

inside
p2
saga fm
p5
editorial
p6
rangers
ramblings
p7
sylvia
jackson msp
p8
community
trust
p10
owen mckee
p11
enduro
challange
p12
community
council
p13
wellie boot
p14
milton
p15
crossword

DEADLINE
DATES

Issue 22: 22 May
Issue 23: 3 July
Issue 24: 21 Aug
Issue 25: 2 Oct
Issue 26: 13 Nov

Travelling Gallery Visits Aberfoyle

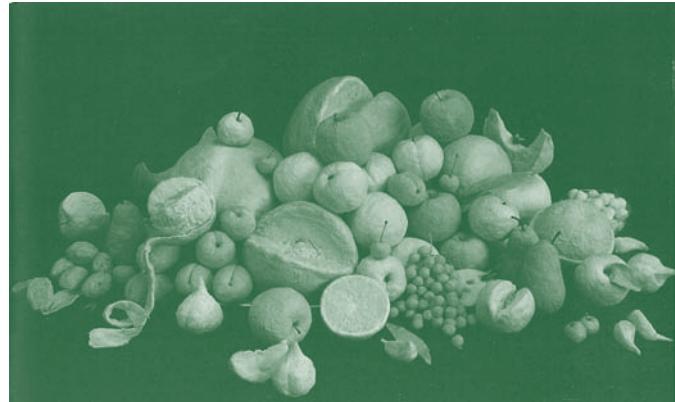
By Dougie MacPherson

Art, in Aberfoyle, is well catered for, with both the Green Gallery and the newly opened Photographic Studio located in the heart of our village. On Friday 8 April, however, a 'new kid on the block' arrived when the Travelling Gallery, or Art in a Bus, visited Aberfoyle for the day. Funded by the Scottish Arts Council, the bus tours the communities of Scotland, particularly those with '*poor provision of the contemporary visual arts*,' to quote its brochure. I decided to visit the bus on the day in question.

Now most contemporary, or modern, art does not greatly excite me, with a few notable exceptions. I enjoy paintings, whatever the subject matter, if they are imaginative, innovative and inspiring. Yes, I am a traditionalist, but I am prepared to be excited by art works, whichever form they may take and there was a variety of styles on The Bus.

I found the staff to be extremely friendly and informative but, alas, I felt the exhibition, itself, to be bleak and dull, with the exception of one or two pieces which displayed some technical skill and were striking in their own way. Art should surely involve the emotions, should hit you between the eyes and take your breath away. It should not need explaining.

Yet this is what we were subjected to. Each work had a written 'explanation' or story giving the



Still Life, 2002
Photograph of Wet Toilet Paper Sculpture (Sculpture: Toilet Paper of varying colour, water, black bin-bags, real stalks, fake flies, disposable tableware)

background, or reason, to the work. I'm sorry, but why do we need verbal description? Should not the work of art speak for itself? The most colourful (okay, it was also the most eye-catching) was a still life with fruit, a photograph of wet toilet paper sculpture. Yes, I know what you are going to say but it really wasn't too bad. What did spoil it for me were the two paragraphs of wordy description that accompanied it.

On the whole, the basic premise of the travelling art bus is sound. In my view, however, it is the execution which is doubtful but if you appreciate sharks in formaldehyde or unmade beds then this might be your bag.

You might then say that the exhibition was 'Very Good' in the west of Scotland meaning of the phrase.

Stop Press The Ospreys Are Back!!

At 12.20 on Thursday 7th April, we caught the first glimpse of our female osprey on our nest via the live camera link at The David Marshall Lodge. To a round of applause from staff and volunteers and a few sighs of relief, she landed, took one look around her and started busying herself with nest rearrangements: 3000 miles and not a feather out of place. Beautiful! On Sunday 10th April at 1.20pm we were finally relieved to see her mate of three years join her on the nest. The osprey season at The Lodge has finally begun. Come and join us at D.M.L. and see the story as it unfolds live on camera. *This is a partnership project between RSPB, Forestry Commission Scotland and part funded by Leader +.*



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Norman Quirk

six months at the helm of SAGA 105.2 fm

It's been six months since the launch of Glasgow's newest radio station, SAGA 105.2fm but MD Norman Quirk says he still hasn't come down to earth.

Norman, who lives in Aberfoyle, says he has been bowled over by the warmth of the welcome from listeners to the station, which primarily targets those aged fifty and over.

"I said at the outset that this was a station I would like to listen to, and that's been the reaction from our target market. We always talk about lifestyle over age and I think SAGA 105.2fm has already done a lot to prove that the music and tastes of our target generation reflect a genuinely quality vintage.

"People aged fifty and over have been ignored by advertisers for too long and it makes no sense. Saga's research shows that this is one of the strongest economic sectors around and

we have had a very successful six months in every way. I take as my barometer that it's SAGA 105.2fm I hear in taxis and cafes all over Glasgow and the West of Scotland. That's when I know we have the formula right."

SAGA 105.2fm is the only Glasgow radio station broadcasting live from Glasgow. Based at City Park in Dennistoun, the station launched in September 2004 and is now looking



forward to the first set of Radio Joint Authority Research (RAJAR) figures for the first quarter of 2005. These will be announced in May and this is the first time SAGA 105.2fm will have been included in the audience research, which takes in the six-month period between the start of September and the end of March.

Norman says, "The early signs are good: since day one the station has been inundated with supportive phone

calls and emails from people saying they have been waiting years for a radio station which can offer everything SAGA 105.2fm does.

"I have been involved in radio in Scotland for more than twenty years and it's been great to have the opportunity to create an exciting new format and to work with such a varied bunch of professionals. I am having the time of my life."

Sri Lankan Priest To Visit Aberfoyle

The Rev Charlie Jansz, the minister for whose village in Sri Lanka the Strathard Community has raised over £5000 for the reconstruction of the community, is to visit Aberfoyle to receive the cheque on behalf of his village on Sunday, 8 May. Charlie, as he likes to be known, will preach at the morning service in St Mary's Episcopal Church at 11.00am and also at the Songs of Praise service at Gartmore House on Sunday evening at 7.00 pm. After the Gartmore service there will be a social evening at which he will be presented with a giant cheque. Charlie would like to meet as many of our community as possible while he is here - adults and children alike. Everyone is cordially invited to both St Mary's and Gartmore House.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to hear at first hand how this little community in Sri Lanka is coping with the aftermath of the Tsunami disaster and how our money will be put to good use in its reconstruction and rehabilitation.

For further information contact Fergus Wood, tel: 01877 387219. *P.S. Donations are still being gratefully accepted to get our total up even higher!*

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If you, or anyone you know, could benefit from this Service please contact the Rural Access Worker on 01786 451203



Loch Ard Rowing Club has now opened for the 2005 season and would like to welcome anyone above the age of 12 to express their interest in joining the club. We are particularly interested in doing some competition rowing during the late summer and would welcome energetic souls who have a good sense of humour (and balance!) and feel they could be useful in a boat. Please contact Douglas Harrison on 382 275 or visit our website www.lochard.net

Springbok meets Jocks in Frocks??!

Come with us to the ceilidh laddie, I was told! Ceilidh? Sure I will go to the ceilidh - is it something you can eat? "No, it's traditional Scottish dancing and lots of drinking", from the mouth of an Englishman. Very excited I bought my ticket which said I should take my own grub and my bottle. Luckily there were many Scotsmen around to explain to me what that actually meant.

Now well on my way to the Kinlochard Village Hall I started wondering if I should have borrowed the neighbours knife and sword? What if I get challenged to a fearsome sword fight for checking out the toetty! But then again, this is not Glasgow so I should be alright! Coming from warmer climates, I was battling against the cold and there at the Village Hall entrance were standing two Scotsmen in their kilts! Only one question came to mind, what's underneath it? I was warmly welcomed with my curious eyes not knowing what was going to happen next. I was told to make my way through the crowd of dancing people to meet up with my French friends on the far side of the hall.



Finally at a ceilidh! I could feel the vibe already! Actually, I felt it better in my ribs as the enthusiastic dancers bumped into me. All in good spirits as The Kinlochard Ceilidh Band set the mood. After a few drinks it was time to try the dancing!

So there's a South African, two French guys (who I only met the day before in the Bunkhouse) and two Englishmen who didn't even know the difference between a kilt and a frock, shuffling about on the dance floor. To our rescue came an experienced Ceilidh dancer who was very helpful, although he didn't manage to make us look less like comic dancers.

Then came the raffle. I would like to thank the lady who won and gave back the oil lamp, which I then won. Unfortunately I left the hall without it - I didn't mean to leave it behind, I really liked it. Thank you for a memorable night.

JJ Botes

Forest Hills Watersports Centre offers a multitude of activities to groups and individuals. Taster sessions for beginners are available all week, while those with more experience can benefit from further training or simply hire one of our boats. All activities are under the supervision of qualified staff, and all necessary equipment can be provided for a safe and enjoyable day, weekend or week away.

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Community Transport Good Neighbours STIRLING

WRVS volunteers are weel kent faces in the Strathard area. The community transport/good neighbours project has been in operation in this area for the last 7 years or so, on one scale or another. It now has a new Manager, Sandra Clements has replaced Senga Awlson as project manager for this area. Sandra will be out in the area in the near future, visiting doctors surgeries, libraries and generally pestering hard working shop owners and other buildings with advertising facilities (glass doors or the window will be adequate!) to display posters and leaflets, advertising the service. She will also be manning a stand at the environmental open day on May 25th in Strathard Village Hall, so feel free to come along and ask questions or volunteer your services.

Volunteer drivers provide transport for elderly, frail, housebound people or those with serious mobility problems, who are isolated by location or personal circumstances, to visit day care centres, visit doctors, hospital, clinics or friends and relatives. Our volunteers can also do a bit of gardening, simple DIY, dog walking, prescription collection, assisted shopping and generally the sort of thing a friend, neighbour or family member would do.

If you would like to become a volunteer with the project or know someone who could benefit from the service, please call **Sandra on 01786 450718**. This project offers a flexible volunteering opportunity for everyone, you can do as little or as much as you want, no matter how little you do, be assured it will make a huge difference to people in your communities lives.

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Spring into Action in The Wonderful Woods Of Loch Lomond And The Trossachs

Forestry Commission Scotland has just launched a spring campaign in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. Called 'Active Woods', the campaign aims to promote the benefits of healthy exercise and peaceful relaxation in the woods and forests.

During the spring Forestry Commission Scotland will be raising public awareness of the recreational opportunities available in local woods through a leaflet, a website (www.wonderfulwoods.co.uk/spring) and features in the local press.

Stuart Chalmers, District Forester for Cowal and Trossachs, and Recreation Ranger, Peter Mitchell, launched the campaign at David Marshall Lodge, Forestry Commission Scotland's visitor centre near Aberfoyle in Achray Forest.

Stuart Chalmers, said at the launch:

"From gentle woodland wanders to challenging mountain bike trails, fun family events to wildlife watching, there's something to suit



Recreation Ranger Peter Mitchell launching the campaign and spring leaflet at David Marshall Lodge.

all ages, abilities and interests in the forests of Argyll.

"Woods aren't only good for the body - they're good for the mind too.

Getting out to the woods is a real stress buster. Research has shown time and time again that time spent in natural green space boosts people's wellbeing and morale."

Peter Mitchell added:

"We'd encourage people to pick up the Spring Active Woods leaflet from their local Tourist Information Centre or from David Marshall Lodge. It'll give them ideas of woodland places and events, and a spring diary that will help them get out and get active. Many of these events are taking place here at David Marshall Lodge, where we have walks, waterfalls and wildlife, including osprey watching."

For even more ideas on how to enjoy Argyll's forests and woods, people can log on to the website www.wonderfulwoods.co.uk/spring or see the features in the local press.

In addition, the Forestry Commission Active Woods website (www.forestry.gov.uk/activewoods) highlights details of thousands of great places to go, and a host of fit and healthy activities and events happening in woods and forests across Scotland.

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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.

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Aberfoyle, Stirlingshire, FK8 3UX

editorial

We seem to have gone all international in this edition. We have a report from India; news that a team is going to the base camp of Mt. Everest to raise funds for the Anthony Nolan Trust; an opportunity to meet the minister from Dehiwela and find out how money raised here has been used to help people affected by the tsunami; even Wellie Boot has news from Madeira.

Of course, the news from nearer home is always interesting and the reason why so many former residents and visitors subscribe. I don't know whether it is the extended holiday period, the weather, the increased pace of life or a combination, but contributions have been very slow to come in this month. I know our readers would have enjoyed reading about the very successful joint Easter service at the David Marshall Lodge; they would be interested in hearing how the cold spring is affecting the bird life; and what is happening about the skip and the roads? Is anybody out there?

Many thanks to all who have submitted such interesting and often amusing pieces. Please keep them coming.

Remember, if you have something to tell us but feel uncomfortable about writing it down, get in touch with us; we have reporters! Otherwise, post it, hand it in at the Post Office or email.

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**Scribblers
Picnic**

Musicians Helping The Fight Against Cancer

The Scribbler's Picnic is a Registered Cancer Relief Charity based in Stirling, which was set up by local musicians along with family and friends of Graham Whitelaw who died of cancer in April 2001. A fine pianist, Graham also wrote a popular weekly column for our local paper The Stirling Observer under his pen-name "The Scribbler".

Our fundraising efforts centre on "The Scribbler's Picnic", an annual Music Festival & Family Fun Day held each summer in Stirling. As well as local talent, this day has featured performances from international legends such as the late great Jim Macleod, and ex-Cream bassist Jack Bruce (both patrons of the charity).

Like many of these things, The Scribblers Picnic began small but quickly took off. Now thousands attend each year, raising many thousands of pounds for The Picnic's five designated charities: C.H.A.S., Maggie's Centres, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Macmillan Cancer Relief and Strathcarron Hospice.

Aside from excellent Live Music, there are Displays, Competitions, Sideshows, Celebrity Guest Appearances and a large Charity Fete where other registered charities and community groups can come along and raise money and awareness for their own good causes.

Stirling County Rugby Grounds at Bridgehaugh, Stirling is the place to be on Sunday 19th June for the 4th annual Scribbler's Picnic. Music, food & drink from 12 noon until late plus entertainment & charity stalls suitable for all the family, and all profits donated to 5 cancer charities.

Scribblers Stroll

Why not come to Stirling on Sunday 1st May for a short stroll & raise funds for 5 cancer charities.

The Scribblers Picnic committee has organised the Scribbler's Stroll between the Tartan Arms, Bannockburn & Stirling Rugby Club.

No entry fee and no minimum amount of sponsorship, just as much as you can raise for Strathcarron Hospice, CHAS, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Macmillan Cancer Relief & Maggies Centres.

Stroll starts 1pm (booking in from 11.45). Walkers can at their own pace make their way along the route using the refreshment & toilet stops where necessary. Entertainment at start & finish so why not make it a day out whether as an individual, group or family

For sponsorship forms, stallholders application forms and further information, phone Jim McKenzie on 01259 218216 or email info@scribblerspicnic.com, or visit www.scribblerspicnic.com

CFSLA Payroll Lottery

The local council staff lottery (Clackmannanshire, Falkirk & Stirling Local Authorities) has developed its own website. Details of local community groups and charities who have been successful in obtaining equipment are listed as well as information and forms to apply for financial help. Why not check it out on www.cfsla.org.uk

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Ranger's Ramblings

A View from the Lodge!

The Heritage Heart

The David Marshall Lodge - A History Part Two: Roots

It is clear that The Lodge would not exist today but for the collective efforts of a great many individuals within The Carnegie U.K. Trust who were instrumental in its conception, and the subsequent skills and endeavours of the architects, planners and builders involved in its construction.

However, in order to gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of its history, we must travel further back in time. Of the many Scots who have played key roles, over the centuries, in the public stage of the world as prime ministers, as presidents, as admirals and generals, it is impossible to do justice. Their biographies would fill a library. This terminology is entirely fitting, therefore, as we begin to learn the story of possibly the best known benefactor of all time, celebrated in over two and a half thousand such institutions in every state in America and in many countries throughout the world, and celebrated in the many educational grants and scholarships that bear his name.

Born the son of a master handloom weaver, in a cottage in Dunfermline in 1835, the picture of Andrew Carnegie's life appears ever more remarkable when it becomes clear he had little in the way of schooling. After only five years of educational upbringing, the Carnegie family emigrated to America, settling eventually in Pennsylvania. At the age of only thirteen, Andrew obtained a job in a textile mill, where he rapidly progressed through the ranks. In 1850, aged 15, from messenger boy at a telegraph company, he became, within two years, a telegraph operator and then personal telegrapher and secretary to Thomas A. Scott, the superintendent of the new Pennsylvania railroad. By all accounts, Scott was the man who set the young Carnegie on the

capitalist road, advising him on all matters financial. Was he, then, the true catalyst of all that was to come?

In any event, Carnegie quickly moved on to take Scott's job and become superintendent himself. He learned to buy stocks and shares in companies he could then persuade to do business with the railroad, so increasing their value. Displaying an inordinate sense of vision and a shrewd perspective of opportunity, Carnegie was confident enough in his powers of discrimination to risk money in a variety of investments. Recognising



in his steelworks in Homestead, Pennsylvania, on the back of his decisions to lower wages and derecognise the union, resulted in a pitched battle as strikers came to blows with Pinkerton detectives drafted in to deal with the situation. Ten people lost their lives during the fracas, which caused a national outcry. Tragic as these circumstances were, clearly they proved to be a pivotal moment in Carnegie's life.

Astonishingly, within nine years, this complex and contradictory empire-builder tuned his attention to shedding the surplus wealth he had acquired.

Selling out his steel interests, he devoted himself to philanthropy. The amount of money he began to give away was immense. At the time of his death, in 1919, at the grand old age of 84, he had bequeathed over £70 million.

Establishing educational institutions throughout The Americas and Britain, and setting up pension and retirement funds for his deposed workers, together with cultural foundations and peace organisations, Carnegie continued to ignore the savage criticism coming his way via the press on both sides of The Atlantic.

Despite this, in giving away his fortune, Carnegie achieved his aim in life, and one community which benefited more than most was Dunfermline, which he described as "the most sacred place on Earth". Amongst a series of "princely gifts" he bestowed on the town of his birth was the establishment of The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, which will form the continuing part of this story. Andrew Carnegie was mourned all over the world and remembered not for being a brilliant, uncompromising and ruthless entrepreneur, but as the most generous Scot who ever lived. It is a fitting title, and one that he keeps to this day.



the needs of a rapidly expanding economy, he moved on from the railroads and into iron and steel construction, with the building of bridges a priority.

Carnegie, already a millionaire, now had the upper hand. As new bridges were constructed, and new lines were opened, he was able to deal with the railway companies, bargaining on costs for the tracks which, as it happened, were supplied by another of his companies, if they agreed to carry his steel for him. As his empire expanded, this effectively meant these companies became self-perpetuating, which enabled him to delegate more and more to others.

This, in turn, allowed him to travel back to Scotland for extended holidays.

In 1892, however, Carnegie's ruthless streak had disastrous effects. An incident

Sylvia Jackson MSP

It goes without saying that roads maintenance has been a big issue in the Stirling Council area. The recent national survey showed that in the case of Stirling, 'A' and 'B' roads are at about the Scottish average level but the C and unclassified roads are in a poor state. Stirling Council has 613km of roads in this latter category.

In response to this, Stirling Council's 2005/2006 budget has recognised road maintenance as their second corporate priority after education and has allocated an extra £1.5 million per annum for road maintenance over the next three years. It is maintained that these additional resources should allow the Council to restore the roads to the Scottish average.

Officers at the Council are now preparing a list of priority roads to be resurfaced. Whilst, not all of the roads identified by communities in Stirling who feel aggrieved about the condition of their roads will be able to be included, I do know that a great deal of work is being carried out by the Community Council to raise awareness of the ongoing concern over the condition of the B829

Aberfoyle to Inversnaid road. This also included a petition by Kinlochard community. Anne McGuire and I have continued to work closely with the community in putting points forward to Stirling Council.

In determining the roads to be resurfaced the Council will take into account both the condition of the road and the traffic volumes and I am informed that there is some dedicated funding available for the B829 as a result of new developments taking place at Ledard. The roads from Aberfoyle, Gartmore and Drymen also suffer from the effect of heavy timber lorries frequenting the routes and the B829 also copes with coach traffic. It is also a route which, along with 3 or 4 other areas in Stirling, is frequently flooded both in the village of Aberfoyle and along the shores of Loch Ard.

With regard to recent and on-going flood damage I have written to Stirling Council to be updated about their on-going work to identify action plans for forwarding to the Scottish Executive for funding.

On other news, I am also backing the national campaign to raise public awareness of the measures to tackle antisocial behaviour and I am urging people in this area to take part in the first 'Standing Up to Antisocial Behaviour Awards Scheme'.

The Awards scheme has been set up to recognise the drive, courage and commitment of local people who have tackled antisocial behaviour and made a real difference in their community. Applications are available from my Stirling constituency office as well as all Co-op Stores.



As always I can be contacted at the Parliamentary Advice Office at 22 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA Telephone: 01786 446515

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sylvia.jackson.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk

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Strathard Community Trust

This is to update you on progress with the trust since the article in last month's Strathard News. The Trust was formally incorporated on the 8th of March. Charitable Status, which will help the trust widen its fundraising activities, is still pending. Directors were appointed as follows:-

Maureen Campbell, Chair

Lesley Quirk, Treasurer

Ian Marshall, Vice Chair

David Miller is the Company Secretary and Brenda Barclay is the Administrator

There are still 4 vacancies for Co-opted Directors. Under the constitution, 3 of these vacancies are to be filled by nominees from the Traders Association, The Local Churches and The Community

Council. Maureen Campbell will write to these organisations to request the name for their Nominee.

Membership:

Who can join? All who live or work in the Strathard Community Council area can become a member of the Trust. Membership is £1 a year. You will be welcome to attend Trust meetings and bring your ideas.

How to join? You can send in the form printed here or pick up a form in the Post Offices at Aberfoyle and Kinlochard, Aberfoyle Garage, Inversnaid Hotel or the Bunkhouse at Inversnaid.

Why join? Members can do as much or as little as they want

to support the Trust. Simply by paying your £1 you will demonstrate your support and will also help with the running costs. You are welcome to contribute in other ways – by helping one of the existing action groups or by coming up with an idea for another project to help the community

Launch

The Launch of the Trust will be held on 13 June, at 6.30pm, in the Memorial Hall. Aberfoyle Garage will arrange transport for the pick up of members of the community from the Kinlochard area to enable them to attend the launch. More information will be in the next edition and there will be posters around the villages. Either join

Strathard Community Trust – Membership Application Form

Full Membership is open to all, over 18 years of age, who live or work in Strathard.

The Cost is £1 per annum for Full, Junior (under 18) or Associate (Supporters from outwith Strathard)

****Junior and Associate members have no voting rights****

Name: Mr/Mrs/Ms

Address (Home, or Business if you work, but do not live in Strathard)

Telephone _____ **email** _____

I wish to apply for membership of Strathard Community Trust Ltd

I enclose the membership fee of £1

Signed _____ **Date** _____

**Please send the completed form together with payment, cash or cheque made out to Strathard Community Trust Ltd, to Lesley Quirk, Treasurer, Glencleland House, Aberfoyle FK8 3TJ
Or drop it off at Aberfoyle or Kinlochard Post Office**

Strathard Community Trust: Reports from Working Groups

Working Groups

There are currently 4 working groups taking projects forward with the support of the Trust and its Directors

1 Environmental, Social and Community. Maureen Campbell & Ian Marshall

2 Paths and Trails. Maureen Campbell & Ros Dingwall

3 Local Economic Development John Paterson & Lesley Quirk

4 Youth Group John Paterson

1. Environment, Social and Community - The final work on the **Aberfoyle Car Park** will commence on 18 April and will last for a period of 2 weeks. **Kinlochard Village Hall** is raising funds for an extension and a Race Night is proposed for the end of April. **The Strathard News** is doing extremely well and going from strength to strength.

John Clow is currently carrying out a feasibility study on setting up a **Waste Management and Recycling Site** in the area, now that we do not have the skip anymore. If this is feasible, the intention is to set up a community business to manage the site and provide local employment. John is also hoping to involve Port of Menteith and Gartmore community groups since the loss of this facility affects all 3 communities. This will not be a quick process but he will give regular updates on progress.

2. Paths and Trails - Phase 2 of the public consultation process took place during the last week-end of February. See last edition for full report. The Group will meet and discuss the outcome and take things forward. **Historic Route** – There is to be an archaeological dig carried out, with the help of volunteers, under the supervision of an archaeological contractor. This will take place for 5 consecutive days starting on 18 April. Several volunteers have already come forward. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to grips first hand with the history of Strathard on sites dating back to the time of Rob Roy and the Jacobite Rebellions. If you want to volunteer, contact John Digney Tel. 01877 382636

3. Local Economic Development Tourism and Visitor Management
The Group is working with the National Park and the Forestry on the subjects of signage, paths. New visitor attractions are also being explored. The development of a Branding strategy for the area is still ongoing. John Epps is continuing to encourage and support **Local Crafts** suppliers to develop new markets

4. Youth Group - Paddy Nixon is leaving the area. A Funding Application has been put forward. The Trust will fully support the work being carried out by the Youth Group.

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*The birds are here, we know this to be so
And to tell the tale, we have our own sweet Jo;
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And certainly capable of playing the part;
All too willing to talk the talk
As she bounces round The Lodge like a young springbok;
Full of enthusiasm as she spreads the word
Of this truly magnificent bird.
But a note of advice for the weak and faint-hearted,
You'll be caught in a snare once she gets started.
For in a question and answer period, you should be aware
Jo may just handcuff you to the nearest chair;
Not letting go until you've heard the story
Of the ospreys in all their feathered glory.
I jest, of course...you really should know
For we are all very happy to have her in tow.
So visit The Lodge and wipe away that frown
As the curtain draws back for
THE ONLY SHOW IN TOWN!!!*



Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Thank goodness the General Election has been confirmed for 5th May. That, ladies and gentlemen, is a relief because the launch of the Park Plan has been on hold as we were advised that we could not launch the Park Plan if the consultation period coincided with the Election Campaign for fear of political bias. For the life of me I cannot imagine how anyone could make political capital out of the Park Plan.

But now that we know when the election will be over we can confirm that the Park Plan will be launched on 16th MAY with our departmental Minister, LEWIS MacDONALD, taking the presiding role. The 'where' is a coup for this area as the setting for the occasion will be LOCH KATRINE. There then follows a consultation period which will stretch through the summer months into September. You will have the opportunity to make your comments and suggestions as there will be meetings and exhibitions throughout the Park area (and further afield) and for those who so wish a visit to our website at www.lochlomond-trossachs.org will give all the information you require. One advantage of the delay is that the consultation period will span the major part of the tourist season, thus allowing our visitors to comment too. After all it is a National Park. I will advise you, of course, of any of the events that will be taking place in this area.

After the consultation period all the submissions will receive consideration before the revised Park Plan is submitted to the Minister. If approved the Park Plan will then become the official document to which not only the Park

National Park News

Pairc Naiseanta Loch Laomainn is nan Troisichean

by Owen McKee

Authority but also all public bodies which operate in the Park will have to pay heed. Hopefully all the hurdles will have been overcome by early summer 2006.

That the Park Authority is not intent on having a Park that is little more than museum came into sharp focus at last month's Planning Meeting. Innovation is certainly being encouraged, not only in design but in the use of materials.

Plans for a replacement house on the banks of Loch Voil are certainly strikingly modern and oh! will the occupants have a magnificent view. The introduction of a turf roof may conjure up the notion of a dwelling from a bygone era but this home will have all the advantages of modern thermal techniques. I am looking forward to its completion in the fervent hope that my innate conservatism is blown away by a structure that will add even more character to a very lovely and atmospheric glen.

It is a relatively short step to Callander where the next change is envisaged. The Park Authority is pursuing with some vigour its aim of having a presence in each of the areas of the Park. The proposal for Callander is that the Rob Roy Centre will become the Gateway Centre for the eastern section of the Park.

As with the Gateway Centre at Balloch the Rob Roy Gateway will provide a visitor centre in conjunction with the Tourist Information Centre. But perhaps of more importance for us here is the fact that the upper floor will house administrative offices which will be able to deal with Planning and other enquiries. And when is all this to

happen? The feasibility studies have been done and are positive. Structural and fabric surveys are to be done but if these prove satisfactory, negotiations to take on the lease will commence with the hope of having the necessary alterations completed in time to open for Easter 2007.

You may recall that our plan to operate a solar boat was abandoned because of the excessive cost. Part of that scheme was to open up interpretative journeys round the islands of Loch Lomond, primarily Inchcailloch where Scottish Natural Heritage has a field station. That station and the access to it is to be improved with work commencing later this year. In co-operation with SNH the interpretative journeys will go ahead and a new electric powered 12-seater boat has been commissioned with delivery anticipated in May this year. The boat, which has green diesel back-up and is wheelchair friendly, will be stationed at Balmaha where work on the pier is progressing.

Slowly, and perhaps for some too slowly, things are being done which I am convinced will prove beneficial not only to the wellbeing of our communities but for the environment which we all cherish in the Park.

As always I can be contacted as follows:
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By Phone: 01567 830214
By email:
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Taking The Enduro Indian Challenge

By Ross Simpson

In February 2005, around 100 individuals from all walks of life left the freezing weather and dark skies of the UK (and Aberfoyle) to take part in their own personal challenge and help others less fortunate than themselves. I was fortunate enough to be one of these individuals.

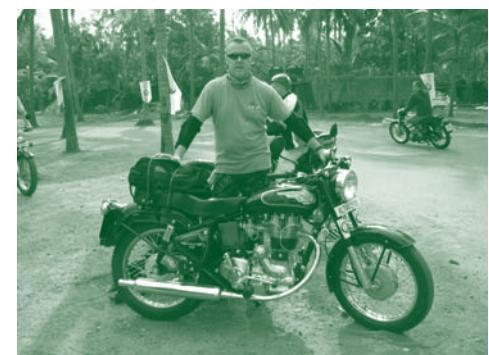
The first aim: to complete a gruelling seven day motorbike ride across southern India, covering some of the most formidable terrain this stunning area can offer. Each day we travelled long distances across mountains and hot arid desert plains, often riding from sea level to 7000 feet negotiating hundreds of spectacular hairpin bends. We rode through dense jungle, protected wildlife reserves and ancient forests, not to mention the chaos of Indian driving in the busy bustling towns that we also passed through.

The second aim: to raise £250,000 for three charities: World Wildlife Fund, The Rainbow Trust and the Pain and Palliative Care Society.

Set amidst some of India's most stunning scenery, the Enduro India Challenge offered the opportunity to explore the diverse regions of Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on a Royal Enfield Bullet motorbike. Without a doubt this was the perfect bike for the job, at home with the challenging roads and variable conditions. Whether negotiating one of the hundreds of hairpin bends that cut deep into the side of the Western Ghat mountain range or riding through one of the many wildlife reserves with the sun setting behind us, all entrants found the experience of India exhilarating and memorable.

An awesome experience:

The Enduro India was a truly awesome experience. Nothing could have prepared you for that feeling you experienced when your Royal Enfield Bullet was chugging up through the Western Ghat mountain range or spluttering into life on a misty morning, high up on a forested hillside. Nothing prepared you for the nerves you felt when starting the challenge, the pure adrenalin rush on most of the rally's stages or the sheer joy and exhilaration that was experienced on completing the tour.



The Enduro India Challenge was by no means the Paris-Dakar Rally, but it certainly was not a quick blast out on a Sunday morning. It was a demanding tour through some of the most challenging and dramatic scenery south India had to offer. The ride tested our confidence, spirit and determination and was both physically and mentally draining at times.

A full support team:

Although participants rode for quite some time each day, between 8 and 11 hours, there was never the feeling of having to rush, the ride was a team event and all riders were looked after by their fellow team mates at every stage. There was full medical support, radio communication and breakdown recovery and every team had an extremely experienced team leader to see them through. Most of the roads had reasonable to good surfaces, the accommodation was clean and basic and the food was excellent.

The most important qualities needed to take part were a sense of humour, a helpful, open-minded attitude and the ability to work as a team, or think for yourself, when the circumstances demanded it. Entrants had to be mature enough to look after themselves whilst keeping an eye out for others around them. It also helped if you were reasonably fit!

When I joined this trip the organizers promised when we finished we would leave "seeing the world in a different way". I can only add that this has come true!

This was my opportunity to do something I really enjoy and at the same time help others less fortunate than ourselves. I thought of this trip as a once in a lifetime opportunity but who knows! The organizers are already planning next year's Enduro India and also an Enduro Africa and Himalayas. So here's till next time!

Ros apologises for not having managed to write up her report of the April meeting, held in Aberfoyle.

Les Goodfellow from Stirling Council attended to give an update on the B829. The money from planning gain from Forest Hills + £30,000 from the Council is to be used to upgrade 6 sections of approximately 50metres on the B829 between Aberfoyle and Kinlochard. Any waste material produced will be used to widen passing places on the rest of the road. The Revenue Budget will be used to improve drainage to help prevent further erosion. The community will be kept informed about the results of the monitoring of the road slippage on the section next to the loch.

The next meeting will be in Kinlochard on 5th May – election day! **Please check the notice boards for change of venue.**



Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Kirk News

You may have heard about the joint services that were held over the six weeks leading up to Easter Sunday. Three Ministers thought it might be possible to get

greater support at Evening Services if we invited all six a d j o i n i n g congregations to visit each other and to bring along other folk, church members or not. We could share our worship joyfully still telling the events leading up

to Easter and getting together afterwards with tea, coffee and biscuits. The numbers increased each night. We started at Aberfoyle with around twenty folk arriving and concluded at Kippen with over eighty folk sharing in worship.

On Easter Sunday (the day the clocks changed to tell us it is summertime!!) the



same group of Churches - Aberfoyle, Buchlyvie, Gartmore, Kippen, Norrieston and Port of Menteith supported an Easter Sunday period of worship at David Marshall Lodge, at the

end of which we enjoyed a breakfast in Liz Macgregor's restaurant. Yes, it was cold and damp but certainly not miserable with Derrick and Bruce and Ian on the guitars. Was it worthwhile? It was certainly telling the Good News, that

each one of us is of value in the eyes of God.

Over one hundred and fifty people remembered a young man who was taken up a hill and hung on a cross for our salvation who came back to life and defeated the finality of separation from our Heavenly Father and those who have gone before.

Sunday 8th May: joint service at Port of Menteith, Celebration of the Lord's Supper between Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith at 10.30 a.m. No Service at Aberfoyle. Tell your friends.

Friday 13th May 7.30p.m. The 21st Company the Boys' Brigade are holding their

Annual Inspection and presentation of The Seven a Side Football Trophy

Sunday 15th May: Pentecost Sunday - neighbouring six Churches get together. Time and place to be confirmed.



Strathard Community Council
Cordially Invites
All residents in Strathard
To an Environmental Day
On Wednesday 25th May
From 2.00pm to 7.00pm
In Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

Stands will include information and advice on Home Energy including free issue of long life light bulbs, Care and Repair, Waste Management, nesting boxes and plants, assistance with tax credits, pensions and grants, Healthy Eating, WRVS Transport etc.

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The Bloomers of Buchlyvie

We were dancers from Buchlyvie,
We like to think quite lively,
But our teacher had enough
And we weren't out of puff;
So off to Aberfoyle
As to dancing we are loyal!
There are Mary, Cathy, Lily, two Marjories it would seem,
Elspeth and Joanna make up the jolly team.
So with hurling and the burling,
We're confused sometimes with twirling,
And the Marjories do get muddled
Their brains a tad befuddled,
Poor Frances in despair
Shouts, "HERE not over THERE!"
The Wind that Shakes the Barley and then Plantation Reel,
Luckenbooth and Hornpipe, I think we've got the feel!
Moorland Willie is a killer - I always get it wrong –
Panic and confusion, but no, we must be strong.
Strathspey coming shortly, that'll be just fine,
The pace a wee bit slower, phew! I'll take my time!
Good! Pat's put on the kettle. That means we'll get a seat,
'Cos after all that dancing – COR! My aching FEET!
The second half has started; off we go once more.
All please take your partners and get up on the floor.
Now Aberfoyle they know their steps,
If you get stuck just watch John Epps!
Arthur he likes skirling,
By jings he's good at birling.
Jane and Anne and Betty too,
Colin, Muriel, to name a few.
So, Frances, many thankysous: you've the patience of a saint.
We hope our many errors don't make you feel quite faint!
We're so grateful for your welcome and it really has been fun,
And are we ever glad, folks, that our dancing days ain't done!



The Trossachs Area
Department of Fish and Wildlife
SCOTLAND
WARNING

1.4.2005

Due to the rising frequency of Human - Scottish Big Wild Cat encounters, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Gartmore Branch) is advising hikers, fishermen, campers and cyclists using the "Out-of-Doors" in a recreational or work related function to take extra precautions whilst in the hills. We advise "Out-of-Doors" people to wear little noisy bells on clothing in order to give advanced warning to any Scottish Big Wild Cat that may be close so they are not taken by surprise. We also advise anyone using the "Out-of-Doors" to carry "Pepper Spray" with them in case of an encounter with a Scottish Big Wild Cat. Out-of-Doors people should also be on the watch for fresh Scottish Big Wild Cat activity, and be able to tell the difference between Wild Kitten droppings and Big Wild Cat droppings. Wild Kitten droppings are small and contain lots of berries and rabbit fur. Big Wild Cat droppings are large and have little bells in them and smell of pepper.

Enjoy your stay in The Trossachs.



Sunday 3rd April saw 52 cyclists and 63 walkers raising money for lifesaving leukaemia charity, The Anthony Nolan Trust. Starting and finishing at the Forth Inn, the bike ride participants were given a choice of 13, 26 or 39 mile routes while the walkers undertook the 13 miles. For the first time in many years, the sun shone and all participants returned from the Ard Forest safe and sound, and - mostly - smiling.

Almost £6,000 was raised on the day, with all money going towards recruiting potential bone marrow donors to the Anthony Nolan Register, giving life and hope to leukaemia patients everywhere. It costs the charity, which receives no government funding, £70 to recruit just one person to its Register.

Special thanks to all the staff at the Forth Inn, Lomond Mountain Rescue for providing such fantastic and humorous marshals, St Andrew's Ambulance for providing first aid and all volunteers who helped on the day. The Anthony Nolan Trust's next event in the area is the Wallace Monument Abseil on Saturday 21st May. Anyone with a head for heights who would like to take on the challenge of the National Monument should call

**Lindsay MacCallum
on 01877 382149 or email
lindsay.maccallum@anthonynolan.org.uk**

Upcoming Events:

- 21 May: Wallace Monument Abseil
- 22 - 28 May: The Great Glen Way
- 11 June: Oban Cathedral Abseil
- 19 - 26 June: The West Highland Way



by Wellie Boot

Spring is here! April and May, for gardeners, must be the most magic months of the year.

We went off to Madeira at the end of March with the garden brown, all the plants still hiding beneath the soil to keep away from the winter frosts. We came home to sprouting green and flowers – in two weeks!! The garden had grown: the daffodils blooming in their spring splendour and the primula denticulata flourishing in their purple glory. If you don't have these little purple drumsticks in your garden, get some. They grow like weeds in this part of the country and are such a beautiful harbinger of spring. One plant, planted in nice damp soil, will multiply about threefold in a year; so in no time at all you will have lots.

Madeira is a gardener's paradise. For someone from Scotland it is fascinating, as all the plants that I tend with loving care in the greenhouse, grow wild on the island. I left a clivia flowering in my greenhouse, which I was so proud of, only to find them everywhere, blooming like mad. The island is covered in blue and white agapanthus, hydrangeas and huge, white arum lilies. It is truly a wonderful place to be.

Back to reality: jobs to do this month (apart from weeding!!!) - seed sowing, if you have anywhere under cover. It gives them a good start and means that, when May and June come and hopefully no frost, you have good little plants to plant out.

If you want to split and move herbaceous plants, this is the time to do it. Don't leave it, as the green is developing well and you will give them a check if you leave it much later. You won't kill them but you will set them back a bit. Remember to pot up extra bit for friends and sales of work!!

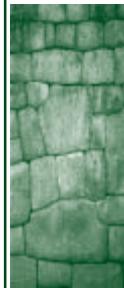
Plant of the month must be the daffodil. I know everyone has them, but there are so many different varieties that you can collect them. There is also nothing more beautiful than a mass (small or large) of "golden daffodils, fluttering and dancing in the breeze". When they are over, dead-head as many as you can, but leave the foliage to die down naturally as this feeds the bulb for next year. I know it's a bit of a mess but it's worth it for next year.

Hope the April showers stay off long enough for you to get out and do some work. Happy gardening.





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committee & contacts

Margaret Neufeld
Editor
01877 386258
editor@strathardnews.com
Ian Marshall
Advertising
01877 382211
advertising@strathardnews.com
Norman Quirk
Treasurer
01877 387201
treasurer@strathardnews.com
Marion Back
Layout
01301 702970
newsdesk@strathardnews.com
Dougie McPherson
Reporter
01877 382564
reporter@strathardnews.com
David Wilkie
Reporter
01877 382868
clubs@strathardnews.com
WEB: WWW.strathardnews.co.

Milton

Hello Children,
Well, it is back to school after the Easter holidays. They always seem to go past in a flash. The weather was really quite cold; we even had some snow on the hill tops. George wanted to play in the snow; I think he should have been a blue, mountain hare! While George hopped up through Drumlean, the Otter family, Grandpa as well, swam up the Forth to Loch Ard, then up Ledard Burn - as far as we could go. It was quite a splash, I can tell you. We caught up with George just before we reached the snow. It was very soft and wet, and not very deep. Making snowballs was difficult, but it was fine for sliding! Otters just love sliding, on mud, on snow.....on anything. From the top of Ben Venue, we could see for miles and miles, and all the hilltops of the Highlands glistened with snow. After a fine picnic, trout sandwiches for us, grass and pickle for George, we set off towards Aberfoyle. As we came to the top of the slate quarries, the sun was very warm - typical Trossachs weather - snowing one minute, sunny the next! The kits, Duke and Katrine, wanted to hunt for slowworms. Slowworms are not worms, looking more like snakes. They are not snakes either, but lizards without legs. Even without legs they can move very, very fast - and we did not catch a single one. We did see a few, sunbathing on pieces of slate, but as soon as they saw or heard us - they were off! Later, down near the David Marshall Lodge, we saw Stephen Palmer getting into training for the conquest of Everest; well, the conquest of the Everest Base Camp! Stephen is one of these people from Aberfoyle who are going off to Tibet in September to raise money for the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust. This is a sponsored walk and they hope to raise more than £21,000.

In case you were wondering who won the Easter Egg Rolling Championship - you've guessed it - it was Braeval. She wins every year. I wonder what her secret is!

Bye for now,
Milton



If you wish to take out an annual subscription please complete the information slip and post it to: **The Treasurer, Strathard News, Glencleland House, Lochard Road, Aberfoyle FK8 3TJ.**

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STRANGE BUT....

Ah, but: the power of television to bring culture to the nation!

Picture, if you will, a recent episode of the *Weakest Link* where Ann Robinson (God bless her!) puts the question to a contestant: "What is the Scottish game called which uses a ball and a curved stick?"

"Curling!" says our competitor.

"Correct!" says our Ann.

The mind boggles. One's flabber is gasted.

Still on the theme of culture, we have the tale of the young Scottish lassie, home to visit her parents and now returning to New York, her adopted city. Her flat mate had asked her to bring some British chocolate back, as apparently American chocolate is of poorer quality (now ain't *that* something!).

So, fast forward to Glasgow Airport first thing in the morning where our girl buys up a fair selection of chocolate bars, sweets and sundry chocolate-based confection before taking it her purchases to the check-out counter. The wee woman looks at the contents of the basket and cries: "Now that's what I call breakfast!"

thank you

On behalf of Forest Theatre Company, I would like to thank everyone who came to our recent production of *The Sound of Music*. We have had some delightful comments and are thrilled with how much it has been enjoyed. It has been a difficult show to produce for many reasons but we are looking forward to discussions of how we progress from here.

So thank you all once again and remember, there would be no show without an audience.

Helen Webster

Chairperson, Forest Theatre Company

• • • • •

Ian, Alison & David MacDonald,
Myrtle Cottage, Gartmore

would like to thank everyone for their overwhelming generosity on the birth of their son, Lewis.

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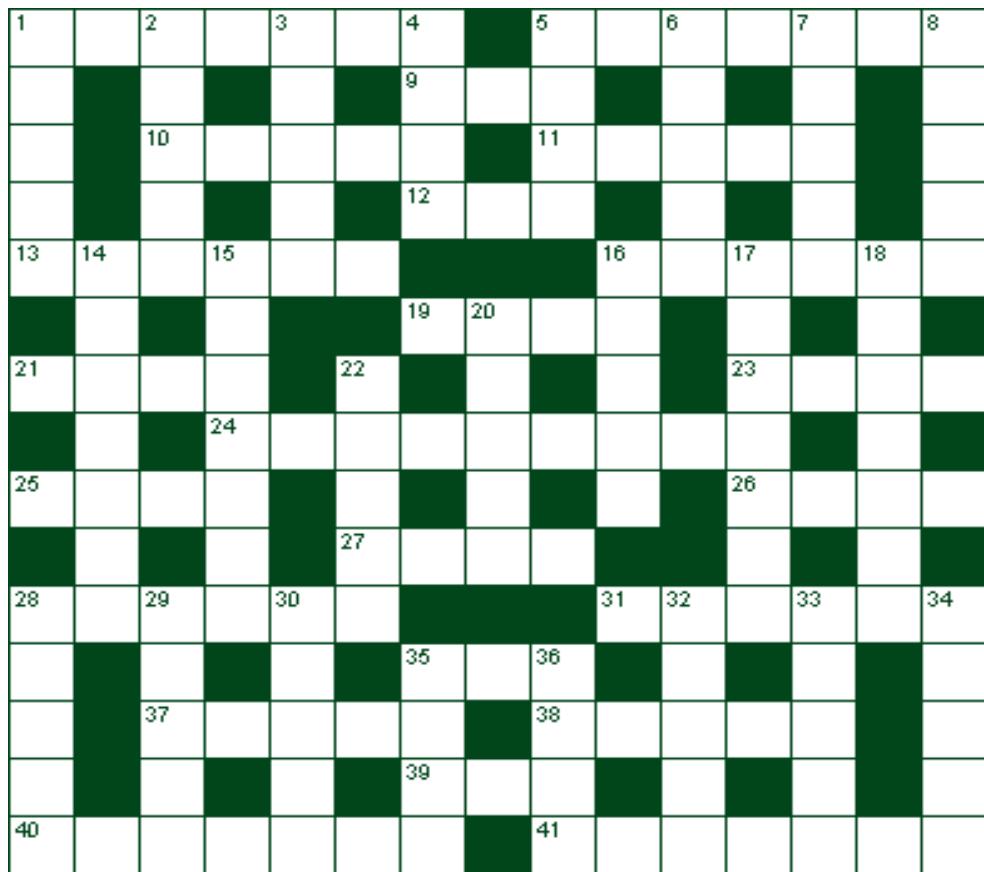
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Across

1. Tries hard (7)
5. Extinguished (7)
9. Comrade (3)
10. Big (5)
11. Academy award (5)
12. Move from side to side (3)
13. Make an accusation (6)
16. Lethal (6)
19. Floating ice (4)
21. Member of Indian sect (4)
23. Journey (4)
24. Capital (5-4)
25. Old Indian coin (4)
26. Island in central Hawaii (4)
27. Snug (4)
28. Robbery at sea (6)
31. Names (6)
35. Water closet (3)
37. Italian composer (5)
38. Watery fruit (5)
39. Sum charged (3)
40. Recover (7)
41. A person nominated (7)

Down

1. Brazilian ballroom dance (5)
2. Souvenir (5)
3. Infectious agent (5)
4. Vomit (4)
5. Long, laborious work (4)
6. Aunt's husband (5)
7. Uncovered (5)
8. Pet term for dog (5)
14. Dry red table wine of Italy (7)
15. City in S Argentina (7)
16. Postpone (5)
17. Try (7)
18. Unhurried ease (7)
20. Songbirds (5)
22. Piquant (5)
28. Stage items (5)
29. Make merry (5)
30. About (5)
32. Religion of the Muslims (5)
33. Russian revolutionary leader (5)
34. Hog (5)
35. Animate existence (4)
36. Augury (4)

Please send completed crossword to Editor, Strathard News, Schoolhouse, Inversnaid, FK8 3TU or hand in to Aberfoyle Post Office. Solution and winning entry will be published in Issue 22

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____

Issue 20 £5 prize winner: Simon Miller, c/o Blairuskin Lodge, Kinlochard

Issue 20 Solution:

Across 1. Strathkinness 8. unhappy 10. peckish 12. terror 13. Einstein 15. constable 18. snipe 21. demon 22. starboard 27. splendid 29. govern 30. wannabe 31. reptile 33. cocker spaniel
Down 2. Teheran 3. asp 4. neednt 5. slide 6. rustic 7. change 9. portal 11. well 14. tango 16. ode 17. stoke 19. par 20. prague 21. disown 23. to do 24. ape like 25. danger 26. edible 28. lingo 32. pin



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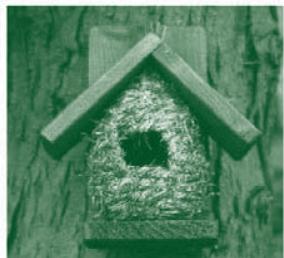
Mobile 0781 4405975

Ask for Andrew

*Braeval Old Mill, Braeval,
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