

Issue 24  
Sep 2005  
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Welcome

# STRATHARD NEWS

The Voice Of Your Community

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## Launch of the Strathard Community Trust



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DEADLINE  
DATES  
Issue 25:  
2 Oct  
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13 Nov

The Strathard Community Trust held it's launch in the Memorial Hall in Aberfoyle on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2005 from 6pm till 9.30pm. It welcomed such dignitaries as Gillie Thompson, esteemed councillor of Stirling Council and National Park fame.

It was a warm and welcoming launch with wine and nibbles, and friendly faces to greet each person as they arrived. The Committee of the trust had put on Display boards describing the actions and future actions of the trust, its aims and objectives explained. Councillor Gillie Thomson gave a welcoming speech to the collective hall and welcomed the Trust wishing it a long and prosperous future.

The next meeting of the Youth Group is on the 14th Sep in the Rangers office at 7.30pm. All welcome, including the KIDS, and all youth groups e.g Brownies, Scouts etc.

**Macmillan**  
*cancer relief*

The annual coffee morning in aid of the above charity will be held in the Aberfoyle Medical Centre on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Entry, including refreshments will be £1.

Gifts for the baking table will be much appreciated and can be handed in to the Medical Centre on the Friday morning. As in previous years, there will also be a raffle and gifts for this, which raises a large amount of money due to the generosity of all who support this worthy cause, can be handed in to the Surgery ladies.

They will be selling raffle tickets one week before and one week after the date of the coffee morning and we thank them for their help. We look forward to your generous support.

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

Get it off your chest with a letter to the Editor. Send to Editor, Schoolhouse, Inversnaid FK83TU or email [editor@strathardnews.com](mailto:editor@strathardnews.com)

## Baillie Nicol Jarvie Sign

Dear Lady Campbell,

Thank you for your letter of the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and the résumé of the history of the sign ending in it being rescued from the rubbish skip for burning.

You will understand that the Aberfoyle community generally has not inspired trust in its care of historical objects, for example: the military road is deteriorating, The Teapot has disappeared, Jean McAlpine's Inn and other buildings were left to deteriorate beyond repair, villages like Delavie and the one you pass on the way to Comer with the adjacent burial ground, the sign forbidding buses etc. beyond the Bailie Nicol Jarvie; these have all gone or are going without a care.

We are not, therefore, prepared to consign the sign to a similar fate and wish to keep it in our possession but place it on permanent loan to the village – that is the Strathard

Community Trust Ltd. We would require only that you transport it, maintain it and display it much as it was in the past, with Rowan Seabrook and his son Kyle having a watching brief with the right to repossess it if it is left to deteriorate.

It may be that the whisky distributors that produce the Bailie Nicol Jarvie Whisky could or would help in financing the proposition particularly if they could advertise their product.

We have the sign in our conservatory on the wall and it looks good but does need refurbishing (paintwork).

Copies of this letter will be sent to Pamela Abraham, Rowan Seabrook, Editor of Strathard News and possibly others.

Yours sincerely,

Maggie and Sam Seabrook

## Reply re Milton Footpath

I contacted Harry and he said the grass was supposed to have been cut at the beginning of the season. The gardeners are soon starting the 2nd cycle and he hopes it will be cut before the school goes back.

There is also a works order out to have some repairs done to the footpath. However the squads are working on higher priority sites at present, so he doesn't know when they will get to the area. Hope this helps - if you need an update nearer the August deadline just let me know. Thanks.

Fiona Fulton. 01786 443361

Email: [fultonf@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:fultonf@stirling.gov.uk)

## MRS OMAND

The parents and children of Aberfoyle Primary would like to wish Mrs. Carol Omand, headteacher, a fond farewell. After nine years at Aberfoyle Primary Mrs. Omand is moving on to pastures new at the end of August. Although we will all miss her, we send Carol our kindest regards and thanks for her dedication to Aberfoyle Primary over the years. We wish her well in her new challenge and happiness for the future.



## Child Bitten

If anyone knows of a black and brown, medium sized dog with a scruffy appearance that roams the streets of Aberfoyle, could they please get in touch with the local police (01877 382222) as soon as possible.

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## Sylvia Jackson MSP writes.....

The *Drug Dealers Don't Care, Do You?* campaign is one of the latest campaigns I have highlighted and promoted in this constituency and I am delighted by the news that it has seen more than 3600 actionable calls in Scotland to Crimestoppers regarding drug dealing. On top of the massive removal of drugs the campaign also resulted in nearly 600 arrests and the seizure of over £60,000 in cash. Around £1.5million worth of drugs has been taken off the street thanks to the actions of people from Stirling constituency and across Scotland. On a more local level, I am to meet with Central Scotland Police to discuss their anti-social behaviour strategy and how that strategy will be implemented with co-operation with Stirling Council and others.

I was also pleased to see many of our community newspapers getting behind the Make Poverty History Campaign. As you may be aware the First Minister recently visited Malawi to explore how the Executive's international development policy could help Malawi meet the Millennium Development goals, particularly in health, education and governance; and to support the activities of Scots and Scottish organisations already active in Malawi.

Many people in the Stirling area feel strongly about the issues that were discussed at Gleneagles and thousands have taken part in activities and demonstrations to show their commitment to these causes. Real and achievable progress was made at the G8 Summit on eliminating poverty and its focus on Africa. The violence we witnessed on the streets of Stirling was roundly condemned and the people who were engaged in violence had no interest in the issues of poverty and climate change. Both my colleague Anne McGuire MP and I visited residents in Bannockburn on the Thursday morning and talked with a number of people who certainly refused to be intimidated by the actions of this violent minority.

As always, my colleague Anne McGuire MP and I can be contacted at the Parliamentary Advice Office at 22 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA – Telephone: 01786 446515

Email:

sylvia.jackson.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk



## Major Film Shoot in Aberfoyle

Many of our readers will have noticed the large presence of a film crew which took over the bottom car park in Aberfoyle at the beginning of August. The high budget movie called *The Flying Scotsman* is about the life of cycling champion Graeme Obree who suffered from manic depression. Obree broke the world hour cycling record in 1993 on a self designed bike made largely from scrap.

The film stars Brian Cox who recently played in last month's BBC drama *The Strange Case of Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle*. Movie fans will also know him from villains such as Troy's Agamemnon, *The Bourne Identity*, *Supremacy's* Ward Abbot and as *X-Men 2's* Colonel Stryker. The film also stars Lord of the Ring's Billy Boyd, *Trainspotting's* Jonny Lee Miller and *Casanova's* Laura Fraser. The film was shot at various locations around Aberfoyle including Braeval and the Lake of Menteith.

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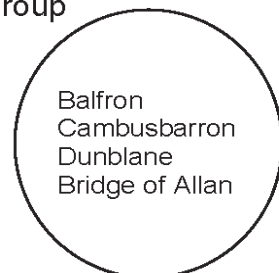
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Yasmin Fraser  
Tel: 07789 486 086  
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Cambusbaron  
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# Community Council Report

An issue of concern over the summer break has been the proposed changes to the Horsa Hut at Aberfoyle Primary School. Nobody from the Council was available to attend our last meeting, so we had no chance to discuss the lack of consultation about the changes to the Hut. I

attended the Planning Committee meeting at which the design for the replacement hut was discussed, and, as expected the members refused the application, as it lacked thought, and took no care to reflect the listed setting in which it was to be situated. Several attempts were made to set up a meeting immediately, in order to get some sort of resolution before the school returned. However holiday commitments intervened and the staff returned to the distressing sight of all their carefully packed equipment dumped back in an uncleaned hut. Heroes that they are, all the staff rallied to the challenge, called in help from Council cleaning staff, and were ready as always for the children's return on Tuesday. Since the beginning of term we have met with the new Director of Education, Mr David Cameron. He has listened to all our concerns, asked for a complete report on what went wrong with the consultation, and agreed to call all affected parties together to plan the alterations, listening to all points of view. He also indicated that he would hope to meet with parents to address any concerns they have regarding possible effects on their children's education.

Whilst looking at Aberfoyle Primary, a very special mention about Carol Omand. By the time you read this Carol will have left Aberfoyle School to move to a new school. Mindful as ever of the welfare of her pupils, she has been working hard to settle everybody in after such a shaky start to the year, before moving on. I would like to wish her well in her new school. Having worked closely with her over the last ten years I know how much effort she put in; arriving at 8.00 in the morning and frequently not leaving till teatime. Under her guidance school, staff and pupils have received excellent reports. Thank you Carol, and Good Luck!

We had some difficult discussions on planning applications at the last meeting, and ended with split decisions: Change of use at Altskeith Hotel to dwelling-house: outline permission for a new house for a Forestry Commission worker at the end of Manse Road. At our next meeting we will be discussing plans to restore and improve the toilets and tearoom at Stronachlachar pier. A brief talk from Janice Lawson from Community Services highlighted the fact that many people, pensioners in particular, are not receiving all tax credits and allowances to which they may be entitled. Having savings of your own does not automatically mean that you are not entitled to extra help. Janice and colleagues are contacting people in the community to try and raise awareness of what might be available, but the Community Council thought that we could also arrange a social afternoon to which Community Services would be invited, and at which you could chat to them, and find out more. More details later! And finally..... I've noticed recently that our bins are often left in the middle of the pavement after emptying, leaving quite an obstruction for children, prams, wheelchairs, and others. I shall be contacting the Council to ask if the binmen could try to place them to the side, particularly in view of how narrow our pavements are. We could all do our bit to help however by making sure that we take the bins back in, as soon as is practical, for the sake of pedestrians and other road users. Anyone who has physical difficulty in moving their bins should contact the Council on 0845 277 7000, and ask if they qualify for their 'pull-out' service, which means that the Council men will take out and return your bin for you.

## Support Our Annual Autumn Fungi 'Fest'

This year's Aberfoyle Mushroom Festival will take place from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October and, with a full programme lined up, looks set to be the busiest and best yet.

Now in its fifth year, the annual event - which is organised by the Aberfoyle Traders' Association - is now firmly established in the community's calendar and has become increasingly popular, attracting a significant number of visitors from further afield.

The festival programme has been extended this year to run over four days and highlights include cookery demonstrations, fungus forays in the forest, and ceilidhs and concerts in and around Kinlochard, Aberfoyle and Gartmore.

Previous years' events have all had an international theme and this has been continued into the 2005 programme, which has a 'flavour of Finland'. There will be Finnish cuisine, Finnish bands and, it is hoped, a number of Finnish representatives attending, including the Finnish Ambassador.

Full details of the events planned will be published shortly in the festival programme. Festival Committee Chairman, Fergus Woods says: "It really offers something for everyone; we've tried to ensure there will be lots going on and fun for all the family, so I hope everyone in the village and the surrounding area will join in and support this year's Festival."

The Traders Association now hopes to plan events over the festive period and welcomes suggestions which will help bring seasonal cheer to the community - and, of course, bring business into the area. Please contact Mary Phillips, ATA Secretary on 01877 382 696 or email [ATA@ForthHouse.com](mailto:ATA@ForthHouse.com)

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## St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Church In The Trossachs and Strathendrick

### ACHALLENGINGTIMEAHEAD

The Vestry and congregation of St Mary's have a busy and challenging time ahead as the fabric report that was commissioned earlier in the year has now been produced and is under consideration. From a historical point of view it is very interesting to discover that the floor that was originally laid was a slate one. On reflection this was not surprising as the church was built by the slate quarrymen in 1892-1893 for their own place of worship instead of having to go to St Andrews Callander or have the priest come to the quarry. The porch was added later and the original roof is in pretty good shape as it was slated by the quarrymen using hand picked undersized Aberfoyle slates which were properly nailed.

Our relationships with St Andrew's Callander are the best that they have been in living memory as the Callander congregation at the time were very opposed to the quarrymen and their developer doing their "own thing" in Aberfoyle where they felt most at home since the railway came, as it affected their numbers attending church in Callander.

In those original days the worshippers used wicker chairs to sit in, some of which are still in the church. In 1912 a wooden floor was laid and wall panelling and very high quality wooden pews were given by wealthy benefactors who had "taken over" the church from the slate quarrymen whose numbers had declined after the Boer War when an economic depression hit the country and most of Scotland's 230 quarries closed. These pews are still being used today and look great and are very comfortable. In 1957 the ones in the Fanshaw Lady Chapel were removed and are still at the front of the church. Part of the works to be carried out will be the removal of the Willis Organ for a well needed service and repairs having done almost 50 years of loyal service. As a result there will be lots of opportunities to see what the church used to look like when it was originally built.

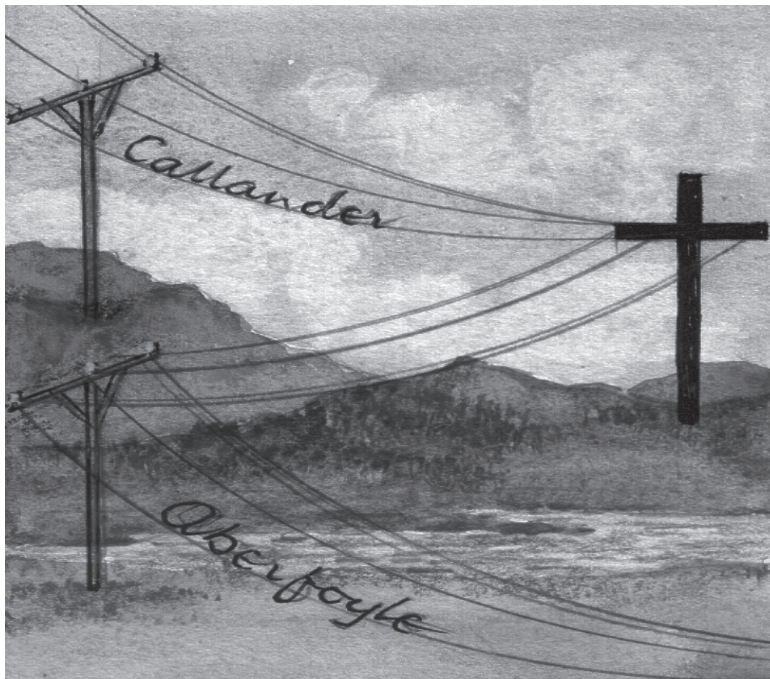
The joint services with Callander continue and are published in the press and on our website [www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk/](http://www.stmarychurchaberfoyle.org.uk/) and there have been several christenings and numbers visiting continue to rise. Why not come and see the church and its collection of icons to Our Lady and the Child Jesus. There was a very large congregation on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August the day before St Mary's Holy Day.

The Yearbook 2005 is available and can be obtained from the church. The front cover is of a new painting by Mrs Billie Bates the well known Balfron artist and long time member of the Church which depicts the importance of communication between St

Mary's and St Andrew's linked through the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ – and moving onward, carrying the Love of God to all whom we meet.

The church is open to visitors thanks to Margaret Johnson and Jean Sykes so if you have not seen the church, come along.

The picture shows the painting by Billie Bates on the Yearbook cover.



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Loch Lomond  
& The Trossachs  
National Park

# National Park News

*Pairc Naiseanta Loch Laomainn is nan Troisichean*

The final days of the consultation period for the Draft Park Plan are with us. I do hope you made your comments. When the Park Plan is finalised the next major task is the preparation of the Park wide Local Plan which will provide the policies for development throughout the Park. To some extent a start has been made through the influence of the Draft Park Plan. You will recall that recently the Park Authority turned down the planning application by Stirling Council for Aberfoyle Primary School. Under the Draft Park Plan the Park Authority has indicated that a high standard of design will be required for all new developments within the Park. That influenced the decision in the Aberfoyle Primary School case. It is important that design features prominently in our planning decisions. We intend to make sure that all architects, builders, kit manufacturers and developers are well aware of the design standards expected in The Park. Increasingly applications for planning permissions are for properties which are too big for their building site or for their position in a village. Such developments could have a detrimental effect on the character of a village. Also it could make it more difficult to provide for housing that is affordable on local incomes in the area.

That is a problem that we will have to tackle and which will feature in the Park's Local Plan. So get your thinking caps on now so that your ideas can be ready when the Local Plan consultation begins.

You may have heard that the Scottish Executive is reviewing development planning with the intention that the planning system is streamlined to provide a faster and more responsive service. It is also intended that the system is as open and accountable as possible. To get their message across in advance of the necessary legislation the Scottish Executive is holding a number of seminars for planning officers and members of planning committees. I will be attending one being hosted by Stirling Council and I will pass on to you details of the changes that are being proposed.

Whilst on Planning may I just clarify something which frequently crops up in objections to a planning application and that is the question of disputed boundaries. To help you understand why you will be told that a dispute over a boundary is not a planning matter, it is first necessary to point out that the permission attaches to the property and not the applicant. You don't need to have an interest in a plot of land to apply for planning permission. You

are required to notify the owner. Where there is a boundary dispute the answer is always the same - that it is a civil matter. The new Access Code is a consideration which does enter the planning regime and the Access Officer now enters the list of consultees with the Roads Authority, SEPA etc. Confusing but all very necessary.

Out for consultation now are the proposals for the revision of the Byelaws and Registration Regulations for Loch Lomond. Explanation pamphlets and consultation comment forms are available from the Rangers at the Discovery Centre. Although these proposals are for Loch Lomond only they are also an indication that most of the lochs within the Park are designated for quiet enjoyment - one major exception being Loch Earn which has an established position as a multiple use loch. It is important therefore that you consider the Loch Lomond proposals and comment thereon even if it is only to say that you are happy to see the noisy activities confined to Loch Lomond (and Loch Earn).

**Owen McKee.** As always I can be contacted as follows: Post: Taigh Na Bhuth, Lochearnhead, FK 19 8PR  
Phone: 01567 830214. email: [owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk)

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## Reusable Nappies are back!

Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils have stepped up their efforts to reduce a particular waste – disposable nappies - which are heavy, bulky and can't be recycled.

In conjunction with Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) they have employed a Nappy Outreach Worker who will raise parents' awareness of the alternatives to disposable nappies.

Lesley McAleenan will work with the Councils, parents, retailers and health professionals in an attempt to convert 500 parents to the joys of modern reusable nappies and develop a Forth Valley-wide Real Nappy project.

Lesley, a mum of 2 children who used reusable nappies on her own children said: "Real nappies come in lots of cheerful colours and they work just as well as disposables. They saved me around £500 with my daughter and more with my son because I didn't have to buy them second



time round. I liked the fact that I didn't have to put them in the bin and so they didn't go to landfill sites.

Washing them really wasn't a problem either. With young children in the house, the washing machine was on so often anyway, I didn't notice the extra 2 or 3 washes per week".

Real Nappy Week at the end of June coincided with Lesley starting in her new role. During that week, the real nappy display was taken around several local venues including the Thistle Centre and the Howgate Centre. Local mums got the chance to see and feel the soft cotton nappies and to learn how easy they are to use. Lesley said: "Many people were surprised at how soft

and cute the nappies are. They assumed that real nappies meant terries, pins and crinkly plastic pants. Not so. We have moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with fleece and cotton nappies and waterproof, breathable wraps.

Cost is a big issue too. I was shocked to discover that many mums of young babies are paying £10-£12 per week for disposables. That's a lot of money to throw in a landfill site".

Currently eight billion disposable nappies are thrown away every year in the UK.

With fortnightly bin collections, parents are finding that disposable nappies take up a great deal of space in their bin. Using real nappies will alleviate this problem and could save councils and parents substantial sums of money.

If you would like more information about real nappy services and retailers, you can contact Lesley on 01786-443332.

Alternatively, more information can be found at [www.realnappycampaign.com](http://www.realnappycampaign.com) or by calling the Real Nappy Helpline on 0845 850 0606



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## Refurbishment at Macdonald Forest Hills Hotel & Resort



The Macdonald Forest Hills Hotel & Resort has completed an extensive refurbishment programme to give its country house charm a more contemporary Scottish feel.

The four star hotel which lies in the foothills of the Trossachs, is a favourite venue for weddings and family celebrations and the recent refurbishments have been driven by the desire to complement the great outdoors with the best Scottish design, inside.

All the public areas have been redecorated with new fabrics, wall coverings and furniture to create a fresh, clean and relaxing environment for guests. The reception lounge, bar, restaurant and garden suite have been sympathetically upgraded to ensure the hotel holds true to its location and heritage whilst capturing the warmth and friendly hospitality synonymous with Macdonald hotels.

Christine Mortimer, general manager for Macdonald Forest Hills Hotel, said,

"Throughout the renovations the emphasis has been on creating a warm yet fresh environment that complements the magnificent views over to Loch Ard and the Trossachs. We are extremely fortunate in our location – it is beautiful here – but it is important that guests feel relaxed and comfortable by the ambience inside the hotel, as well as out.

"The refurbishment gives the whole place a lift, so that even if it is raining, our guests can enjoy their surroundings." The renovations at Macdonald Forest Hills Hotel & Resort are part of a £150m refurbishment across the Macdonald Hotels & Resorts group.



## An Addition to the Mushroom Festival

by Dougie MacPherson

The Aberfoyle Mushroom Festival is the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in October. It has become a popular event attracting many visitors. This coming October my wife and I had hoped to add to it by organizing a Husky Race to coincide with the Festival.

We considered that the spin-offs would be good: more people in the village (husky dog owners included, because the race does not last *all* day, after all!), more accommodation required because it would be a 2-day event, and extra money garnered by the Forestry say, by running a minibus service from the village to the event for spectators. The last idea was not original-Kielder Forest do similar when they hold Husky Races.

Sadly, it is not to be. Despite active assistance from the Forestry which involved a Forest Ranger driving me round several possibilities in Loch Ard and Achray forests for a complete afternoon, we could not find *one* trail which was in anyway near a suitable

condition to hold a race. The Forestry have showed willingness to help find us a venue but the dynamics of widespread timber harvesting has proved insurmountable with all trails viewed in a deplorable state.

It is a shame. Where several years ago there were several husky events in the Queen Elizabeth Forest each winter, this will now be the *second* autumn/winter season when there will be none. The one light at the end of the tunnel is that

the Forestry seem keen on having our events in Strathard so, who knows, maybe the winter of 2006 we can return.

*As a postscript* to the above, the Forestry did approach us, generously volunteering to have a trail prepared to husky race standards. Sadly, this offer, coming in mid-August, was too late as this winter's race calendar has already been set.

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# A NEW SOCIETY LAUNCH IN STRATHARD

By Dougie MacPherson

A new book has just hit the bookshops entitled *In Praise of Slow* by Carl Honore. In it the author states, "Thanks to speed, we live in the age of rage." It has become a bestseller, in which the author highlights the mania for speed and the more recent backlash against it.

In it Honore describes how people are realising that slowing down makes for an improvement in the quality of life. The Japanese now have their Sloth Club and the Italians have launched their Slow Movement which, amongst its aims, has Slow Food and, yes, Slow Sex. (This gets better and better!)

As this now appears to be growing into a worldwide movement of ideas and attitude, I thought it fitting that we in Strathard should 'do our bit', so to speak, and take the bull by the wotsits, no matter how painful that may be.

Let's face it, we do live at a pace of life far faster than that of our parents and grandparents. Take shopping for instance. Everything is hurry, hurry and when you go for the 'messages' with the wife then you can't help but pick up her attitudes. You go round the supermarket which is geared for fast, easy shopping. Ha! That's a laugh! As soon as you reach the checkout, she (the wife - and now you) is scanning the queue for the shorter or faster moving line. So you pick one. Then there is a hold up and the queue you didn't go for is now way ahead and the shoppers that were once behind you are now way ahead. They are wheeling their trolley past your counter while you are still loading up; and because this has happened through your poor judgement, you are now at least 2 minutes behind where you ought to be. Alright so far? Good, because it gets better!

You have finished your shopping and drive off in your car. You are still in a hurry. Ahead of you, and going at a snail's pace, is an old estate car with Dad, Mum, two kids, assorted luggage and two bloody big Irish Wolfhounds hanging their heads out of adjoining windows and dribbling. To cap it all, they (not the dogs), are towing a caravan with a stack of metalwork in the shape of a collection of bicycles on the back.

You are starting to lose the plot. It's understandable. You are wasting precious time. At the first open section of road, you manage to overtake, swerving to avoid a rather large pothole in the process, one of Stirling's finest which is obviously fairly deep if the sight of a rooftop car aerial protruding from the hole is anything to go by.



*too laid back?*

But you have passed the family on holiday and are going like the veritable bat out of hell, well pleased with yourself when, some 5 miles down the road, you come up against temporary traffic lights which, naturally, are at red. (They are always at red! They *paint* them red!) The council is repairing the road - and making a meal of it. It stretches ahead of you like a mini Grand Canyon, yet no one is working on it. They are all in their cabs eating and reading their newspapers without a care in the world. It's your belief that they only waited till you were in sight before changing the lights and jumping into their vans. Oh what a jolly jape! But, hey, you are getting hyper! After all, you have complained about the roads so you cannot complain when they come to repair them, even if it is in midsummer and at the height of the tourist season. The council roads department *and* forward planning, oh, *come on!*

So you sit there, quietly seething and then see in your rear view mirror, pulling up behind you, the very estate car and accompanying menagerie you passed some miles back. How embarrassing. What makes it worse is that the driver waves cheerily at you. An even more dreadful scenario is that Dad gets out his car and walks up to you, looks in, and says,

"Hey, that's not a bad car you've got there. Fast, is it?" He means well, but you barely hear his words for the noise of your teeth grinding together in impotent rage.

But you get home, and ahead of schedule as planned, just in time to tape the programme on TV that you wanted to watch, except that the programme itself is a load of tosh (lovely word, that) and you would not have watched it in a month of Sundays had it been live. So what have you achieved? What was the point?

I do feel that it is time that the people of Strathard recognised that this is not only a worldwide problem, but also affects our community. To that end I am suggesting that we set up a club, a society, which recognizes that 'slow' is the way to go. Hey, there must be a motto there somewhere!

I propose that we call our society the **Strathard Nice Neezy Society (NN Club)** for short) to promote the virtues of a laid back life. We shall *not* push ahead at supermarket queues but

instead stand back and let little old ladies go in front of us whilst whistling in a nonchalant manner. Of course, if you are also tuneless then that might not be a good idea - it could be a further source of stress between you and your wife, not to mention the other customers.

Driving manners can be changed. Why speed to make up 2 minutes? Let old men with bunnets on and smoking pipes pass you. In fact, wave them on by. Watch, in your rear view mirror, as many others follow your example and form a convoy of happy motorists, driving along at 40 mph, blowing their horns in enjoyment and waving cheerily at other motorists with clenched fists. Ah, the joy of a slow and peaceful life!

Circulars will be sent out shortly, looking for office holders and those willing to make a contribution to setting up the NN Club. Sadly, I will not now be standing as I am finding time short.

Incidentally, should anyone come to read the book above, *In Praise Of Slow*, then I would appreciate their opinions as I, as yet, have been unable to read it due to pressures of commitments.



# Ranger's Ramblings

## A View from the Lodge!

.....  
Contributions welcome: Contact David Wilkie on 01877 382258 or email [david.wilkie@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.wilkie@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)



### ABERFOYLE COACHES – THE WAYAHEAD

Aberfoyle Coaches has evolved over the last couple of years from the old Aberfoyle Motors which has been trading continuously since 1928. With an initial desire to improve not only our vehicles but also raise the profile of the company brand with a new easily identifiable logo, along with a greater emphasis on staff training, so far this has proven to be a sound philosophy. From fairly humble beginnings supplying school transport to Stirling Council with the odd private hire thrown in, Aberfoyle Coaches has grown considerably. We now carry out several tours a year on behalf of Lochs & Glens Holidays, something we hope to continue building on in the future. We have become the main provider for wedding transport to hotels not only locally but also as far afield as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth. Many local clubs and societies now rely on us for their day trips and evenings



out. Aberfoyle Coaches plans on continuing to grow with a desire to offer a greater choice of trips from small parties of seven or less up to full capacity (one hundred and seventy six). In conjunction with T.A.G.S. (Third Age Group Strathendrick ) we plan to increase the operating area to take in Callander, Doune, Dunblane and others locally. T.A.G.S. currently organise days out and theatre trips for elderly people living in Aberfoyle, Gartmore, Drymen, Killearn, Balfron, Buchlyvie and Kippen. These

trips offer fantastic value for money, normally under ten pounds, which includes a meal. Last year, we also became the sole suppliers of transport to Stirling County Rugby Club. With seven teams travelling to over ninety away fixtures, this has been a boost to what can be a long slow winter. I'm happy to say their first XV have been promoted to the first division this year, so this must have something to do with them travelling to the games in comfort!

Aberfoyle Coaches intend to continue to offer a safe quality service at an affordable price no matter the occasion. Whether it's your wedding transfers, corporate entertainment or simply a day away sightseeing, give John a call or check out our website [ABERFOYLECOACHES.COM](http://ABERFOYLECOACHES.COM) for more information.

*P.S. The working week is now extended to Saturdays for the workshop, which can carry out servicing and MOTs while you wait! – We hope this helps.*

### A RIGHT ROYAL 'DO' IN DRYMEN

The Lomond Mountain Rescue Team have a renowned and well-deserved reputation in the field, having responded to more than 450 incidents since their foundation in 1967. Consisting exclusively of volunteers, their standing is based on traditional values of fortitude and endeavor, together with an outstanding team spirit. On Wednesday 27 July, due reward was granted in the shape of a brand new purpose-built outpost in Drymen. This intrepid reporter was indeed humbled to receive an invitation to join a highly-charged guest list which assembled on the day to mark the occasion. Before proceedings could take place, a lighter moment was to be found as news came through HRH, The Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior of The Order Of St. John, due to officially open the post, had been held up by a tractor in Buchlyvie, and there would be a ten minute delay! Upon his eventual arrival, short speeches were delivered by Dr. Bob Sharp, team leader of Lomond Mountain Rescue, and Colonel James Stirling, Prior of The Order in Scotland, before The Duke unveiled the plaque and handed over keys to Dr. Sharp for a brand new land rover. The guests then proceeded to Drymen primary school for a superb buffet lunch, catered by Stirling Council, which presented an opportunity for former and current members of the team recount their adventures. I am indebted to Dr. Sharp for being given the chance to take part in such a wonderful event and my memories of the day will be everlasting. The staff of The David Marshall Lodge are proud to be associated with the team and consider the annual Christmas fund-raising day to be one of the highlights of the year. If you wish to learn more about their very essential work please contact [www.mrc-scotland.org.uk/lomond/](http://www.mrc-scotland.org.uk/lomond/)



### NOTICE BOARD



September is normally a calming period for events, as we begin to prepare for the whirlwind that is Halloween. In the meantime there are still one or two occasions for you to enjoy.

#### HEELSTERGOWDIE

**SUNDAY 4th SEPTEMBER / SUNDAY 2nd OCTOBER 2.30 PM**

These are the last two dates of the 2005 season, and if you haven't already had the pleasure of an afternoon in their company, then I urge you to attend and enjoy a superb rendition of traditional folk music, laced with a touch of humour.

#### BATWATCH

**SATURDAY 10th SEPTEMBER Time TBA**

Better be quick with this one, as places are limited and always in high demand.

**History Of The David Marshall Lodge  
Part 3 will appear in a future issue of  
Strathard News**



## A VERY DAVID MARSHALL LODGE DAY

During my years at The Lodge, I have been privileged to meet many wonderful people from all over the globe, and from all walks of life, who have provided me with countless happy memories. Many of these people have become friends and there are even a number I now exchange Christmas cards with. Every now and then, however, some very special individuals find their way to our doorstep and it would be difficult to pick out a more emotional working day than the second visit of the summer by The Chernobyl Children Lifeline Concern with a group of youngsters from Belarus. Their trip to The Trossachs included the superb hospitality offered by The Forest Hills complex and a sail on The S.S. Sir Walter Scott at Loch Katrine. The Lodge was delighted to play a part with a free guided walk to the waterfall in the company of Katy Freeman, and a private viewing in the wildwatch room to learn about our osprey project. The behaviour of the children during their stay was a credit and a perfect day was sealed in the shape of a very personal gift handed over to the staff as farewells were exchanged. The Concern will always be assured of a warm welcome anytime they wish to pay us another visit. If you wish to learn more about their vital work being carried out on behalf of the children, the website is [www.chernobylchildlifeline.org](http://www.chernobylchildlifeline.org)

Pictured below the Chernobyl Children at the Osprey Watch



## BATS AND MOTHS AND OWLS AND THINGS

Our ever-popular Wild in the Woods weekend was extended somewhat with a hastily arranged Barn Owl ringing night on the Monday prior to the main event. Places for that and our other two evening events - our first ever Moth Workshop on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and a Bat Watch on the Saturday were again quickly snapped up. Despite the late hours involved and the obligatory intrusion of the dreaded midge throughout, the participants responded with admirable enthusiasm. (One

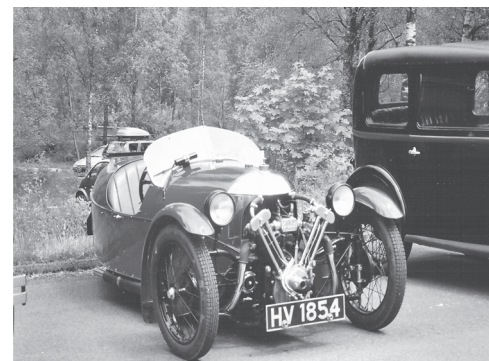
youngster noted in the feedback survey form that the reason she enjoyed the Bat Watch so much was that she got to stay up late ! ) In the face of stiff competition from the Callander Highland Games, the weekend still drew strong numbers of daytime visitors, who were able to take part in our Wildlife Tracking guided walks and enjoy our RSBP, Badger Society and Wildlife Crime promotional displays. As an added bonus, our live link to the osprey nest captured images of the first attempted flight by one of our chicks, around Sunday

lunchtime. The Lodge will be introducing a priority booking procedure for next season as there is normally a high demand for our limited number events. If you wish to be included in our mailing list, contact details are to be found at the head of the page.



## CAR RALLY PHOTO COMPETITION

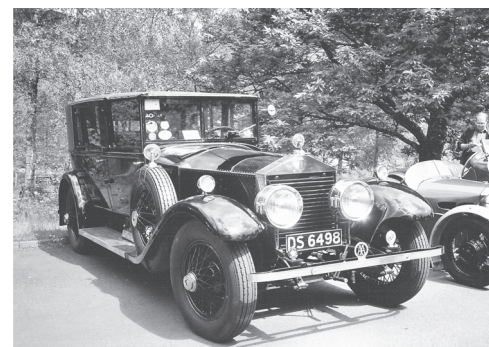
The recent car rally at The Lodge on the 12<sup>th</sup> June was a fantastic spectacle and The News would like to offer the chance to win a five pound cash prize for anyone who can identify the make or model of the three cars in the photographs. In the event of a tie, the winning entries will be drawn from a hat. Please send or pass your answers to any of the committee, whose contact details can be found at the back of this issue.



**CAR ONE ?**



**CAR TWO ?**



**CAR THREE ?**

## HOLISTIC FAIR

Apologies are due regarding the numerous requests from our regular visitors who expressed an interest in attending the proposed Holistic Fair scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled at late notice, due to unforeseen circumstances.



# Спасибо Большое!

(Thank you very much!)



**for helping to make our stay in Scotland  
a wonderful experience!**

*tanya*

***yana***

*yura*

*ilya*

*sasha*

*vlad*

*alyona*

*lena*

*veronica insa rita masha dominica anna roman matve*

## Local History Group

The Loch Ard Local History Group meets on the first Monday of each month (except in January next year) at the Kinlochard Village Hall. Meetings begin on 5th September at 7.30 pm when Ian Mitchell will give an illustrated talk, "The Mountains before the Mountaineers". On 3rd October at 7.30 pm the topic will be "Local Archaeology: Excavating an Historic Road" Melanie Johnson. Melanie was the professional archaeologist who led a strong group of local volunteers, exploring the character of the original road from Inversnaid to Loch Chon. She will discuss the results of her work. November sees the well-known Balfour local historian Jim Thomson giving an illustrated talk entitled "The Endrick Made Balfour". Several families moved from Aberfoyle to Balfour during the Industrial Revolution to find work.

In December there is a Members' Night. On 9th January Susan Harvey of Harvey Map Services will give a talk about Local Maps and in February the subject will be "Local Names and the Gaelic Language in the National Park" with Chrissie Bannerman. Alastair Durie will talk about "Queen Victoria and Tourism in Scotland" at the meeting on 6th March, 2006. In April the topic will be "Finding Out About Crannogs" with the Director of the Scottish Crannog Centre, Barrie Andrian.

**The Annual Subscription is £5 and the charge for visitors is £2.**

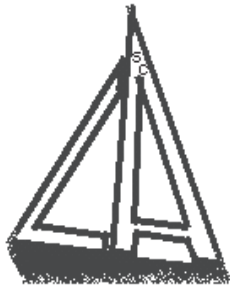


**Members taking part in the archaeological dig**  
(Photo: John Digney)

### Aberfoyle Brownies

James Aitken, Cairsti Aitken, Gemma Aitken and Victoria Steele recently climbed up Ben Ledi with the Callander Rotary Club. We raised £180.00 for Aberfoyle Brownies.

\* Aberfoyle Brownies will restart on 14<sup>th</sup> September.



## LOCH ARD SAILING CLUB

Mid August already and the wind conditions have often been very fickle recently but at least there has been warm summer weather this year for the less avid members to sit in the sun and grab another cup of coffee because once again the wind has died away. All very frustrating on the other hand for those members who enjoy the chance to pit their skill against others in the two races

organised on a Sunday! However, as the days draw in, we are beginning to think about what is left to look forward to before the end of the season in October. In September on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup>, the Club is once again hosting a Travellers Event for the Solo Class of singlehander dinghies at the request of the Solo Association. A Traveller event, as its name would imply, is a regatta to which sailors from many different clubs come to race against each other. If the weather is good that day, it will make a fine sight on the loch to see the fleet sailing around the race marks.

The Solos have been coming to Loch Ard for several years now and the Club must be doing something right for, much to our pleasure, we have been asked by the Solo Association whether the Club would be willing to host the 2006 Scottish Solo National Championship. The Club has agreed to this and has suggested the weekend of the 8/9<sup>th</sup> July next year for this major event. After the success of hosting the Scottish National Flying Fifteen Championship last season, we are looking forward to seeing a large fleet of these smaller singlehander boats sailing on the loch. It is always an education for those of us only too ready to admit that we do not know all that perhaps we should about the finer points of sailing, to watch the top sailors in any class competing against each other. On a different tack, (note crafty use of sailing terminology!!) the Club, amongst several other locations, has recently been visited by a surveyor on behalf of a mobile phone company. Apparently, a site is being sought somewhere in the Kinlochard area for a phone mast to improve the reception for mobile phone users in the area and several locations are under consideration. No decision has so far been made on the site to be chosen and of course the company will have to submit a planning application to the National Park when and if they decide to proceed. Should the Sailing Club site be proposed, the matter will be put to the membership for approval before the Club agrees to its site being used.

*Richard D Gordon*

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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



**open to everybody.....with something for everyone!**

Sailing, Canoeing, Kayaking, Fishing, Boat Hire, Mountain Biking, Quad Biking, Off Road Driving and Safari's, Climbing, Abseiling, Archery, and multi-activity courses. There is a wide range of equipment at the centre available for any activity which you wish to pursue.

**FOREST HILLS WATERSPORTS CENTRE**  
Kinlochard, Aberfoyle, Stirlingshire FK8 3TL  
Phone 01877 387 775 Email [foresthills@goforth.co.uk](mailto:foresthills@goforth.co.uk)



# Medical Centre

Information for all patients registered with the following practices: Aberfoyle, Buchlyvie, Balfroon, Drymen, Killearn, Kippen, Strathblane and all branch surgeries.

## HALF DAY CLOSING FOR STAFF TRAINING

The seven medical practices in West Stirling area have combined to explore ways in which they can improve the care they are able to offer their patients. One of the areas identified by the practices is the training and development of doctors, nurses, health visitors, practice nurses and administrative staff and, in order to address these needs, staff training will take place from 12.30pm on the following afternoons:

**WEDNESDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2005**

**THURSDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

**TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

**WEDNESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2005**

On these dates, the Health Centres will close at 12.30pm and the "Out of Hours Emergency Service" will come into operation together with District Nursing and Health Visitor emergency cover. If you have a problem and require emergency medical or nursing care during these afternoons, PLEASE TELEPHONE YOUR HEALTH CENTRE AS NORMAL. You will be told how to access the service you require.

**REMEMBER, IN A LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY, DIAL 999 FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

**Heart to Heart** is an organisation that offers support to those who have been affected by divorce or separation. Being the only group of this kind in Scotland, they offer a unique service which is not only accessible to all who have direct experience of divorce or separation, but also to those helping friends or relatives through this difficult time. They currently operate from Callander, but are now in the process of reaching out to cover the surrounding areas due to the recent appointment of a Development Co-Ordinator, Kay Miller.

There is a wide range of support on offer from Heart to Heart, one of these being the informal, relaxed and friendly meetings based on a series of 6 weekly talks and discussions on "Recovering from Divorce or Separation." There will be an opportunity to talk and share experiences in a safe and confidential environment.

Other support is also on offer including practical information or just a friendly chat.

## The Medical Garden

The Medical Garden Committee is holding a fund raising event on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October in the Memorial Hall from 12 noon to 5.00pm.

Four different kinds of soup will be available from noon to 2.30pm after which coffee, tea and biscuits will be served.

We are holding this fundraising event to celebrate 10 years of the "Practice Garden" by designing a low allergy garden to help people with problems to design their own garden.

Various craft tables have been organised for selling goods - ideal for Christmas gifts! There will be a lucky entry ticket prize and also a tombola stall. The four local schools will be entering a competition of collages or pictures showing Mushrooms, Fairies and Toadstools and certificates will be awarded.

The entry fee will be £1.50 for adults and £1.00 for children.



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**Heart to Heart**

A support group for those affected  
by divorce or separation

Looking at the effects of the past, conflict patterns, communication,  
boundaries, legal and mental issues, children, moving on.

Register now for the next series of meetings

**EVERY THURSDAY FOR 6 WEEKS**  
**8<sup>th</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> October**  
**7 pm to 9.30 pm**  
(child care available if required)

For registration and further information about what else we can offer:  
PHONE: Lynne on 01877 331157 Sheena on 01877 330569  
Email: heart.to.heart@virgin.net

**CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE**

A range of helpful books and other resources are also available.

The next series of meetings will begin on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September from 7pm to 9.30pm, and will continue every Thursday until 13<sup>th</sup> October. (Childcare is available if required).

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from this service please contact Lynne on 01877 331157 or Sheena on 01877 330569 for further details.

## The Garden

by Wellie Boot



**August**-I think this is my least favourite month of the year in the garden! That may seem a strange remark for a dedicated gardener to make, but this gardener doesn't grow annuals or dahlias. I suppose I have always had a spring and early summer garden-even a winter garden, so most of my plants by August are getting oversized, blousy and eaten by the buggaboos, and oh the weeds, they are getting oversize and blousy too, but unfortunately not eaten. The fresh hope of spring and the abundance of colour of early summer have passed and the glory of Golden Autumn has not yet arrived. Enough of all this moaning.

The Japanese Anemones are giving a glorious show of pale pinks and white and the lilies are magnificent. I grow my lilies, both in the open ground and in black plastic pots. The pots can then be taken into the greenhouse, or shed, or the spare

bedroom for the winter. The outdoor varieties I grow are Lillium Regale and various oriental ones; they seem to thrive and come up and flower every year, however I suspect I replace some every three or four years. The pot grown ones are Lillium Stargazer, a very dramatic brilliant pink with white edges and darker pink spots. It doesn't like being out in the winter, hence growing it in pots. It goes

inside and each spring the black plastic pots are placed in a border amongst other plants or in large tubs with other plants. The black plastic pots just vanish and your beautiful show of lilies can appear in a different place each year-very clever.

I must tell you what I saw when I went to close the curtains in our bedroom the other night-a large tawny owl sitting on the window sill looking in at me. I couldn't believe my eyes. It, of course, flew away when it saw me, but it left a lovely big feather just to prove it had been there. Can anyone suggest what it was doing there? We do have four Housemartins' nests in the eaves above the window. The joys of living in the country.

The vegetables and fruit that grow in raised beds and large pots are doing fine- lots of lovely courgettes. The strawberry towers are developing well and we have had quite a lot of strawberries this year, rather than the deer, who ate the lot last year, leaves and all!

I hope you are getting your clippers and saws nice and sharp for the great autumn prune.

Happy Gardening



## Inversnaid Primary School

Welcome back to Mathew, Ross and Eilidh and a special welcome to Jamie as our new P1. We would also like to welcome Sheila Scott as our new school cook. Sheila's cooking has already been given the 'thumbs up' from the children and she has proved that she is continuing the tradition of excellent school dinners at Inversnaid. Congratulations to our Green Team who were awarded joint runners up in Stirling Council's 3Rs Trophy competition in June. Their detailed display focused on the importance of 'Reducing, Reusing and Recycling'. Well done to you all.

This term the children are again actively involved in raising awareness of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle'. They have decided to make better use of our waste paper by making it into logs and briquettes and they have begun to re-make envelopes out of the mountain that we get in the school post. These logs, briquettes and envelopes can be bought directly from school or from Kinlochard shop. Thank you Shona for helping us once again with our fund-raising.

Besides these new projects the school still collects various 'used' items, which are then passed on to different charities:

- Used Printer cartridges for animal rescue centre
- Used Postage Stamps and used Postcards for Leukaemia Research
- Waste paper
- Old Spectacles for Third World Charity
- Milk bottle tops for 'Guide Dogs for the Blind'

Please help us to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle by bringing us your 'usable' waste. Thank you.

Chris Carter

## ALL FOREST ROADS LEAD TO STIRLING

Foresters are heading for Stirling next week to meet central Scotland people to take the pulse of their opinions about the nation's woods and forests. They will host a public meeting in Stirling on Thursday 25th August to hear how the public think Scotland's 1.35 million hectares (3.3 million acres) of woods and forests should be managed and developed. It will be one of a series of similar meetings across Scotland.

The meetings are part of efforts by Forestry Commission Scotland to consult the public as it updates the Scottish Executive's Forestry Strategy. The existing strategy, Scotland's first, was published in the year 2000, and is due for its first review to ensure that it is kept relevant to changing times. The public meeting at 4.30pm on Thursday August 25th in the Stirling Management Centre at Stirling University will be a chance for the public to put forward their views on the important issues in forestry and how they should be tackled. It will last between two-and-a-half and three hours.

George McRobbie, chairman of the Commission's regional forestry forum for Argyll and east central Scotland, which advises the Commission on local issues, encouraged anyone with an interest in the many benefits that forests can provide to come along to the meeting, adding,

"The role that Scotland's woods and forests can play in all our lives is becoming more varied and complex all the time. Not only do they produce timber, but they also provide safe places for wild plants and animals to live, and they are also providing more and more opportunities for people to relax and recover from the stress of modern living. Nowhere is this more important than in the forests on Stirling's doorstep in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park.

"Forests' role in providing environmentally friendly wood fuel for heating, and their ability to play a part in community and rural development, are also increasing all the time.

"With so many complex factors to consider, it is important that the Commission and the Scottish Executive hear what people want from their woods and forests so that the new forestry strategy will take the public's aspirations into account and be relevant to changing times."

Forestry Commission Scotland is also asking people to send their comments and ideas to it by 16th September. To help them, a consultation document, entitled "Review of the Scottish Forestry Strategy", can be downloaded from the Forestry Commission's website at [www.forestry.gov.uk/SFS](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/SFS). Free paper copies can be ordered from Sharon Robinson, National Office for Scotland, Forestry Commission, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT; telephone 0131 314 6486; e-mail: [sharon.robinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.robinson@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).

Responses to the consultation should also be sent to Ms Robinson to arrive no later than Friday 16th September 2005. Once all the responses are in, a draft strategy will be written, taking into account the comments and ideas received, and then a second consultation will be held to find out what people think of that before the final strategy is produced next year (2006).

Further information about the Stirling meeting is available from the Commission's Perth & Argyll Conservancy office in Perth, telephone 01738 442830; e-mail: [panda.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:panda.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

## Rangers Corner



Summer's here and the time is right, so the song goes  
For dancing in the street

But I have no time for this particular prose

As I melt in the overbearing heat

Am I the only one who feels this way?

The only one who pines for a cool autumn day?

Of course the summer brings an abundance of life

But it is certainly coupled with measure of strife

With voracious appetites and teeth like razors

We couldn't stop their advances even with Star Trek phazors

I'm talking about the midge, the ticks and the clegs

Who bed down in our faces, our arms and our legs.

As we strip down to a t-shirt and shorts at the first glimpse of sun

An open invitation to these devils if ever I saw one.

Good luck to those of you dancing in the street

Most of you I am never likely to meet

Because I'll be locked in a cupboard

Waiting for the sun to go down!!

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**Mob: 07803 615924**



**Forestry Commission**





In birding terms, there are a lot of LBJs (little brown jobs – birds which are difficult to identify) about now. In late July and August, there are many recently fledged young birds and moulting adult birds. During the moult birds lose old feathers and grow new ones. Some species of young birds can look very different to the adult species (robin for example) and this leads to a lot of confusion with identity for both the inexperienced and experienced bird watchers. At the Garrison car park, I was reminded of this confusion when watching adult and young dunnoek, robin, redpoll, whinchat, meadow pipit, willow warbler and stonechat all mixing in a small area. However there was little confusion in identifying the golden eagle being mobbed by two ravens over Stob an Fhainne and less than an hour later an osprey circling with a fish in its talons, again over Stob an Fhainne. On the 18<sup>th</sup> August I was surprised to observe that the goats had started rutting, this rut was on Garrison Farm on lower and safer ground in comparison to last years observed rutting on the craggy edges above Loch Lomond where one of the males was nearly butted over the edge! I enjoy watching the males rearing on their hind legs before clashing against each other, the clash of horns audible over a long distance, as they battle out who is going to be top goat. I am not surprised that we have at least two males with broken horns on the reserve. Having discussed this rutting with Tracy Livingstone (British Feral Goat Research Group), it is early for goat rutting but not that unusual with climatic change confusing the animals, however it may mean that we have early January kids and the prospect of higher kid mortality. In late September or October, dependant on the weather, the red deer rut will be starting soon. This is a good opportunity to listen and observe the roaring stags as they compete for the hinds.

## Aberfoyle Post Office

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## THE DANCE CONNECTION

The Dance Connection's pupils from Aberfoyle had a sparkling finale to their first year of classes with a sell-out show held at the MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling on the 28<sup>th</sup> May. Over 200 dancers from Aberfoyle, Callander and Stirling took part in 'Inspirations' dancing to music from Shrek and Moulin Rouge and 30 adult tappers performed to 'I've got rhythm'.

The Dance Connection classes resume on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August at the Memorial Hall, Aberfoyle. Classes are also held in the Kirk Hall, Callander.

Director Carla Duggan looks forward to welcoming pupils new and old to her classes which cater for 3 years old right up to adults. Classes can be taken in Ballet, Tap, Modern and Jazz and trial lessons are available.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact Carla on 07815 146462 from 23<sup>rd</sup> August.



*The Dance Connection's Finale*

Hello children,

We are all back at school. I just don't know where the summer holidays went; they seemed to flash past. The weather was simply wonderful: long hot days and plenty of sunshine. The one problem for otters was the lack of water. The Black Linn Falls, normally so full that we can plunge safely over the cascade into the pool below, was reduced to a trickle. On the other hand, the lochs were really warm: perfect for swimming and playing games.

The young goslings at Ledard have grown up very quickly. If you look closely, you will see that the white geese are always racing against the grey ones; sometimes they even play water polo against each other. They play with an empty plastic bottle that somebody forgot to take home with them. Discarded fishing tackle is even more dangerous to wildlife!

Grandpa Otter has not been surprised by the brilliant weather: after all, he predicted that it would be. Back at the beginning of May, Grandpa noticed that the ash tree leaves came out a long time after the oak leaves – always a very good sign. There is an old country saying, "Oak before ash, you'll get a splash; ash before oak, you'll get a soak." It seems that you will get wet one way or another; it is just a matter of degree!

At least it stayed dry for the important days. Kinlochard Gala was a resounding success: everyone had a great day – and they raised lots of money. Drymen Show, washed out at the end of May, also enjoyed the best of weather – but only just!

On a family outing to the top of Ben Venue, we met Stephen Palmer and Peter Sunderland. The twins, Katrine and Duke, were amazed to learn that they were training for a climb on Mount Everest, which is much higher than even Ben Lomond! Six of them are going to raise lots of money for the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust. Braeval and I are going to give them our pocket money for a whole month.

Bye for now,  
Milton





## A FAIR SHARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Older people in rural Stirlingshire are the target for a new project that aims to increase the uptake of benefits and services by older people.

Called the Fair Shares Project, it has been developed by Stirling Council, in partnership with other agencies, to provide targeted information, advice and assistance to older people, particularly those in rural areas and ethnic groups. The Project aims to reduce the barriers that exist to claiming benefits and to offer help with the application process. Typical benefits that go unclaimed are Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit and Council Tax Benefit.

From early August project worker, Janice Lawson, will be based in a different rural village each month, raising awareness of services and benefits to which older people are entitled. Janice will also build up links within the community and leave an information resource before moving on to her next location. She will be in Drymen in August, Strathblane in September and Balforn in October.

More information about services and benefits is available from the Fair Shares team on 01786 470408

## ABERFOYLE OSPREYS TAKE THE PLUNGE!

Aberfoyle's "Big Brother" osprey chicks have wowed crowds of cheering visitors watching them on camera by taking to the air for the first time. The first, older chick made its first flight at 1.40pm on Sunday, 31st July, followed by its four-day-younger sibling today (Friday 5th August) at 11:05am - after some encouragement from its mother and older sibling.

The chicks' young lives are being captured on camera for the benefit of visitors to the David Marshall Lodge forest visitor centre near Aberfoyle, where Forestry Commission Scotland and RSPB Scotland have established an osprey information centre and viewing station. Joanna McFarlane is the osprey information officer there, helping visitors get the most from their visit to watch the ospreys, and she said, "We've been looking forward to this day for weeks, and everyone was delighted when they were able to share the exciting, nerve-wracking moments when the chicks made their first tentative flights. "Their mother is now spending more time away from the nest, and she will be leaving soon on her migration to spend the winter in West Africa, leaving the chicks with their father. They will spend the next three weeks or so coming and going as they build up their strength and flying skills for the migration to West Africa, which they will do alone, one by one.

"The male will continue to bring fish to the chicks up until the point when he finds the fish are piling up and he realises that the chicks have gone to Africa as well! Then he, too, will leave for West Africa. "All going well during the winter, we will see the adults reunited on our nest in March or April next year in front of our cameras once again. However, we won't

see the chicks back in Scotland until they are three years old, because they stay in Africa for three years before making their first migration back to the land where they hatched."

The osprey information centre and viewing facilities were established by RSPB Scotland and the Commission, with assistance from the European Union's Leader+ programme, to mark Ospreys' 50th. This a three-year programme of events across Scotland to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the return of ospreys to breed in Scotland in 1954 after an absence of 38 years. Other partners in Ospreys' 50th are the Scottish Wildlife Trust, Kailzie Gardens, Dumfries & Galloway Council, the Highland Wildlife Foundation and the Scottish Raptor Study Groups.

Viewing facilities have also been established to enable the public to watch ospreys live on their nests at the following places: Glentress Forest, near Peebles, by Forestry Commission Scotland; Loch Garten, Strathspey, by RSPB Scotland; Loch of the Lowes, near Dunkeld, by the Scottish Wildlife Trust; Kailzie Gardens, near Peebles; and Wigtown Bay, by Dumfries & Galloway Council.

The osprey viewing facilities at Aberfoyle are also part of the Forestry Commission's Wildwoods campaign aimed at encouraging people to enjoy Britain's woodland wildlife. Further information about the best places to see woodland wildlife is available by logging on to [www.forestry.gov.uk/wildwoods](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wildwoods) or calling the Commission's public enquiry hotline, 0845 FORESTS (0845 3673787). Brilliant! scheme across Scotland and the UK, where everyone can enjoy seeing birds in close-up. For more information visit [www.rspb.org.uk/brilliant](http://www.rspb.org.uk/brilliant)

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*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.*

## IT'S A TOTAL WIND UP.....

### And its on sale at a Strathard outlet near you!

Read all about it, in the new book entitled 'The Great the Good and the Gullible'  
Written and compiled by local writer Brian MacDonald.

Frustrated by the helplessness he felt watching his good friend Maggi Goudielock undergo the trauma and treatment of illness, Brian MacDonald came up with a novel way of raising funds for charity. Writing under the pseudonym Brian D Donald he decided to write some 'wind-up' letters. The results and the answers he received to his spoof letters are really amazing. He wrote to various dignitaries, stars, hotels and companies and, along with the replies, has compiled a book in order to raise money for the Strathcarron Hospice.

#### The book is called:

### LETTERS FROM THE GREAT THE GOOD AND THE GULLIBLE.

Not only is it a clever idea, it's a hilarious read. So far Brian has raised £3,400. Here is one of the articles to whet your appetite!

#### THE TROSSACHS AREA Department of Fish and Wildlife SCOTLAND WARNING

Due to the rising frequency of Human-Scottish Big Wild Cat encounters, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Trossachs 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.

*The book is available from Aberfoyle Post Office, price £9.99p*

*By post, cheque for £11.00 includes p & p to:-*

**Wee Brammer Book Publishing**

**Westbrae, Gartmore**

**The Trossachs FK8 3RJ**

## STRANGE BUT....

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

**Byron (The ither wan)**

**Memory** is a strange thing, I'm sure all would agree, and selective. Most of us can give an answer to the most obscure of subjects, but remembering everyday facts and figures? Forget it! Well, we certainly seem to.

Take the television or pub quiz, for example. On the most esoteric of subjects we can give a rapid response:

"What was the ancient capital of the Chaldeans?" *No problem....*

"Give the formula to calculate the area of a circle." *Easy....*

But, when you are asked by 'Er Indoors, "Did you remember the milk? I told you 3 times!" you have to admit that you clean forgot.

"But I *can* name the mountain in the film North By Northwest!" you add.

"Oh, *do* be quiet!"

Now *that's* the clincher!

**It has been** strongly rumoured that the **Bank of Scotland, Aberfoyle**, is to issue all its customers with a free umbrella apiece. It must be stressed that this is only a rumour at this stage.

It is felt, though, that such a move is not only politic, but a necessity in view of the discomfort experienced by many of the bank's punters endeavouring to obtain money from the cash machine in wet weather.

How many local people have stood at said machine and been deluged (well, okay, maybe dripped upon) by water from above? It can be very uncomfortable and cannot be avoided. It could be argued that it is the bank's problem, because there is obviously a cash **flow** problem and there is the risk of its customers going into **liquidation**, whereas, with a little outlay from the bank's **float**, secure cover could be given to one and all.

*An interesting proposition, I'm sure you would agree.*

### thank you

The Strathard News Committee would like to thank Mr. W. Matthews and Aberfoyle Traders Association for their very kind donations.

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## Another Bridge Sighted

In the last issue we reported the presence of two new bridges, the handywork of the "Phantom Bridge Builder of Aberfoyle". The Strathard News can now report the presence of a third bridge. This beautiful structure spans a ravine and waterfall over Achray Water and is even more stunning than the first two spotted.

The location of this bridge is a short walk along the forest road leading to Ben Venue from the rear of the Achray Hotel. The bridge links this road with the Water Board road leading to the Loch Katrine Dam. The Strathard News believes that work is underway to link this road with a trail leading to the new Achray Car Park. Our intrepid reporter "scoop" has reason to believe that there are more bridges to be found which he hopes to reveal along with the identity of the "phantom" in future issues.



## Kinlochard Gala Day

As a result of a survey conducted in the Kinlochard area at the end of 2004 concerning the future refurbishment and extension of the village hall and in response to one of the questions asked re. fund-raising ideas, a group of village residents formed a

Gala Day Committee. With great gusto and a lot of hard work on their part, the Kinlochard Gala Day took place on 17<sup>th</sup> July and was a resounding success. The final total of monies raised on the day was £3,805.93. This was well in excess of what we had anticipated.

The Village Hall Committee would like to express its sincere thanks to Ian and Diane Williamson, the lynch-pins in this endeavour; also Steve and Lynn Pollacchi, Bill and Kathy McMillan, Drew and Allison Keir, Ricky and Shona Baston and Maria Facenna. There were numerous sponsors and people who gave

loads and loads of prizes for the various raffles and tombolas etc. – too many to thank individually in this short article; nonetheless, a great big thank you for all your contributions.

However, it is worth mentioning that the vast majority of the people in the village came together on the day and helped to make it the success it was. As a result, the Gala Committee has had numerous requests to hold it again next year and the answer is: there will be another gala day in 2006. There are already offers of various items for prizes.

Once again, a big thank you to everyone who gave us their time, donations and sponsorship. Now all we have to do is to think how we can do better next year: we are open to suggestions.



## a' phàirc

Bat nights, forest walks and the world's biggest grouse, find out more in The National Park's magazine. The fourth edition of a' phàirc, the official magazine for Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park is now available. The publication will be distributed to addresses in the Park and will also be available from National Park HQ and the Gateway Centre. A'phàirc, Gaelic for The Park, is designed to update people on the progress of the Park. Speaking about the latest edition, Bill Dalrymple, Chief Executive of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, "We have tried to include a wide range of projects and updates for you in this issue. Everything from bat facts to river buoys, walks in the Park to Celtic missionaries. There is also the chance to have your say with the new proposed Loch Lomond byelaws"

Copies of the magazine are available by contacting National Park HQ (Tel 01389 722600) or can be downloaded as pdf or text from our website

[www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/html/publications/newsletters](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/html/publications/newsletters)

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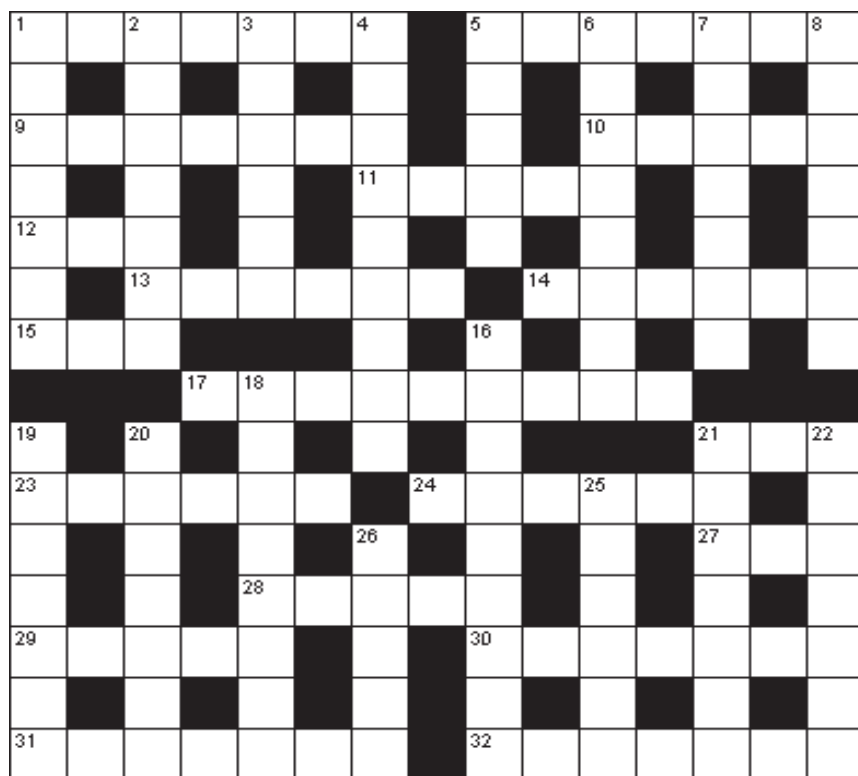
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### Across

1. Married man (7)
5. Lease holders (7)
9. Most tidy (7)
10. Affected by rust (5)
11. Country in NE Africa (5)
12. Jelly (3)
13. Crotchety (6)
14. Keep under restraint (6)
15. At the present time (3)
17. Ornamental water jets (9)
21. Minor falsehood (3)
23. Member of the Society of Friends (6)
24. Take on a fresh supply of fuel (6)
27. Cereal grain (3)
28. Slumbered (5)
29. That group (5)
30. List as an item (7)
31. Folds (7)
32. Make clear (7)

### Down

1. Pistol (7)
2. Devour (7)
3. Person who wields an axe (6)
4. Tending to deter (9)
5. Capital of Japan (5)
6. Situated in the north (8)
7. Feed bag (7)
8. Horizon (7)
16. Holy Land (9)
18. Abroad (8)
19. Living in water (7)
20. Combat area (3,4)
21. State in the SE United States (7)
22. Among (7)
25. Maintenance (6)
26. Transmits (5)

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 25

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

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

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**Issue 23 £5 prize winner: Jane & Pete Honeyball, 6 Rectory Medow, Chinnov, Oxon**

Issue 23 Solution:

**Across** 1. diamond 4. smash up 8. bartholomew 12. loin 13. whip 14. frame 15. nestle 17. shall 22. oops 23. stare 24. some 25. eerie 28. jewess 30. lover 32. land 34. ages 35. king of kings 38. sapling 39. spidery

**Down** 1. daily 2. moan 3. net 5. moo 6. stew 7. propeller 8. bone 9. hire 10. limb 11. whoa 14. flash 16. sushi 18. haste 19. powerless 20. lad 21. fever 26. rink 27. polo 28. jerk 29. sags 31. essay 33. dial 34. aged 36. gun 37. imp

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