16. Misplace (6)
19. Large marine food fish (4)
21. Cry (4)
23. Felines (4)
24. Papal (9)
25. Listen to (4)
26. Female sheep (4)
27. Exchange for money (4)
28. Benzene (6)
31. Soak up (6)
35. Prefix "beneath" (3)
37. Unit for measuring gold (5)
38. Join (5)
39. Cathedral city (3)
40. Gum used as a food stabiliser (7)
41. Room for surgical operations (7)

**Down**

1. Republic in W Africa (5)
2. Auctions (5)
3. Interior (5)
4. Breathe convulsively (4)
5. Jump lightly (4)
6. Hindu religious teacher (5)
7. Unity (3)
8. Very hard mineral (5)
14. Bondage (7)
15. Make larger (7)
16. Virile (5)
17. Favourable termination of endeavours (7)
18. Aardvark (3,4)
20. Pending (5)
22. Small rodent (5)
28. Brand name for a copying machine (5)
29. Compare (5)
30. Compass point (5)
32. Prickly plant (5)
33. Corpulent (5)
34. Abdomen (5)
35. Type of gun (4)
36. Purchases (4)

Please send completed crossword to Editor, Strathard News, Scholhouse, Inversnaid FK8 3TU or hand in to Aberfoyle Post Office. Solution and winning entry will be published in issue 19.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

## Under the Hammer

A MYSTERY buyer has paid nearly half a million pounds for Glengyle House, which stands on the reputed birthplace of Rob Roy.

At a packed auction in one of Glasgow's top hotels on Wednesday, an unnamed Scot paid £470,000 to beat 10 other bidders.

Despite the fact that it is a mere shell, bidders were willing to pay a high price for the house which nestles on the banks on Loch Katrine and is reputedly built on the site where Rob Roy was born in 1671.

Organisers say there were around 10 bidders vying for the former Scottish Water B-listed property.

Auctioneer Shaun Vigers admitted he was surprised by the amount of money it took to close the bidding.

The results of the other Scottish Water properties sold at the auction are listed below.

- "Hillview", Stronachlachar, £101,000
- "Crimmond", Stron'lachar, Withdrawn
- "Tigh Alainn", Stronachlachar, £93,000
- "Glengyle House", Str'lachar, £470,000
- "Glen Finglas Depot", Brig O'Turk, £114,000
- "Ballat Depot & Cottage No 2", Balfron Station, £205,000

## Have a laugh.....

Jack & Jill were on their way home from the bar one night and Jack got pulled over by the police. The officer told Jack that he was stopped because his tail light was burned out. Jack said, "I'm very sorry officer, I didn't realise it was out, I'll get it fixed right away." Just then Jill said, "I knew this would happen when I told you two days ago to get that light fixed." So the officer asked for Jack's license and after looking at it said, "Sir your license has expired." And again Jack apologised and mentioned that he didn't realise that it had expired and would take care of it first thing in the morning. Jill said, "I told you a week ago that the DVLA sent you a letter telling you that your license had expired." Well by this time Jack is a bit upset with his wife contradicting him in front of the officer and he said in a rather loud voice, "#\$%& Jill, will you SHUT UP!" The officer then leaned over toward Jill and asked. "Does your husband always talk to you like that?" Jill replied, "Only when he's drunk."

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## Aberfoyle Toddler Group...

would like to thank all the local businesses who donated raffle prizes and all the people that supported the table top sale on the 16th October in the Memorial Hall. We raised over £200 and are very grateful for everyone's generosity.

*Lynne and Marcia*

## Mushroom Festival Committee...

would like to thank all those locals who supported this year's Mushroom Festival events. This year was the best-attended to date. The International Flavour for the 2005 Festival will be Finland, famous for its vodka, wild berries, and the home of Santa Claus. The dates for the 2005 Festival will be 23 - 25 October.

## Kinlochard Village Shop.....

Shona, Richie, Ryan and Amy would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their amazing support in the first two months we've been trading.

We appreciate, so much, all the positive feedback and comments you've all made about our new venture in which we are still learning. Juggling a family, a home and a new life style has been so difficult, almost hard even, yet you've all helped where you could and not moaned at me for forgetting to order enough whatever, and laughed with me at all my mishaps – fingers crossed there aren't more to come. Having a supportive local community not only makes my job easier but, mostly, more worthwhile.

Now, here comes my "Oscars" speech. Can **we** thank all the squad at the garage who dish out, send and deliver my newspapers every day; the boys and girls who uplift them and deliver them at the weekend; the people who've done all my forms as my computer was in a box! (you know who you are. Thanks.) Thanks also to the lady who took pity on me looking tired one Friday and shoved me into my house to sit down for an hour – I'm smiling just thinking about it!

We mustn't forget everyone else who has built, demolished, planted, weeded, painted, rewired, plumbed, cleaned, served, restocked, ordered and those who just came in for a nosey and a blether. Thank-you. We appreciate you all. May God bless you all over Christmas and always.

## Poppy Appeal

The collection at Aberfoyle, Kinlochard and Inversnaid came to a total of £706.40. I would like to thank all who helped and contributed.

*J. Pittaway (Convener)*

## The David Marshall Lodge

### THANK YOU

The management and staff of the D.M.L. and Liz McGregors Coffee Shop, with David Thornaby Brough, woodcarver, wish to extend a huge thank you to all our regular visitors and friends from around the country and abroad, for your continued support and the response you have shown towards the events we have put on this past season. It has made us all the more determined to make next year even better! We would be happy to see you all one more time during our CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA.

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## announcements

### Ne'erday Ceilidh

Kinlochard Village Hall Committee are holding a Ne-erday Family Ceilidh Dance in the hall with music provided by the Kinlochard Ceilidh Band on 1st January, 2005, commencing at 7.30 p.m. Tickets, price £5 for adults and £3 for children are available from the Village Shop, Kinlochard. There will be a grand raffle and whisky curling. Families are asked to bring their own liquid refreshments. All proceeds to the hall extension fund. See you there!

### Strathard Community Council

Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month at 7.30pm. The next meeting is 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005 in Aberfoyle

### Aberfoyle Brownies

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

### Kinlochard Toddlers

Fridays 10.30 – 12 noon  
Old School or Hall. Bring a Parent

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### Answers

1. Scrooge 2. A Christmas Carol 3. Indian 4. Yes, a horse called Christmas day fell in a Boxing Day race 5. Tinsel 6. Pacific 7. Santa Claus 8. England 9. Under the Pacific Ocean 10. Germany

A2Z

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*As you prepare for Christmas, support our local businesses and leave more time to spend with family and friends over Christmas and Hogmanay!*



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#### NEWS FROM ST MARY'S CHURCH

Since the last report the congregation of St Mary's have held some wonderful services and welcomed many visitors to the Sunday services. Among the most memorable services was the Harvest Thanksgiving ceremony when the special picture of the Aberfoyle Slate Quarry was unveiled by Peter Joynson who is the longest living member of the congregation and who leads the St Mary's Historical Team. We were able to welcome the artist Moira Revie and her husband who took part in the unveiling of the picture mounted in an impressive frame and is beside the main door. All are welcome to come and see it and to find if their ancestor's name is included.

A member of our congregation, retired schoolteacher, Mrs Janet Chesney, is on



a project in Malawi working in a school deep in the country and sends her reports on the way of life and the problems and tales of the wonderful people she is living with and helping. This is one of the Vestry of the Church's outreach charity projects and if anyone would like to know more please contact the Rector Richard Grosse at the Rectory. Since the Rector arrived there have been good attendances at services and the audio system is working well. The collection of Orthodox Icons of Our Lady and the Child Jesus continues to grow which is appropriate as

St Mary's is the host church for the worldwide prayer group of the Society of the Child Jesus, led by Patrick Mileham.

The Remembrance Evensong was a very moving service and more evensongs may be held in the future. The Carol Service will be held on Sunday 19 December at 3.00pm. The picture shows Peter Joynson and Artist Moira Revie and the slate picture at Harvest Festival.

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