

ISSUE 4

March
2003
Free

STRATHARD NEWS

THE VOICE OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Suggested
Donation
50p

inside
P2

Editorial
P3

Action Plan
Launch
P4

Broadband
P5

Aberfoyle School
P6

Sled Dogs
P7

Community Council
P8

Rowing Club
P9

Sylvia Jackson
P11

Owen McKee
P12

Traffic Calming
P13

Playgroup
P14

Inversnaid School
P15

Classified
P17

Sailing Club

Strathard Community Futures Launches Action Plan

**Aberfoyle Memorial Hall
29th March
Open 11 AM – 3 PM
Launch Party for
Strathard Residents**

Pop in between 11am and 3pm to see the displays of work done to date. The Action Groups will be on hand to answer any questions on their specific area of responsibility. Bring the kids, entertainment provided.

See page 3 for more details

Tramping Through the Trossachs

Aberfoyle Festival of the great outdoors is a winner!

Tramping Through The Trossachs, or T4 to the Aberfoyle Traders' Association organisers, was so successful in 2002 that this popular Strathard Springtime celebration of the great outdoors has been extended to two weeks this year - spanning the Easter weekend. For 2003, the festival is being led by the Go Forth Partnership, operators of The Loch Ard Watersports Centre, located on the B829 West of Aberfoyle.

The organisers have devised a full programme of events so that there is something exciting to do every day - whether exploring the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park in the capable hands of the Forest Rangers, taking to the water with the Watersports centre on Lochardside or, new for 2003, the High Ropes experience and parachute simulator in the grounds of Gartmore House. As before and among other things in a full programme of events, there will be guided walks which focus on the folklore of the area, and evening functions in local venues to complement the more aerobic daytime events.

Please collect your free copy of the full programme and event guide from Strathard's retail and hospitality businesses, perhaps when you shop locally in Aberfoyle, Gartmore or Kinlochard, or from any Tourist Information Centre in the National Park.

See also the Aberfoyle village website www.aberfoyle.co.uk

Delegations of guests are expected from Ireland as part of a community-led initiative in which Strathard is forging partnerships with similar rural communities in Craigavon, Co Armagh and Tochar Valley, Co Mayo.

SS Sir Walter Scott Gets a Facelift



The S.S. Sir Walter Scott is the only surviving screw steamer in regular passenger service in Scotland. The grand old lady has been sailing majestically on Loch Katrine since 1900 and has uniquely provided a quiet, serene and memorable pleasure cruise to her thousands of passengers. Over the winter months the S.S. Sir Walter Scott has been on the slip at Stronachlachar receiving her annual maintenance. Freshly painted, with significant alterations in the engine room and a new license, she is now back at the Trossachs Pier ready for the sailing season. The Trossachs Pier Gift Shop and the Café are also now licensed. The season starts on 31st March and the staff are looking forward to working together with other local businesses to make this year a success.

**Sailing timetable and tariff can be found on the transport insert.*



EDITORIAL

For this months Editorial I have been a little short on inspiration, so a friend suggested using spring time as my main theme with snow drops, crocuses, daffodils, pee-weeps and oystercatchers all to the fore. I set about writing this brilliant essay, got about half way and realised that I was just writing a lot of rubbish. I then turned to Peter Joynson's book, "Local Past" for some inspiration. This proved too inspiring! I wanted to write about everything including how in August 1654 the parish of Aberfoyle was burned and wasted by the English army, cultivation was utterly ruined for the time, and houses destroyed. Maybe this would account for a lot of the ruined crofts and buildings scattered throughout the area!

A Stone Bridge of two arches across the River Forth at Aberfoyle was demolished by order of the Government in the year of 1715, and yet still unrepaired in 1724. Things haven't moved on very much, as we are still trying to persuade the powers that be to build us a New Bridge! Although there is now some hope. A feasibility study is being set up to look at the possibility of building a pedestrian bridge across the river. I believe that we may have lost some of the historical value of the Old Stone Bridge when it was strengthened and straightened in the late 1960s to allow busses and lorries to cross over the river. The Old Bridge could have made a more interesting foot Bridge than anything we are liable to build today, linking the old and Historic part of Aberfoyle to our more modern residential and commercial area North of the river. All going well The Strathard News will be represented at the Community Futures Steering Group's launch in the Memorial Hall on Saturday 29th March, where we will be only too pleased to welcome your views and comments. We'd like to thank Stirling Council for providing us with a grant which will help to secure the future of the newsletter. Also, to those readers who have shown their support for us by taking out an annual subscription.



Jimmy Campbell
Editor

Arts and Crafts Opportunity in Aberfoyle



The Area Tourist Board have invited Aberfoyle Traders' Association (ATA) to lead an initiative which will promote the sale of locally produced high quality goods through the Trossachs Discovery Centre in Aberfoyle.

If you live in or near to the National Park and have a skill with an application, which should appeal to visitors to the area, this is your big opportunity! Items made from natural materials such as Aberfoyle slate and locally made jewellery are pre-stated under-satisfied areas... the challenge is before you to give this initiative *your* best shot.

Whether at the souvenir price level - made for around £2 +odd (normal retail mark-up must be assumed), or of high perceived-value giftware which can be offered for sale at "realistic" prices... please contact John Epps of ATA on 01877 382276 or e-mail crannaighouse@aol.com

Tea? Cup or Pot?



The Teapot 1900

According to local legend, if you asked for a cup of tea at the Teapot, that's exactly what you got. On the other hand, if you requested a *pot* of tea you received something a little stronger!

**Picture courtesy of Ian Morrison*

Strathard Community Futures Economic Development Means Business!

Community Futures - the programme of change to make Strathard the place we the residents want it to be - initiatives include the Strathard News itself! Many of us are concerned that the Strath is perhaps over-dependent on Tourism - a notoriously fickle marketplace... could anyone forget the 2001 FMD season! We have a specialist team developing ideas there, but what about **Non-Tourism Business**?

Ever had an idea... for setting up a business but not followed it up? Would you like to develop your idea now, perhaps attracting funding which can be supported by the Community Futures team? Or would you be prepared to pass your idea on to somebody young and enthusiastic to carry forward?

Do you need work... but not know who might be able to use your skills?

Would you like to learn a trade... and be Nationally recognised?

Have you ever wanted to get something done... and felt sure somebody in the area should have the skills... but somehow couldn't make contact?

Could you train an apprentice... if only you could find somebody with some latent talent and enthusiasm... and find a formula which would not cost you money?

To discuss any of the above please contact

John Epps on 01877 382276 or e-mail crannaighouse@aol.com

Aberfoyle Interiors
Traditional Upholstery
Evening Classes ♦ Day Home Workshops
Materials ♦ Sundries ♦ Upholstery
Antique Furniture for Sale
Enquiries Welcome
Tel 01877 382404
Prop. Colin Johnson





**STRATHARD
ELECTRICAL SERVICES**
Prop. John Samson
*Electrical Wiring & Lighting
Intruder, Fire & Comms Systems
Door Entry, CCTV & Security Lighting*

**Craigenvoech
Lochard Road
Aberfoyle FK8 3TO**

**Tel. 01877 382 559
Fax. 01877 382 559
Mobile. 07860 263338**

Community Futures Action Plan Launch

The concept of Community Futures was originally started by Stirling Council and has now been taken up by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority as a means to ensure that changes to our rural communities are led by the residents, rather than imposed from outside. During 2002, every household in Strathard was provided with a questionnaire asking everyone to say what they liked / did not like about living here, and what should be done.... The response revealed some results which were not altogether surprising. For example, most of us want something done about our roads, whilst on a local level our young people want a skate park! Importantly, we the residents had written our own agenda for change. A community workshop was then held and focus groups formed, to more closely analyse the agenda and draw up a list of practical actions. These are now presented in a published document, *The Strathard Community Futures Action Plan*. Everyone in the Strathard community is invited to Aberfoyle Memorial Hall on 29th March to witness the formal launch of our action plan and discuss the details with members of each focus group.

The hall will be open from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. and a light buffet lunch will be provided. The Playbus will be on hand to keep smaller children occupied. We are providing a *Happy* bus to transport people from Inversnaid, calling at Stronachlachar, Kinlochard and wherever is convenient for you. To book, call Ros Dingwall on 01877 382231 or 01877 382668.

Chairman of the Community Futures Steering Group, John Epps (tel 01877 382276) says "Community Futures is a dynamic instrument for change by the people, for the people; several of the Action Groups have already made excellent progress in drawing-up plans to be taken forward for implementation, whilst other Groups have already achieved results. A prime example of this is the re-publication of The Strathard News. We sincerely hope that everyone interested in the future of our community will take a personal interest in the programme by attending the Action Plan Launch, and by making their own ideas for change known to the present team of enthusiastic volunteers"

Aberfoyle Unveils Pioneering Broadband Project

Businesses and residents drive forward innovative satellite and wireless connections to put National Park villages on the map.

A ground-breaking project is being unveiled this month to provide broadband connections to businesses and residents in Aberfoyle using the latest satellite and wireless technology.

The Aberfoyle Broadband Community (ABC) will initially serve more than 20 businesses in this rural Stirling community, and more businesses are expected to sign up at a later date. A wireless network will connect businesses to two satellite dishes, one located in Aberfoyle and the second 3 miles along the glen at Kinlochard.

A wireless hotspot will also be located within Aberfoyle and will provide both visiting tourists and business users with remote access to the Internet and e-mail. This facility will be provided at low cost for a minimum of 15 minutes at a time.

This pilot project has been driven forward by the Aberfoyle Traders' Association in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley with funding from Lomond & Rural Stirling LEADER + and is the first of its kind in Scotland. The aim is that other rural communities across Scotland will be able to use this as a model for similar projects.

The ground-breaking initiative complements a wider Scottish Enterprise Broadband for Business Programme which aims to switch businesses across Scotland on to the benefits of broadband. Mary Phillips, of the Aberfoyle Traders' Association, said: "Aberfoyle has a varied, vibrant and forward-thinking business community. We have worked together for 9 months to develop this project and are delighted that our hard work is now paying off. Although located in the heart of the National Park, we want access to the latest technology so that our rural businesses can be competitive nationally and internationally, helping create a prosperous local economy. This is a significant moment for the residents and business community of Strathard but it would not have been possible without the support of Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and LEADER +."

The Aberfoyle Traders Association, which represents over 40 businesses involved in tourism, trades, business and IT consultancy, language translation, arts and crafts and a range of training opportunities, has contributed to the project, with other contributions coming from SE Forth Valley and from Leader+.

The e-business team at SE Forth Valley has been assisting the Aberfoyle Traders Association for more than nine months with technical expertise and help in identifying and choosing suppliers as well as providing funding.

Charlene O'Connor, chief executive of SE Forth Valley, said: "The broadband project for the Aberfoyle community is an excellent example of what local people can achieve when they work in partnership with public agencies. Having rural businesses connected to the latest broadband telecommunications technology is a major priority for the Scottish Enterprise Network and this project is at the vanguard of Scotland's digital revolution." She added: "This project demonstrates how different technology can work seamlessly to deliver broadband to rural businesses; if it works in Aberfoyle, it can happen elsewhere. I hope the project will become a big success and I look forward to seeing it rolled out to other communities in Scotland."

The launch of the Aberfoyle Broadband Community project marks the first LEADER+ project in the national park area to get underway. In December 2002, Lomond & Rural Stirling Leader+ awarded its first round of applications since announcing its success at attracting a programme of European funding for projects which improve the quality of life in the rural area. Anne-Michelle Ketteridge, Programme Manager for Lomond & Rural Stirling Leader+, said: "LEADER+ is very much about funding innovative community projects, and Aberfoyle Traders' Broadband Community project certainly meets this challenge. However, what is most impressive about this project is the way the community has come together and worked hard to find a solution to an issue affecting everyone, and then gone on to implement that solution - which just goes to show how much can be achieved when a community works together."

A Professional Service From

AC Electrical

**Full Electrical Service
Domestic & Commercial**

SELECT

Tel 01877 382 088 or 07796 331451

www.acelectricaluk.co.uk

**Installation, Periodic & Portable
Appliance Testing & Certification**

**Also Data & CCTV Systems
Quality Work Guaranteed
Regular Customers Scotland Wide
Glasgow * Falkirk * Stirling**

Kirkton House, Duchray Road, Aberfoyle, Stirling FK8 3XB

At the Scottish Afternoon in January the children gave a splendid performance to staff and parents with a wide range of Scottish poems, songs, fiddle and recorder. In February our annual Bulb Show was another very successful event. All children had examples of art work, writing, craft and topic work on display. It was a very colourful event. The bulbs were so beautiful, as ever, although it seems to become increasingly difficult to judge the best date when they will be ready. The plate gardens were very

imaginative and had taken a lot of effort to make. Thank you to all parents and friends for making this such a happy community event. Children entertained the Women's Guild with recorder, Scottish poems and songs. The children thoroughly enjoyed the event and want to say a big thank you for the biscuits, crisps and juice. Primary 4, 5 and 6 have enjoyed curling at the Forest Hills and are looking forward to meeting children from our neighbouring schools at the Tournament on the 7th of March. The children have a wonderful

writing wall and would be delighted if any parents or adults would care to contribute to this. We are looking for writing in the widest and most creative ways possible. Please join in. In January we welcomed Ian Forrest, a student teacher, to our nursery and playgroup. During this time our context was 'Hot & Cold' and the children had many opportunities to experiment and discuss making things hot and cold.

Aberfoyle Primary School & Nursery Class

The weather obliged and we had buckets full of ice in the mornings to use in the sand, water and our home-made polar landscape. The children's interest led us on to learn about hot and cold places and dinosaurs. At the end of January we celebrated Burns by listening to poetry, making up our own rhyming poems and learning about our own Scottish Culture. Chinese New Year closely followed this and we moved on to looking at Chinese Culture.

The children were very closely involved in making different Chinese dishes and were very enthusiastic about eating with chopsticks. Most of the children preferred their rice and noodles 'plain' and liked to taste different foods separately. We decorated the nursery in red and gold and experimented with Chinese writing, making paper cuts and Chinese lanterns. We are pleased to welcome back Claire Cushing, a music therapist. Claire is visiting the nursery on Wednesday for four weeks. On her first visit it was Chinese New Year and we composed our own Chinese music,

made a musical stir-fry and danced to dragon music.

Recently we welcomed Mrs Pauline Forsyth and Mrs Shona Baston, who have joined the nursery as Support for Learning Assistants, and they will be working with us in June. Thank you to parents and the community for their continued support.

Carol Omand (Headteacher)

Aberfoyle Medical Centre

Donations towards the purchase of expensive emergency equipment, including defibrillators, continue to arrive at the surgery. We are so grateful to you for your generosity. Please note, on the following dates Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie surgeries close at 12.30pm in order to address staff training requirements:

Tuesday 25th March 2003.
Thursday 24th April 2003.
Tuesday 20th May 2003.
Thursday 19th June 2003.

Remember to order and collect your repeat prescriptions in good time for the Easter Holidays. The Surgeries will be closed on Friday 18th April and Monday 21st April

Reading Room: The first Annual Valentine's Ball on 15th February was a huge success. An unbelievable £1300 was raised towards the cost of roof repairs. A big thank you to everyone, individuals and local businesses, who made this possible and you can be sure February 2004 is pencilled in for the 2nd Annual Reading Room Valentines Dance

Strathard Community Link up with Ireland

The Strathard community has developed an innovative project, STRAP (Shamrock Thistle Rural Action Partnership) to join up with two similar rural communities, The Birches in Co. Armagh in Northern Ireland and the Tochar Valley in Co. Mayo in the South. The aim is to develop community and business links to benefit all who live in the three areas.

In early March, a meeting of the three communities was held in Co. Armagh, attended by representatives of Strathard – Ros Dingwall, Fergus Wood, Mary Phillips, John Epps, Lesley Quirk, Catriona Phillips and Eilidh Campbell. Deborah Willie attended from Stirling Council as did Anne-Michelle Ketteridge, the project officer for the Leader+ European Fund

A number of action groups were established to develop reciprocal projects in Tourism, Farming, Youth, Culture, Community and Business and these will be developed over the coming year. It is hoped that some projects will qualify for funding from Leader+

Three members of the Kinlochard Ceilidh Band - Eilidh Campbell, Stuart Cameron, and Fergus Wood - joined dancers and musicians from The Birches and Mayo communities in providing entertainment at an excellent social evening laid on by the Mayor of Craigavon which raised money for local charities. Strathard will host the next meeting of the three areas in June when we plan to progress the projects as well as giving our visitors a warm Scottish welcome and showing them around our beautiful area. We hope that as many people as possible in our community will have the opportunity to meet members of the other two communities as part of this Partnership and will also visit them in the future

Plans for this June visit will be published in the next issue of the Strathard News and anyone who would like to find out more about this, YOUR community initiative, should contact Ros Dingwall on 382668, Fergus Wood on 387219, Mary Phillips on 382696, John Epps on 382276 or Lesley Quirk on 387210.

FROM THE ALPS TO ABERFOYLE

A Sled Dog Journey Across Europe



When the Pet Passport scheme was first introduced my wife, Bridget, and I decided that we would like to take advantage of the scheme and compete with our dogs in Europe. It seemed to be the chance of a lifetime.

We have 13 Siberian Huskies and moved house to Aberfoyle some years ago to take advantage of the many miles of forest trails to run and train our dogs. The only catch was the lack of winter conditions in this country. We were looking for snow. Europe seemed to provide the answer. This was confirmed when two other sleddog teams from Scotland competed in France during the previous winter and returned, via the Pet Passport, with no trouble in getting back into Britain.

We took our 8 really fast dogs, our 'Screaming Skulls' as we call them, the reason being obvious when you see them ready for 'the off' at a race. The major drawback was the overall cost which we were aware of before we started out. It still seemed to mount, however, in the months and weeks before the trip. Pet Passports for eight dogs was one of the biggest cash outlays. Equipment, fuel and accommodation were also costly. We figured, however, that this would be a 'one-off'. We had worked sleddogs in Alaska a few years ago, but this time we would be competing with our very own dogs, on snow and in Europe. Our dogs were getting older (*Chewbakky*, my lead dog is now over 10 years old) and I am no spring chicken myself, so this would be our last chance.

We were racing in the Savoy Alps in France, an eight day race of about 7 miles each day. The first race starting on January 4. We had to consider carrying enough water and feed for the dogs for 14 days. We were travelling by van to the Alps which involved a round trip of over 2,400 miles. There were 6 British teams, 4 of them from Scotland.



It was an eventful (and slightly bruising) 8 days racing. The competition was intense and the course quite 'strenuous' in places, involving not a few hairpin mountain bends which caused the British contingent some 'hairy' moments. To add to that, none of us had had snow and sled experience for quite a while. Needless to say, there were a few spills amongst us. The dogs were all fine and handled it well, but my sled broke twice and had to be repaired and I managed to get a few cuts and frostbitten fingers. The only problem some of our dogs had was getting acclimatized both to the altitude and the bitter temperatures. At one race venue, for example, the temperature registered at -15°C , and this was mid-morning. *Chewbakky*, being slim and with a thin coat, found it particularly cold. This was when we were waiting to set off, I must add. On the actual runs, she and the others had no problems. In fact, they seemed to revel in the cold and snow! One of the runs was a night run, with halogen lamps on the sled and fastened onto my hat. I had had doubts about this race but as it transpired, I thoroughly enjoyed it. We relied on our dogs to follow the trail. The sled (and my head) rocked about so much that you only caught occasional glimpses of the trail through the trees. One minute you would be on the flat, the next hurtling downhill with a sharp bend at the bottom! It certainly kept the adrenalin flowing! We both enjoyed the trip and the dogs loved it. Just as an aside, the French commentator *kept* insisting at the start of each race that each British team was another 'team Ecosse'. This did irritate our English friends a little! It does make a change to have the boot on the other foot, *n'est-ce pas?*

It seemed quite strange to return to Scotland (We got back into Britain with no hiccups at all), and find ourselves racing at the Aberfoyle Husky Race just a few weeks later, on 1 and 2 March. This time it was in the mud and drizzle. The hard ground is less kind to the dogs' paws than the snow but they seemed to realize that they were 'home' and gave it 'laldy' as they say.

It is always the last event in our Club's Scottish calendar and it attracted over 50 entries from as far afield as Northumbria and Sutherland. The forestry put on a 4.5 mile trail which all classes competed in and which we all enjoyed. From now on its downhill, no more running our dogs in the warm weather-just cutting the lawn and asking myself: 'Did we really do all that?'

By Dougie MacPherson

Aerobics

Hi/Lo Aerobics Class

Suitable for all ages & fitness levels

Starts Tuesday 22nd April in Memorial Hall,
Aberfoyle. 7pm-8pm Cost £3
Everyone welcome.

For more information contact Katrina on
01877 382198

(Qualified 'Fitness Scotland' Aerobics Instructor)

Aberfoyle Motors Ltd

M.O.T. Station & Garage Workshop

Convenience Store*Newspapers*Off-sales
Tobacconist *Video Hire*DVD Hire

Coaches available to hire for all occasions

Tel. 01877 382 2341 Fax. 01877 382 735

aberfoylemotors@aol.co.uk

End of an Era

In this modern age of constant movement, there can't be many people who were born, attended school, married, raised a family, worked, retired, died and are buried all in the same place. George Buchan was such a person. George was synonymous with Inversnaid and at this



anniversary of his death we still miss and remember him. A life spent in a tiny hamlet at the end of a 15 mile single track road did not mean that George was out of touch with the world. He always took an interest in matters local and worldwide and enjoyed nothing more than a good blether on any topic you liked to pick. He would often stop on the road, turn off the engine, wind down the car window and start the conversation with a joke. His personal memories of the area were fascinating and often very funny. In particular, the years he spent running the Inversnaid Hotel provided him with a wealth of stories that should have been published. As driver of the school bus for almost 50 years, George will be fondly remembered by the many children who were transported by him to and from school. He was one of the original Community Councillors for the area and remained one to the end. His passing marked the end of an era. Gone are the Buchans from Garrison Farm, gone are the sheep from the hills and the place feels empty without them!

Aberfoyle & Port of Menteith Kirk News

I would like to convey our appreciation to the folk who supported our Gilt Day Appeal for Christmas presents for teenagers who are in care in the Stirling Area. The presents donated on Sunday 15th December 2002 were distributed and a letter of thanks has been received from Social Services.

Our Burns Supper Social Evening on Friday 31st January was a great success. We were lucky to have Revell McKeand as organiser, ably supported by so many willing and talented folk. Well done everyone, workers and supporters all.

The Port Kirk held a Spring Airs Concert on Wednesday 26th February. Our thanks go out to the entertainers, Alex Menteith, The Blackford Fiddlers and The Ledi Birds, to our Master of Ceremonies Jimmy Nairn, and to those who made the effort to attend. It was an excellent evening of song, music, poetry and humour, with tea, sandwiches and home-baked tasties. The performers deserved a medal for performing in such low temperatures in the Kirk. Once again our grateful thanks to all who helped and performed. The Port Kirk Annual meeting will take place in the Kirk at 6.30pm on Sunday 16th March. The Aberfoyle Kirk Annual meeting will take place immediately after the morning Service on Sunday 23rd March. The Annual meeting is the opportunity for all those folk who have their own views and advice on how the Kirk should be run to come along and let us hear them.

With every blessing for you and yours,

Reverend Danny Gibb



Community Council Update

We had a new venue for the March meeting -Inversnaid Primary School. The move was necessary because the Boys Brigade has given up the lease of the outdoor centre in the old Church at Inversnaid, and the Church of Scotland has put up this building for sale. Unfortunately I missed this meeting due to the fact that I had joined a group of 10 community and business representatives from Strathard and Stirling for a trip to Northern Ireland for tripartite discussions on setting up links with similar communities to us. There is a report elsewhere in this edition.

One item on the agenda for this meeting particularly worth mentioning is a planning matter. It was brought to the attention of the Community Council at our February meeting that the National Park Authority had given conditional approval in December to the application by Lochard Properties to build 24 residential properties in Kinlochard. This is an application with a long planning history, and the Community Council was not made aware of the granting of approval. This is a separate matter which I am pursuing with the appropriate authorities. However at this meeting we had to discuss the application to erect access gates at the entrance to the proposed development. The meeting's decision was to refuse, since we do not feel that the matter of access has been resolved with the Council Roads Dept. There is no mention of provision of access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles; there is insufficient space for a vehicle not gaining access to reverse out of the opening; we would like clarification on the principle of private access to a residential development under Scottish access laws.

Our next meeting, in Aberfoyle on 3rd April, will include discussion on some of the plans drawn up by the action groups under the Community Futures programme. These plans will be on display at the launch of the Action Plan on Sat. 29th March in the Memorial Hall. Please come and view them at your leisure, between 11.00 and 3.00pm. We look forward to seeing you there.

Ros Dingwall
Chairperson

"Row, Row, Row, Your Boat" on Picturesque Loch Ard

What more picturesque a sight could a budding photographer look for than a rowing boat paddling into the sun setting over Loch Lomond on the western banks of Loch Ard? This is a sight that is likely to become more common with the formation of the new Loch Ard Rowing Club (LARC for short), a club accepting new members interesting in pursuing the sport made famous by five successive Olympic Gold Medal winner Sir Stephen Redgrave.

Not that you are likely to see Sir Stephen rowing down Loch Ard, or at least not yet! LARC's 25 strong membership includes oarsmen and scullers of all proficiencies: European veteran champions, Henley-Royal Regatta Gold medal winners, novice 13-year olds, and even more novice 40-year olds! We aim to have fun, and if in the process of having fun we learn a little about rowing and get a little fitter then that's an added bonus.

For those that know little about rowing as a sport, it will probably come as a surprise that it is one of the oldest sports in the country. Competitors from all walks of life competed in Victorian times, from the Tideway in London to the Clyde in Glasgow. As recently as 20 years ago it was a sport actively supported by schools, universities and clubs in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. It has had a rightful revival following the incredible success of Steve Redgrave over the last 20 years.



In Scotland, this revival has encompassed the establishment of the National Rowing Academy at Strathclyde Park, a state of the art rowing facility, dedicated to the development of rowing in Scotland. In a small way, the revival is also reflected in the formation of the Loch Ard Rowing Club. LARC's founders' main objective is to introduce more people in the Strathard community to the delights and benefits of rowing. LARC is well connected - it is a fully affiliated member of the Scottish Amateur Rowing Association, it works closely with Callum Macdonald, Development Officer of the National Rowing Academy, and its membership includes Henley Royal Regatta champions, Cambridge University blues and an Amateur Rowing Association qualified coach. LARC is also well resourced - it has several single and double sculls, a new rowing pontoon, a safety/coaching launch and training skiffs.

We also have also invited visiting clubs to use Loch Ard for short training camps. Last year, Glasgow University Boat Club visited for a training week before Easter. So far this year, Edinburgh University Boat Club 1st VIII has visited for a very successful training weekend, and Jesus College (Cambridge) 1st VIII will visit in April during the Tramping Through the Trossachs week for a training camp. We have even been promised a cup to present as a trophy in our first regatta - a good incentive to organize a Loch Ard boat race! The Club also works in close collaboration with other users of the loch to ensure that Loch Ard remains a loch for the quiet, tranquil and peaceful enjoyment of leisure pursuits - i.e., fishing, sailing, canoeing, and rowing. The sight of a sleek rowing shell paddling into the Loch Lomond sunset can only add to this tranquility.

James Cowderoy
Captain of Boats

For further information on the Loch Ard Rowing Club contact
Douglas Harrison at Douglas@Renagour.cc or by phoning 01877 382 275

Ward Toll Pet Centre

For all your Pet Needs & Feeds

*Dog Grooming
&
Bathing Service*

*Advice for
Problem Pets*

*Small Animals &
Birds Always in
Stock*

- Nutritious foods
- Dental care kits
- Chews and more

To keep your pet looking and feeling great

Free Local Delivery within a 5mile radius

Open 7 Days
10am – 5pm
Tel 01360 850000



If we don't stock what you need, we'll get it for you!

Stirling MSP Sylvia Jackson

I am very pleased to be asked to write a column for the Strathard News. So much is happening in Aberfoyle and surrounding area it is difficult to keep place with activities. I hear the Community Futures work is progressing well and the Community Council agenda is as busy as ever. The £240,000 injection of money from Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley was most welcome for the partnership working with Stirling Council and others to renovate the Main Street, Riverside walkway and car park.

My most recent meeting in Aberfoyle was in connection with the development of a pedestrian bridge near Manse Road Bridge. There have been a number of meetings about this issue and at one time it was wondered if the scheme could be developed as part of the bigger Aberfoyle Centre changes. A meeting in the near future will hopefully move the initiative forward with firmer dates for action – the bridge is badly needed and I will continue to support and move the proposal forward.

As the weather becomes more spring - like we can look forward to the 'Tramping Through The Trossachs' Outdoor Festival to be held 13-27 April. I remember the photocall last year was interesting – as Fergus Wood brought a bicycle, a dog, fishing tackle and golf bag full of gear and I think you can imagine the rest as I struggled in oversized wellington boots and jacket to not lose my balance on the jetty at the Lochside!

Also, on April 17th the Community Council is to hold an eco day from 2-7pm, involving a number of events to encourage us to become more environmentally friendly, particularly in the area of recycling.

Following a surgery in Aberfoyle when the gritting of the road between Aberfoyle to Kinlochard was first raised I have kept in close contact with constituents and the Strathard Community Council. The Aberfoyle to Kinlochard road was one of three roads which I raised directly with Cllr Gillie Thomson. After discovering that an agreement regarding the school route between Aberfoyle and Kinlochard, as well as on other routes, was not being upheld the roads were re-instated as priority 1. However it then took some time before a final confirmation letter was received from Stirling Council which I then passed on to the Community Council and constituents who had written to me. I have also taken up other routes on behalf of Loch Katrine Community Trust and a number of constituents from across the Council area.

Finally in relation to local issues, thanks to Ros Dingwall, Pam Abrahams and many others for all their help, particularly in relation to the meetings associated with the new pedestrian bridge and the on-going discussions with Scottish Water to make sure there is as full community involvement as possible in connection with the Loch Katrine Integrated Catchment Management Plan. Thanks to Owen McKee for taking over the Chair of this group.



The recent East Dumbarton Council meeting agreed that the treatment works would go ahead at Milngavie. I spoke at the meeting, both representing the views of Strathblane residents about the lack of adequate consultation by West of Scotland Water/Scottish Water and Loch Katrine residents about the urgent need for such a treatment plant. This is critical to allow the full implementation of the Integrated Catchment Management Plan.

At the Scottish Parliament there are only a few weeks left before the dissolution of Parliament on March 31st before the May 1st elections. These weeks will be particularly hectic as a number of important Bills complete their passage through the Parliament. Recently completed is the Criminal Justice Bill with new legislation in areas such as anti-social behaviour orders, drug courts and tougher penalties for wildlife crimes, the possession of indecent photographs of children and for abduction. The Title and Conditions Bill has significantly helped sheltered and retirement home owners to have more responsibility for management of their properties.

Locally the decision by Forth Valley NHS Board to make RSNH at Larbert the 'favoured' site for the new acute hospital was a blow considering the advantages of the proposed Pimhall Stirling sites due to their accessibility, lying adjacent to the M9/M80 interchange. However, Stirling Council has to be congratulated for the hard work undertaken to have these sites considered.

The Stirling sites were seen by the Board as "problematic" in terms of time scale. Unfortunately sites, like the one at Pimhall which is within the proposed 'New Growth Area' would, through the local plan process, take up to two years before a particular site could be available.

Thus time factors became critical in the discussions, reinforced by clinicians on the Health Board, who maintained that acute services would not be maintained in the Forth Valley area without speedy action. Accessibility continues to be a key concern and although the Larbert site became the favoured option, it was agreed there would have to be an investigation into the transport infrastructure in relation to that site. This is an important issue particularly for the Stirling and Ochil constituencies, but also for the whole Forth Valley area. I suspect that when the transport costs are assessed, the Board may live to regret its haste in coming to a single preferred option in the advance of knowing all the cost factors in developing each site.

However, the battle is not yet over, and while we wait for the transport study to take place, I have already met with Keith Yates, Chief Executive of Stirling Council and the Council's Group Leader, Corrie McChord to encourage discussions with developers to release land at Pimhall as soon as possible. Also it has to be remembered that any planning for a new hospital will take a considerable time, and at the end of the day I suspect that a small delay in knowing exactly where the hospital site will be located may not materially affect the building time to any great degree.

While the siting of the new acute hospital is a critical one, it is clear from the consultation feedback, as well as the comments made by the Board at its meeting, that a very important issue is the development of community health provision. This will be important for our rural communities, such as Aberfoyle and surrounding area. I have already spoken and written to Fiona McKenzie, Chief Executive of Forth Valley NHS Board to start these discussions with the rural communities in Stirling constituency as soon as possible. She assures me this is the intention.

Also, it is important to address the wider context, looking at changes made in other neighbouring Health Board areas which obviously impinge upon Forth Valley. I have an assurance from the Chief Executive, Fiona McKenzie, that this is being done.

The Board also discussed the transitional arrangement for acute services provision in the Forth Valley area up to the time a new hospital is built. It was decided that women and children's services will be centralised at Stirling Royal Infirmary. Urology will be relocated to Falkirk to make space for the additional services at Stirling Royal. As said already, the future development of health service provision within the Forth Valley area is a very important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me about any of the points I have made or any issues which you are uncertain about.

As usual both Anne McGuire and I can be contacted through the Parliamentary Advice Centre, 22 Viewfield Street, Stirling FK8 1UA on 01786 446515 or by email sylvia.jackson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Gartmore House

What are you doing on Tuesdays?

Conference & Activity Centre



Let us entice and enthuse with our Tuesday activity days

- Computing skills
- Cookery demonstrations
- Aromatherapy
- Plants for health
- Computer aided gardening
- Writing skills
- Silk painting
- Country crafts

Each Tuesday has a different theme and you are welcome to join us for coffee by the log fire and take part in two activities around a heart-warming two course lunch in our library – all for £9.50

Perfect for individuals or group outings – come and share in a fun filled day.

Enjoy Treat Yourself Tuesday, every week at Gartmore House

Gartmore House, Gartmore, by Aberfoyle, FK8 3RS
Tel: 01877 382 991 Fax: 01877 382 725
e-mail: mail@gartmorehouse.com
www.gartmorehouse.com



Cowal and The Trossachs District

Forest Enterprise are proud to announce in 2003 the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park Visitor Centre will officially revert to its original title of *The David Marshall Lodge*. The management and staff of *The David Marshall Lodge* are planning to celebrate what should prove a hugely popular decision amongst the local community and our vast number of regular visitors/friends from outwith the area, with a commemorative wall feature outlining Mr Marshall's contribution to what has ultimately turned out to be one of the most spectacular locations within the British Isles.

Donations of memorabilia, with particular regard to photographs, would be most welcome in order to enhance the feature to its full potential. The need to create a fitting and lasting memorial to an individual whose vision has been instrumental in providing a facility, which is a source of relaxation, enjoyment and inspiration to people of all ages and denominations, cannot be underestimated. Mr Marshall's legacy is such that a great number of individuals within Forest Enterprise have devoted their entire careers toward the management, maintenance and promotion of *The David Marshall Lodge*, and it is vital his memory is recorded for the benefit of future generations.

Any contributions/information received will be treated with sensitivity and not produced without permission, either on a temporary or permanent basis, according to your wishes.

Please contact: David Wilkie
01877 382868 (Home)
01877 382258 (DML)
01877 382383 (District Office)

Want something for nothing? Of course you do!

So come along to Aberfoyle Memorial Hall on Thursday April 17th 2.00pm till 7.00pm.

Strathard Community Council has arranged for the return of the **Great Light Bulb Giveaway!** Bring along up to 4 ordinary bulbs and receive, absolutely free, four Long Life Energy Efficient Bulbs in return.

This unbeatable offer is combined with a Community Environmental Day at which you will be offered the chance to pick up some free packets of wildflower seeds along with information on how to attract butterflies, ladybirds, etc. into your garden. Get information about the hedgehog and nesting boxes on display. Talk with the experts on composting and find out about the special offer on composting bins. Discuss Solar Heating with someone from Energy Efficiency.

If you are over 60 and own your own home then you are eligible for assistance with minor repairs or adaptations up to the value of £500 from the Council Care & Repair scheme. Come and speak to one of their officers. You might also qualify for a grant for central heating, home insulation, safety checks on your heating system or other schemes to make your home more energy efficient.

Also hoping to be present is Mr David Riggle, with information on Stirling Council's new scheme for collecting biodegradable waste from every household. Come along and find out how this new system will work in your community.

Can't make it? Let a member of the Community Council know and we will get bulbs and seeds to you.



Loch Lomond
& The Trossachs
National Park

National Park News

Pàirc Nàiseanta Loch Laomainn is nan Tròisichean

It is my intention to use this page to keep you informed on what is happening in the National Park but, equally importantly, I hope that it will encourage you to express your views as to what you would like to happen in the Park.

Although it is a national park, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is unique in the UK in that it has a fourth aim of promoting the social and economic development of the communities in the Park. In other words it recognises that people live in the Park and their well-being is essential to the Park. Your views really do matter.

Does the establishment of the Park make any difference? The answer is yes and the Park Authority will be working hard to ensure that the difference is for the better.

Planning & Development Control for the Park area has been passed by the local authorities to the Park Authority. However, until the National Park Plan is finalised and adopted in 18 months to 2 years time, planning decisions will be governed for the Strathard area by the Stirling Local Plan. So for the time being there will be very little change on planning decisions. Planning applications now have to be submitted to The National Park at Balloch. It is recognised that this will create some difficulties in viewing plans so the Park Authority is investigating ways of making viewing more accessible.

Although we have agreed that the Park HQ will be in Balloch it is also intended that there is a need for visible representation all around the Park. We have already identified premises at Ben More Gardens in Argyll and are currently looking at premises in Callander. Clearly we will have to look at other areas and obviously we have to look here too.

One area where things are up and running is The Countryside Ranger Service. The Park is divided into four areas for administrative purposes. These are The Trossachs, Lomond, Argyll Forest and Breadalbane. Each area has a Ranger Team and the Trossachs team is under the leadership of Steve Nunn.

During the tourist season each team will be augmented by a seasonal ranger - interviews for the seasonal posts are underway. The Countryside Rangers are the front line troops and, among other things, have the important task of educating the users of the Park, both local and visitor.

Another area where the Park Authority will come into play is car parks and toilets. Some of these currently run by Stirling Council will be transferred to the Park Authority.

The Park Authority will also be working closely with other agencies, particularly Forest Enterprise and Scottish Natural Heritage on access to areas for recreational purposes.

Transport strategy and affordable housing are other areas which will feature largely.

How is it all paid for? The Park Authority submits a tender to the Scottish Executive. The Grant for the coming year has been fixed at £m5.5. Not quiet what we asked for but I am sure we will make good use of it. Additionally we will be looking for monies from the European Community for projects and we will be working with the other agencies on projects of common interest. One such project is a solar boat to be based on Loch Lomond. The project encompasses an audio-visual floating facility for 50 or so people. There are no such boats operating in the UK at present but there are a goodly number in Europe. The feasibility study looked at a 30 week operation period and on that basis would be viable. However we want to look at the project more closely before making a decision but to protect possible European funding we have signed a letter of intent. A challenging time lies ahead.

by Owen McKee

I can be contacted as follows:

Post - Taigh Na Bhuth, Lochearnhead, FK19 8PR

Phone: 01567 830214

email : owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk



Something Special...

A fabulous selection of gifts, silverware, ceramics, jewellery, glassware, toys, home accessories, new & second hand books, greetings cards and gift wrap.

Gift wrapping service, using best quality handmade paper, ribbon, etc.

*Children's play area
Friendly Service in a Traditional setting*

Tel 01877 389000

ABERFOYLE POST SHOP

01877 382 231

POST OFFICE SERVICES

- ✓ Vehicle Licensing
- ✓ Travel Insurance
- ✓ Commission-free Currency
- ✓ Banking Services
- ✓ Bill Payments
- ✓ TV Licensing
- ✓ Priority Mail Services



SHOP SERVICES

- *Cards *Stationery
- *Toys *Sweets
- *Film & Batteries
- *Toiletries
- *Fax & Photocopying

Counter opening hours:

Mon-Fri 9.00 - 5.30

(Wed: 9.00 - 4.00

Sat: 9.00 - 1.00)

Shop opening hours:

Mon - Sat 7.00 - 5.30

Sun: 11.00 - 5.30

Internet Access £1 per hour



1st Aberfoyle Brownies



After a long Christmas break we started back at the end of January. We welcomed two new Brownies. After our carol singing outside the Co-op on the 4th of December we were pleased to receive a certificate from Blue Peter to thank us for the £94.54 we had raised for their charity Water Aid in Africa. Many thanks to parents who helped us to sing and everyone who gave money for the charity.

We have two unit helpers, Nancy Gibb and Julia MacLennan, and we can't thank them enough for all they do. Three Brownies have gone up to Guides. They are Hazel MacLennan, Samantha Williamson and Grace Roberts.

We meet every Wednesday 6pm till 7.45pm in Church House. At the moment we have 19 Brownies. The Easter holidays are 9th - 16th April starting back on the 23rd April.

If you wish to contact a Guider they are:

Jackie Gerlach 01877 339942

Trisha Roberts 01877 382705



*Come sit by roaring log fires and join us for dinner,
or Sunday lunch, in the Dining Room at Altskeith*

Thursday 7.00 – 8.30 pm (From Easter)

Friday 7.00 – 8.30 pm

Saturday 7.00 – 8.30 pm

Sunday Lunch 12.30 – 2.30 pm

*Come for a drink and see the new stone arches in our
Waterfall Bar*

Wednesday 7.00 pm - Midnight

Thursday 7.00 pm - Midnight

Friday 7.00 pm - 1.00 am

Saturday 7.00 pm - 1.00 am

We suggest calling in advance to reserve a table.

Tim, Altskeith Tel 01877 387 266

www.altskeith.com

TRAFFIC CALMING

Lochard Road

As part of the Transport and Access group's remit on traffic calming, we decided to support the School Board's ongoing campaign for this along Lochard Road. We wrote to Stirling Council's Technical Services department who advised us that £20,000 had been allocated for such a scheme, to be completed by 31st March.

We arranged a site meeting with an officer from the Traffic Management Team. This was also attended by representatives of the Community Council and School Board, together with the Headteacher. The Traffic Management Team proposed a scheme involving better signage and road markings, and three narrowings marked with bollards. It appears the preferred option would have been for speed humps, but these were ruled out as the street lighting would have needed upgrading to conform to government regulations where speed humps are constructed, and this would have exceeded the budget. A number of other options such as chicanes, rumble strips and further road markings were ruled out as unsuitable on grounds such as disruption, noise and limited effect.

The proposals were discussed at the following Community Council meeting. Leaflets giving notification of the meeting and the whereabouts of the plans were distributed to residents along the section of road in question and to all families with children at the school. Concerns were expressed in particular about the effect on traffic flow when the road is flooded, and the potential problem of congestion when large vehicles try to negotiate the narrowings if cars are parked close by. The Traffic Management Team have therefore amended the proposals and re-aligned the narrowings accordingly. We hope these measures will achieve the long-awaited objective of reducing traffic speed in the vicinity of the school.

*Strathard Community Futures
Transport and Access Group*

Trossachs Cab Company



Your Local Private Cab Company

Luxury 7 Seater People Carrier

Airport Transfers

Local and Long Distance Hire Available

Prompt & Reliable Service

Competitive Rates

Fully Licensed & Insured

Main Street

Aberfoyle

FK83UX

Tel 01877 382108 or 07791 598925



This month children have been learning about recycling. We have looked at the different properties of material and what can be recycled and where. We now have two black bins at the entrance to playgroup where cans and paper can be recycled. We hope to receive another so that we can also recycle glass. Sorting is an important step in children's development of mathematical skills and this can be done in a variety of ways. We hope to have a trip at a later date to visit the bottle, can and paper banks behind the Wool Centre so that the children can see where their recycled materials go and again sort them into

the appropriate banks. Still focused on our Environment we have begun to build a small wetland area in front of playgroup. We have 2 sinks. One is being made into a small pond and the other will be a bog garden. The children have had great fun building this. As a result we would like to create 2 areas for the children just to be able to dig the soil and transfer it from one area to the other. We would like to invest in a small wheelbarrow for the children to use for this purpose. We no longer need to buy a compost bin as Wendy has managed to acquire us one. We can now recycle our fruit and vegetable peelings and any cuttings and clippings we have from the garden.

On Friday 7th March we walked through the woods to the David Marshall Lodge. As this only took us 30 minutes to do we hope to do this on a regular basis once the weather gets better. Snack up at the lodge on a warm spring/summer day sounds good. However, on Friday it poured. The children were so excited about their trip that we decided to go anyway. A big thank you to Rowan Seabrook and Nicola Ozkan, who gave up their spare time to brave the weather with us and make the trip possible. In spite of the rain we all had a really good time. We fed the ducks and found frogs and frogspawn. We arrived at the cafeteria very wet and very, very muddy. However, we were warmly welcomed by Liz and her staff, who provided the adults with a coffee to warm us up, and the children had somewhere warm and dry to have their snack. At the weekend I purchased some wildlife plants for our wetland and hopefully we can continue to develop this area. Our wetland area should attract a variety of insects and create an area for children to learn about nature and how to care for it. Could Parents please ensure that children bring a pair of wellies to playgroup as we hope to go outside in all weather and the ground is very muddy in the garden.

Letters will be posted on Wednesday 30th April to parents who applied for a playgroup place for children born before 31st August 2000. Parents of children who have their 3rd birthday after 31st August will be considered at the next stage of admission after the summer.

Relief Playleader

Required for Aberfoyle Playgroup
Training provided
Competitive salary
Valued role in community
Fun working environment
Please contact
Janet Stewart
01877 382 736

To enrol your child in Playgroup call

Lesley
01877
382 464
 or
Ginny
01877
382 562

gerard
 domestic storage archive commercial
removers ltd



You will be moved by our Experience!



- Local & National Removers
- Piano, Antique and Fine Arts Specialists
- Modern Containerised Storage
- Regular Part Load Service to and from England
- Office and Business Moves
- Bar Coded Archive Document Storage

For more information or to arrange a free pre-move survey, please feel free to contact me, Elaine Mummery during the day on 0140 954 3939 or evening/weekends on 01877 382052

Head Office:
 Anniesland Village Business Park
 Netherton Road, Glasgow G13 1EU
 Email: elainemummery@gerardremovers.co.uk
www.gerardremovers.co.uk

Inversnaid Primary School

Ben Lomond

By W. D. Cocker
(Who grew up in Strathendrick)

Sentinel, Steadfast, Self-Reliant,
Facing the winds of heaven, defiant
You tower 'mong mighty hills, a giant,
Ben Lomond

In your demeanour there is pride
Kings have their day, but you abide.
What secret does your silence hide
Ben Lomond?

Inscrutable, austere and vast,
Are you still dreaming of the past,
Or is your vision forward cast,
Ben Lomond?

And do you watch as dawn breaks wan
To catch some signal from Ben A'an
And pass it on to Cruachan,
Ben Lomond?

As I am in Primary 7 I have been going to McLaren. I went three times. I got shown about the high school. We have been allowed to play games in Fun Time Room. I met more people at the high school from other Primary schools. There are only seven of us who go from the four schools that go with me. I have enjoyed my visits to McLaren and am looking forward to going to McLaren in August.

By David

On January 27 we had a Bird watch. Everyone took part in it. We watched birds for an hour from the window. We counted how many we could see. It was for the RSPB. We made charts and drew pictures of the birds. It was fun.

By Ross P3

A theatre group called Meanbh-chuileag, which means midge came to the school. They came on Tuesday 11th of March in the morning. They put on a play for us and me and David got dressed in a kilt. They taught us 2 Gaelic songs and a step dance. I liked it very much.

Thomas P5

The school was painted in the February holidays. The school was green and grey before. The room is much brighter and more colourful now. The classroom, hall and boys toilets were painted.

We chose green, red and orange. The classroom is green, yellow and white now. It is brilliant. By Mathew, P4

Milton the Otter

Hello Children,

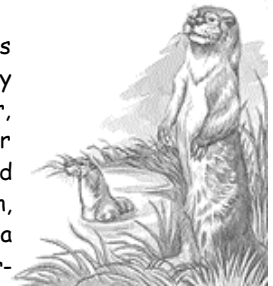
The sun has been shining so much that it has melted most of the snow, making the burns and rivers run quite high. There was so much water that Mum and Dad, Emory and Sizzler, decided on a family outing a swim to Loch Ard. The twins, Duke and Katrine, were very excited. Even my bossy sister, Braeval, thought it was cool! It certainly was cool. The water in April is not warm! Grandpa Otter came with us, he always points out things of interest and tells us wonderful stories about the old days. We swam up the Forth, past the Scottish Wool Centre, under the old Aberfoyle Bridge and on, up the river. Soon we were at the place with the same name as me, the Milton. When Grandpa was a young kit the Milton was not much more than an old ruin. Now it is a fine house, with a red letter-box in the wall. It was great fun swimming up the falls of the Avon Water. Tiring too!

We were soon in the calm water of Loch Ard and, once we had got our breaths back, swam on through the Pass of Aberfoyle. Grandpa told us of a fierce battle fought here long ago between Highland clansmen and Government troops.

Later, when Grandpa was showing us the place on top of Dun Dubh, where long, long ago the Romans built a fort, Dad caught a big fish in the loch and we all had a picnic. After a big feed and a long nap (well, swimming really tires you out) we swam the short distance to the Echo Rock. If you shout really loudly from here you can get a wonderful echo back .echo back echo back. Our friend, Donald the mallard, heard us shouting and swam out to meet us. He was very pleased to see us and had brought each of us a present a blue duck egg! His wife, Millie had laid so many eggs that they didn't know what to do with them all. I am going to keep mine until Easter and I am sure I will win the egg-rolling competition this year. Don't forget the Easter Bunny Hunt at the David Marshall Lodge on Easter Sunday.

Bye for now,

Milton



Business Advertising Rates

25mm X 20mm	£5
40mm x 75mm	£10
152mm x 40mm	£20
75mm x 75mm	£20
190 mm x 90mm	£30

To advertise phone **01877 382211** or
Email advertising@strathardnews.co.uk
For assistance and advice on layout contact
Marion Back Tel 01301 702972
marionback@compuserve.com

R&C LUKE



**01324
625624**



T/A J. Brown
Coal Merchant & Contractor
12-14 Slamannon Road
Falkirk FK1 1LG

guyana

plants, crafts and art

**Unique range of arts and craft
from throughout the world**

**Extensive plant area for all
your gardening needs**

Open seven days - 10am to 6pm

**Main Street, Aberfoyle
TEL 01877 382308**

Announcements

Trossachs Hash House Harriers: Meet fortnightly on a Sunday at 12pm. Next run 18th April, meet in Aberfoyle Car Park (behind the Forth Inn)

Mobile Skate Park

Stirling Council Parks Department will be erecting a Mobile Skate Park in the area behind the Scottish Wool Centre. This facility will be available from **14th April until 22nd April**. Would users please ensure all equipment remains inside the designated area as requested by Stirling Council.

Country Pursuits of Strathard

The AGM of Country Pursuits of Strathard will be held on Monday 28th April at 7.30 pm in The Medical Centre, Aberfoyle.

Aberfoyle Bowling Club:

The Green Season starts on Sunday 27th April at 2pm. All new members welcome. For more information contact Irene Finlayson on **01877 385278**

Please contact Margaret Brown on **01877 382463** if you have anything for submission to the Stirling Observer under *Aberfoyle News*

For Sale

4 drawer metal filing cabinet: fawn and brown. Excellent condition. £49
Tel 01877 387210

Greenhouse: Polythene covered metal hoops. Approx. 10m x 4m wide x 2m high. As new, buyer must collect. Only £99
Tel 01877 387712

Old Piano: in good working order tuned recently. £49
Tel 07787 917126

Small box freezer: in good working order £30
Tel 07787 917126

2 x Two-seater settees in need of recovering or throws £20 each
Tel 07787 917126

Wanted

Gardener wanted: one day or 2 half days per week. Excellent hourly rate. **Tel 01877 387210**

Dog Walker: Glen, an active Collie, would like a person who likes a good walk to take him 2 or 3 times per week. Mum will negotiate on charges!! **Tel 01877 382441.**

Lost & Found

Found

In Aberfoyle: shinty stick and golf club.
Phone 01877 382175

Classified Advertising Rates

Announcements	FREE
Wanted	FREE
Lost & Found	FREE
For Sale:	
Items under £50	FREE
Items £50 - £100	£5
Items over £100	£10

To advertise email classified@strathardnews.co.uk or

Complete the form below and hand in, together with appropriate fee, at Aberfoyle Post Office in an envelope marked ***Strathard News Classified***

Advert: _____

Name: _____

Tel: _____

Fee Included: *please tick below*

£5 ☐

£10 ☐

Did you know?

A building in which silence is enforced, like a library or school room, is referred to as a "silentium."

Changes to the way in which Benefits are Paid

Starting from April this year, the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP), is phasing out payment by means of books payable at the Post Office, and asking all its customers to change to payment directly into an account. The whole process is expected to take up to two years, and some people have already been contacted by letter.

First: **Don't worry**, your letter will arrive eventually. And you will keep getting replacement books until your chosen account is in place.

Second - you have **three** choices:

- 1) Payment into an existing bank or building society account. If this is your choice, fill in the form enclosed with your letter, giving your account details and send it away in the envelope provided. If you wish to open a new account see the bank of your choice.
- 2) Payment into a 'basic' bank account. These accounts provide some of the facilities of a current account, but do not allow overdrafts. Most of the major banks have agreed that money in these accounts may be withdrawn at any Post Office.
- 3) Payment at the Post Office, through a Post Office Card Account. These accounts will only receive your benefit, and you can take out all or part of the existing balance. You will also be able to check your balance. You will receive a PIN number which you will need to memorise, but you can change it to something easy for yourself. If you wish to choose this option, phone the number given in the letter and just tell the operator, or write to the Government department who sent you the letter. **Do not** send back the bank form sent with your letter.

When the DWP is ready it will send a letter to those wishing to open a P.O. Card Account. Take this to the Post Office, along with the requested proof of identity if possible. The counter staff will help you fill out an application form and send it away for you. You will then be sent a pack with your account details. At this point, phone the DWP with the details of your account, and then take the enclosed pick-up notice to the Post Office to collect your Card. We appreciate that these changes are confusing and will cause some distress. Most people are happy with the existing system. However staff are available and willing to explain the procedures, whichever option you choose.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT SURVEY

This was carried out in January throughout Strathard. A summary of the results has been sent to the Transport Co-ordinator at Stirling and a meeting with him is to be arranged shortly, at which we shall be pressing for more frequent services. However, it was apparent from the survey that many people are unaware of some existing services. This is partly due to the difficulty of obtaining timetable information, and the Transport Co-ordinator has therefore offered to work in partnership with us to produce a composite timetable for Strathard. In the meantime, all the bus times are being published as an insert with this issue. As far as we know these are correct, but the information cannot be guaranteed as definitive so please check in advance!

From the 500 households surveyed we received 68 responses answering our survey specifically, and 27 wishing to take part in a larger National Park survey currently being commissioned.

Main destination requests: Stirling; Callander; Glasgow; Strathard links to main destinations.

Main request times: **Stirling** - commuting hours; late evening returns (to allow for activities such as cinema); increased frequency, preferably hourly.

Callander - increased frequency, preferably two-hourly. **Glasgow** - commuting service direct; late evening return. **Strathard** - to allow Kinlochard & Inversnaid residents and visitors to link with main services.

Specific needs: Tourism - clockwise *Trundler* route to reach Loch Katrine; Methods of linking staff and visitors from Forest Hills and Inversnaid Hotels to different destinations: Education - improve accessibility to colleges, Falkirk Tech., Anniesland College, Stirling University; Medical - to fit in with visiting times/appointment times at Stirling Royal Infirmary.

Other suggestions: Smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Hourly or two-hourly timetable as a minimum provision. Link up to meet other services in other villages. For late evening services target Friday and Saturday nights. More publicity needed for existing services. We will use Strathard News to raise awareness. We will also look at providing timetable for our own area only.

*Strathard Community Futures,
Transport and Access Group*

Caption Competition

What's going on here?

Answers on a postcard to

Editor

Strathard News

Kirkton House

Duchray Road

Aberfoyle FK8 3XB

Or email

editor@strathardnews.co.uk

The winning entry will be published in the next issue and the winner will receive a £5 gift voucher for A2Z.



The days are getting warmer and longer and the members of the Loch Ard Sailing Club are once again, like Mole in the 'Wind in the Willows', getting that fidgety feeling that always comes as the start of another season nears.

There is something quite exciting in that first sight of the length of Loch Ard as you top the hill at Dun Dubh on Opening Day and you try to kid yourself that this year the water in April will be MUCH warmer and the wind will be MUCH steadier and you will not capsize QUITE so often, despite the fact that as usual at the start of the season there is a strong east wind blowing and the white horses are rolling relentlessly ashore! However, when you arrive at the club and meet up again with your friends and hear the crackling rustle of the main sails on the Flying Fifteens as they fill and lead the fleet out for the Opening Day race, then you forget the work that had to be done first at the pre-season work parties and, like Water Rat, once again feel that 'there is *nothing* - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.'

(Especially when the weather gets warmer!!!) Opening Day this year is Sunday, 13th April, and thereafter every Sunday until the end of October. Anybody who would like to find out more about the Club is welcome to come down and see for themselves any Sunday afternoon during the season.

Contact me on **01877 382486** for information as to membership.
Richard D. Gordon Hon. Sec. LASC



Keeping Loch Lomond clean and healthy

Loch Lomond, part of Scotland's very first national park, now has its own Catchment Management Plan (CMP), launched at Gartocharn, West Dunbartonshire. The plan is a framework developed to ensure the natural water resources of the Loch are preserved. Its aim is to influence the management of Loch Lomond and its surrounding area in a way that will maintain and improve water quality, conserve water resources and protect and enhance the area's diverse range of aquatic habitats and species. Importantly, the plan embraces the aims of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park "to conserve and enhance the natural heritage of the area" and "to promote sustainable use of the natural resources".

The catchment plan aims and objectives, and the collaborative and consultative manner in which they have been set, follows many principles of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The WFD introduces to Scotland a new planning system to protect and improve the water environment, River Basin Management Planning, to be supported by more detailed sub-basin plans and involving the active participation and engagement with stakeholders and interested parties. The Loch Lomond Catchment Management Plan embodies many of these principles and aims and, therefore, represents a significant step both in protecting the environment of the Loch Lomond system and in moving towards WFD implementation.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Water, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Interim Committee of the now fully formed Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, worked closely in partnership with interested groups and other agencies for several years to develop an agreed and holistic plan that addressed all the environmental and conservation needs of the area.

Tricia Bradley of the National Park Authority and Chair of its National Park Plan Working Group, said when launching the plan, "This is a very significant step for everyone involved in safeguarding Loch Lomond and demonstrates well how essential it is for all the agencies to work together. The National Park Authority welcomes this action plan and will use its recommendations when developing the National Park Plan."

Pete Murray, SEPA Team Leader for the Loch Lomond catchment area said: "All the parties involved in this plan will continue to work together to ensure that the plan being presented today will be delivered over the longer term. SEPA's main concern for Loch Lomond is the increasing level of phosphorus in the water. Sources include sewage effluent and diffuse run-off from the land. Unless the increasing trend is reversed, phosphorus build-up in the Loch will lead to algal blooms, which can be toxic, damage to the existing fragile fauna and flora and general loss of amenity."

Cheryl Black, Scottish Water's Director of Customer Service said: "Water is one of Scotland's most important natural resources and we consider its stewardship a top priority."

Roddy Fairley, Scottish Natural Heritage's area manager for the Loch Lomond area, said "We are delighted that the hard work of many local people, groups and agencies has been rewarded with the production of this Plan. We hope everyone will work hard to implement the Plan so that in future we all enjoy lochs, rivers and streams which are better for people and better for wildlife."

A2Z Prize Crossword Answers

1	T			2	I	F	3	F		4	S	L	U	5	G
	R				R		6	O	W	L					D
	O			7	K	I		R		O					A
8	Y	9	O	G	I		10	E	L	E	11	V	E	N	
		A			N		S				I			S	
12	B	R		13	I	G	H	T	S	14	P	A	R	K	
	A			M			A			A		A			
16	R	E	P		17	O	R	T		18	C	O	W	L	
	I				M			20	I	N	K			O	
	N				21	I	B	O		E				A	
22	G	N	A	T			23	N	E	T	T	E	D		

The winning entry was submitted by Lesley Quirk.
Call into A2Z to collect your £5 voucher, Lesley.

We now have 30 subscribers who receive their copy of the Strathard News by post in advance of its general release. Please consider taking out a subscription – it helps to ensure the future of the Strathard News, and your personal copy is delivered directly to you by post!

We are on the lookout for a budding publisher to help with layout. If you have some experience and knowledge of MS Word (you don't need to be an expert, as training will be given) and would like to get involved in the production of the Strathard News please get in touch with Marion Back, tel. 01301 702972 or email publisher@strathardnews.co.uk. Our thanks to all the contributors and advertisers who have supported us since the re-launch of the News. I hope you will agree that the News is going from strength to strength, there's certainly a real buzz within the committee about the quantity and quality of submissions. Keep up the good work! In future, all email submissions for publication should be sent to newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk

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

**The Treasurer, Strathard News, Glencleland House,
Lochard Road, Aberfoyle FK8 3TJ,** or
hand it in at the Medical Centre in Aberfoyle (ask for Jackie!).

Cheques made payable to *Strathard News*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____

Date: _____

Committee & Contacts

Jimmy Campbell 01877 382 210
Chair/Editor editor@strathardnews.co.uk

John Clow 01877 382 508
Vice Chair/Editor clubs@strathardnews.co.uk
Local Organisations

Norman Quirk 01877 387 210
Treasurer treasurer@strathardnews.co.uk

Marion Back 01301 702 972
Publisher/Newsdesk newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk

Ian Marshall 01877 382 211
Advertising advertising@strathardnews.co.uk

Margaret Johnson 01877 382 611

Stuart Davies 01877 382 303
Classified classified@strathardnews.co.uk



Next issue due out April/May
Deadline for submission
20 April 2003