

Strathard News

The Voice of Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar & Inversnaid

www.strathardnews.com



Issue 48, Dec 2008

Merry Christmas

Christmas Eve: Watchnight Service
11.30pm - Aberfoyle Parish Church
Christmas Eve: Midnight Mass
23.30pm - St Mary's Aberfoyle

Kinlochard Christmas Tree Lighting

Kinlochard Parent & Toddlers Group

invite you and yours to join us on

Friday 12th Dec 6.30 pm @ The Village Hall
tree-lighting 🎄 refreshments 🎄 wee concert

Kinlochard Ne'erday Dance

The ever-popular Ne'erday Family Ceilidh Dance will take place at Kinlochard Village Hall on Thursday, 1st January - all profits towards the Hall Extension Fund. Tickets will be on sale from the Kinlochard Post Office and Ledard Farm. This is always a full house so get your tickets in good time to avoid disappointment.

Any enquiries to Fergus Wood at Ledard, tel: 01877 387219

St Mary's Christmas Bonanza

Saturday 6th of December

10.30am at Dounans Camp

Kombola Fair Trade Crafts Bric a Brac
Home Baking Jumble Decorations

We need your jumble

We would be grateful for your unwanted items to sell in aid of the St Mary's Church Renovation Project

You can leave jumble anytime at

- The Dounans Centre or
- St Mary's Church or the vicarage

Give us your unwanted
Clothes, Books,
Bric a Brac, Toys,
Pictures, Crockery,
Jams, Chutneys

Or ring Hannah on 01877 389314 to arrange a pick up

Deadline Dates:
issue 49; 25 Jan 2009
Issue 50; 8 Mar 2009

Writers Award for Hazel

by David Wilkie

Hazel Stuart, 34, in the words of my editor, is 'weel kent' around these parts. Brought up and schooled in Aberfoyle, she worked her passage in several places around the village, before gaining a degree in English Literature in London. Hazel is now living in Burbage, in The Midlands, with her partner Chris, and daughter Georgie, and is currently teaching English as a profession. She has recently turned her attention to short stories, and won an award from The Atherstone Writers Group for The Shoes at the Back Door, (see page 18) which was published in The Hinkley Times this October. Despite the fact she no longer resides in Aberfoyle, it would seem she is unwilling to escape her roots, as there are serious plans to explore the phenomena that is Robert Kirk in her future writings. Watch this space.



Unexpected, but very welcome guests joined the 'News' committee at their last meeting. George (Clooney) & Daniel (Craig), you made our night! (especially Gwenda's)

COMMITTEE & CONTACTS

Editor: Margaret Neufeld
01877 386258
editor@strathardnews.com
Treasurer: Gwenda Naylor
01877 386244
treasurer@strathardnews.com
Advertising: Ian Marshall
01877 382211
advertising@strathardnews.com
Layout: Marion Back
01877 386222
newsdesk@strathardnews.com
Reporter: David Wilkie
01877 382868
clubs@strathardnews.com
Reporter: Dougie MacPherson
01877 382564
reporter@strathardnews.com
Distribution: Arthur Jones
01877 382682

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Local MP urges Residents to Claim Their Cash

Stirling MP, Anne McGuire, is urging residents in her constituency to check if they have unclaimed money in dormant accounts, which they may have forgotten about. Constituents can check if they have unclaimed dormant funds via the British Bankers' Association at www.mylostaccount.org.uk.

Ms McGuire said: "Times are tough and it is sometimes difficult to imagine that we could forget about having money tucked away somewhere, but the Dormant Account Campaign has proven that this does actually happen."

The latest figures from HBOS show that it has reunited more than £18 million of dormant funds leaving £29.2 million still to be claimed. In this constituency alone, they have identified 69 dormant accounts. The total balance of these accounts is £9440; which works out at an average of £137 of unclaimed funds per account. So, ahead of the second reading of the Dormant Accounts Bill in the House of Commons, which will see funds from these accounts going to worthwhile causes, I am urging residents to claim their cash."

Strathard Community Trust

local projects local people

Membership:

To join or renew your membership please contact Diana at the Rade Shop or Ros at the Aberfoyle Post Office.

Current Groups:

Play Park Group (phase 2)	Diana Carmody	382345
Railway Turntable (phase 2)	Ian Marshall	382211
Paths and Trails Group	John Digney	382636
Strathard News	Margaret Neufeld	386258

Directors:

Ian Marshall	Chair/Director
Ian Davison Porter	Vice-chair/Director
Diana Carmody	Treasurer/Director
John Clow	Director
Ros Dingwall	Director
Rev Richard Grosse	Director
Jimmy Quinn	Director

Meetings: Open to members. Check notice boards for dates.

Contact: info@strathard-ct.org.uk www.strathard-ct.org.uk

Local Telephone Directory

The new 2008 edition of the Wee Blue Book is now on sale and copies have been flying off the shelves, with nearly 300 sold already. In full colour and also with more pages and improved binding, it's packed with

local phone numbers, business details and useful information. Great value at the same £2 price as last time, and we have even been told it makes interesting bedtime reading! Pick up your copy at Aberfoyle Post Office, Gartmore Community Shop, Guyana, Aberfoyle Surgery and the BIG Lottery Bid shop in Main Street.

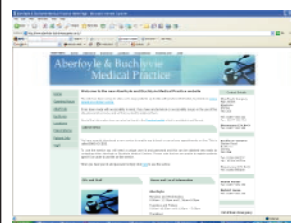


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You can now book or cancel your appointments on line or order your repeat prescriptions. Whether you are at home



or work, you can quickly log on to view, book and cancel appointments. Available 24 hours a day, it's especially useful when the practice is closed or telephone lines are busy. Please ask at reception for a registration form.

CONSULTING HOURS

We now offer an early morning surgery from 7.00am-8.00am once a week either in Aberfoyle OR Buchlyvie Surgery. Consultation will be by appointment only and should be booked in advance. This service is specifically aimed at patients who have difficulty accessing medical services during normal working hours. In addition we have modified existing surgery times in order to provide a service which we think will suit a greater proportion of our patients. Details of consulting hours are printed in the local telephone directory.

VISITING HOSPITAL DOCTOR

On the 3rd December Dr Sharon Lim will be joining Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres. Dr Lim is a doctor from the hospital who will be coming to the surgeries for four months to gain experience in general practice. She will be working alongside Drs. Pollok, Lindsay, Maclaren and Burton and will be doing sessions and visits at both Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie. We are delighted that Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie have been selected to participate in this worthwhile scheme and hope you will join with us in welcoming Dr Lim into our communities.

MACMILLAN NURSES CANCER CARE

The coffee morning in aid of the above, held in the Medical Centre, raised the splendid sum of £670. Grateful thanks go to all who supported this worthy cause with gifts of baking, raffle prizes, donations of money and helped in so many ways. The Medical Garden Committee send their sincere thanks to all, especially the surgery ladies, who sold raffle tickets for two weeks, and it is due to their efforts that so much money was raised.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

We Will Be Closed On The Following Days

Thursday 25th December 2008

Friday 26th December 2008

Saturday 27th December 2008

Sunday 28th December 2008

Thursay 1st January 2009

Friday 2nd January 2009

Saturday 3rd January 2009

Sunday 4th January 2009

Please visit our website or look in the Wee Blue Book for our normal opening times.

Police Community Website

Constables Jo McDowall and Ricky Govan are the two locally based Police Officers covering the village of Aberfoyle and the surrounding communities. They carry out community liaison duties in Aberfoyle and can be contacted at Aberfoyle Police Office. Tel 01877 382 222. They can also be contacted by email through the Central Scotland Police website www.centralscotland.police.uk. There is a community page for Aberfoyle on the website which can be accessed by going to My Area, Dunblane Sac, Aberfoyle. There you will find community news regarding crime updates and police surgery dates.



LOCAL YOUTH FINED

7th, October 2008

A local youth was recently fined £600 for his part in anti social behaviour in the village. As well as being locked up overnight at the time the youth was fined at his recent appearance at Stirling Sheriff Court. Such action shows that instances of anti social behaviour will not be tolerated in the village and will be looked upon harshly by the court system.

BEAT THE BURGLAR

29th, October 2008

Everyone can't help but notice, rather depressingly, that the evenings are now getting darker and it will shortly be late afternoon when darkness falls. This is a time when everyone needs to be vigilant against break-ins and prepare their house to look less attractive for the opportunist thief who is looking for an easy target. So, how do you do that?

Take a walk down any street during the evening after dark and it will quickly become obvious which house is occupied and which is not. Are the curtains drawn with the lights on inside? Is there a car at the door? Are there signs that someone is home?

If the answer is yes, then the housebreaker will likely move on to an easier target. Houses where the curtains are wide open and the whole house is in darkness and no car in the drive then become attractive and more likely to be subject to a break in.

Secure the house; security lighting outside; lights on timers inside; angle blinds so that passers by can't see in; leave a radio on playing a talk programme. These are some steps that can easily and inexpensively be taken. Also consider trimming back hedges and bushes to keep hiding places to a minimum. Don't leave garages open or ladders and tools lying around that could be used to break in.

Look after your neighbours – have some thought for the houses around you and look out for any suspicious activity; persons or vehicles.

If you are suspicious about callers or cars / vans in the street then let the Police know. We would rather respond to a 'false alarm with good intent' than have to deal with a break in and the misery it causes.

There are several reasons that this time of year is more attractive. One as I've mentioned is the cover of darkness. Secondly is that in the lead up to Christmas it is fair to say that most households would have a collection of Christmas gifts beginning to gather. Thirdly, the thieves themselves need to finance their own festive period or their drink or drugs habit and will always be on the lookout for maximum gain for minimum work.

I have a selection of leaflets to do with protecting your home against housebreaking and invite anyone in need of assistance to pick some up or ask for advice from me at the Police Office.

Did you know? – The terms Burglar and Burglary are largely English terms which have come into common usage. Scots Law refers to the same crime as Housebreaking and generally termed as Theft by Housebreaking or Housebreaking with Intent to Steal. The correct term for persons responsible for housebreaking is "Housebreakers" but I would suggest that their victims have some other choice names or phrases of their own.

Aberfoyle Reading Room

An extraordinary meeting of the above will be held on **Thursday, 15th January, 2009 at 7.30 pm** in the club rooms. The present committee feel that the lack of interest in the village will leave them with no alternative but to close and dispose of the premises.

As this institution has been ongoing got over 100 years it would be a shame if this now has to happen.

Anyone with ideas or interest in how the club can survive will be made more than welcome.

Please come along and support this long established club before it is consigned to history.

A festive Best Wishes from the Registrars at Stirling Council's Aberfoyle Local Office

As we approach the end of the year, I can reflect that 2008 has been another busy year for Aberfoyle's Registration Services.

We have (at the time of writing) registered 12 births this year, welcoming babies from all across Strathard. Sadly there have also been some tragic events this year and the area has lost some people who will never be forgotten. In recent months there have, however, been fewer sad events registered; and long may that trend continue.

The area continues to provide many popular wedding venues, both through our ministers within and outwith their churches, but also through many establishments hosting civil ceremonies. A plus for us, as planning and officiating at wedding ceremonies is a favourite of both myself and the Assistant Registrar, John Boyle-Hannah. Having said all that, there have been slightly fewer weddings of all types this year. Can I suggest that at some point over the festive season all you single men out there, get down on one knee before the lady in your life? That should hopefully bring the numbers back up!

Registration and Stirling Council Local Office services are available by appointment on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am until 12 noon. It should be noted that we will also be closed on Fridays 26th December and 2nd January. Telephone 01877 382986 or call in to make an appointment. In an emergency, outwith office hours, please telephone 0845 277 7000. John and I will look forward to continuing to be of service to you throughout 2009, and meantime wish you a very happy festive season.

Sharon Johnston
Registrar



THE POKER TREE PROJECT

Everyone and their cousins wanted to see the big trees down, and there was no shortage of 'suits' to do the dirty deed. One or two in the village were even willing to 'sponsor' us to 'take care of business'. The clamour from the numerous contractors offering their services caused a fair degree of confusion and, it has to be admitted, communication within the interested parties at this stage of the project was not all it could have been. This was probably due in part to the frustration attached to the variety of quotes submitted, which ranged from the polite (two hundred pounds) to the absurd (twelve hundred pounds). In light of this, the magnificent gesture from James McArthur and sons, out of Balfon, to undertake the task free of charge should be applauded widely, most especially because they chose to extend the ideal of community spirit beyond their own local boundary. On the day itself, this spirit I speak of was also typified by Jackie Stanford, a resident of The Baillie, who brought out refreshments for the workers. Jackie, and her husband Andy, have more reason than most to enjoy seeing the trees brought to earth, as they practically blotted out the sun from their living room window. By all accounts, their son Findlay was also most impressed with the proceedings having, as he did, a ring side seat. As the winter sets in, there will be a time for pause, and David and I will hold discussions with Toto as to the way forward for the gardens. Hope you are enjoying the views.



Aberfoyle Post Office Thank You

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Every month Trossachs.co.uk are running a competition from their website, with fabulous prizes for the lucky winners. Entry is FREE, and don't worry if you get the answers wrong you get another chance. To increase your chances of winning why not get your family and friends to enter as well. Just log on to trossachs.co.uk and click on Free Competition to start. Good Luck!

November's prizes are courtesy of Aberfoyle and are a Christmas package worth over a £100:

A Real Christmas Tree from the David Marshall Lodge, the Forestry Commission

A £25 gift voucher from Guyana Gift and Garden Centre - Main Street, Aberfoyle

A £25 gift voucher from Chill Out (based at the David Marshall Lodge)

A £25 meal voucher from the Blue Bell Cafe at the David Marshall Lodge.

This combination prize (the lucky prize winner gets ALL 4 prizes) makes it a great day out in December to Aberfoyle.



COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPORT

A big hello - and sorry that I've not produced this column for such a long time. It's been a busy time of late but that's no excuse for neglecting my duties.

First things first; welcome to the Community Council members who have just joined us – Jimmy Quinn, already well-known as tenants' representative for the area, is representing Aberfoyle, and Mike Campbell who has returned to the area and to the community council is representing Kinlochard. Geraint Short who was already serving as a co-opted member is also now confirmed as an elected member for Aberfoyle.

Most of you will by now have picked up a copy of our new local phone directory; I do hope you like the new look! On behalf of the Community Council I would like to thank the team who worked so hard to produce it – Fiona McEwan, Marion Back and Margaret Neufeld. You all did a brilliant job!

The Community Council along with Loch Katrine Trust has been working hard to resolve the dispute regarding Forestry Commission plans to plant around Loch Arklet, which is mentioned elsewhere; as is the Big Lottery bid to buy the garage. Several Community Council members are heavily involved in the bid and the Community Council has applied to Stirling Council for funding to extend use of the Main Street premises until February, to allow maximum local input to the project.

Unusually the Community Council has recently made a planning objection which means that as a result this application will be considered by the National Park Planning Committee. The proposals are for demolition of the 'Rade' building on Main Street and the erection of a much larger retail unit with a flat above. We have already received various local representations on this matter, including concerns that this is one of the oldest buildings in Aberfoyle. If you have any opinions or information, do get in touch with a Community Councillor, telephone the Community Council on 387200 or e-mail planning@strathard.org.uk

While no-one was pleased to see the recent flooding incidents there were some signs of progress with Stirling Council, which is our route for access to funding to address this ongoing problem. When we started lobbying in 2007 both Aberfoyle and the B829 had disappeared off the Council's flooding 'action list'. However we are beginning to see a better response now, and the

information we provided to the Council, including the community questionnaire, has produced some positive action:

- Work on a flood consultants' study for Aberfoyle/Loch Ard is completed and results are awaited – as promised our area was investigated as soon as Council funds were made available. This first step is essential before the Council spend any further budget here.
- A remote monitoring system for Stirling Council is now in place at Manse Road Bridge in Aberfoyle. This enables staff to track water levels as they rise, and more monitors may be installed in future.
- 2 hydrologists are now in post at Stirling Council, and one has detailed knowledge of our area.
- The responsible Stirling Council officer came to inspect Aberfoyle flooding on Saturday 25th October, when the remote warning system showed the water level was rising fast. During the major flooding events in 2006 and 2007, Council officers did not even have a record of our problems, even the 3-day road closures!

The Community Council has plans for more work this winter on the flooding front, for example updates on our new website, and developing procedures to improve local response. Also we believe the garage could have a role to play during flooding if it was community-owned.

To all of you who got involved with the Community Action Plan – thank you for your contributions. Several actions (such as flooding) come under the

auspices of the Community Council and we are working on these; others will be progressed through the Community Trust. So if you have volunteered to get involved, don't worry, we haven't forgotten your offer. We will be getting in touch in the New Year.

Best of all, at this time of year we are busy planning the Senior Citizens Christmas Dinner, to be held on 8th December. Once again Forest Hills Hotel has kindly offered to provide the venue and the dinner, Aberfoyle Motors the transport, and we would like to thank them for their generosity. This is by far our favourite bit of organizing in a very busy year and we want to be sure that everyone who should be there, gets invited. So if any of you ladies has reached the age of 60, or if the gents have made it to the age of 65 (we still go by Government definitions of old age!), and we haven't delivered an invitation to you, then our apologies - you obviously don't look old enough! - so please pop into the PO and give me your name to be added to the list!

And finally..... and it is finally, I have obviously been finding it difficult to keep up with everything that's going on in the community, as well as in the Post Office, and I don't like the feeling that I'm not doing justice to the job of chairperson, so I have decided to step down as Chair of the Community Council at the December meeting. I hope to be able to stay on as an ordinary member of the CC, and certainly wish luck to my successor! I really enjoy working for all of you, and with my fellow committee members, and I hope I will be able to continue for a while yet.

Ros

Strathard Community Council

meets on the 1st Thursday of the month, alternating between Aberfoyle Memorial Hall, Kinlochard Village Hall and Inversnaid Primary School. The next meeting will be held in Inversnaid on Thursday 4th December at 7.30pm.

Half an hour prior to the meetings a local District Councillor (Tony Ffinch, Paul Owens or Fergus Wood) will hold a surgery for residents who wish to raise issues and concerns.

Community Councillors

<u>Ward 1 Aberfoyle</u>	<u>Ward 2 Kinlochard</u>	<u>Ward 3 Inversnaid</u>
Ros Dingwall	Fiona McEwan	Scott Provan
John Clow	Maureen Campbell	Andre Goulancourt
Geraint Short	Sue Russell	Ralph Wolfe
Jimmy Quinn	Mike Campbell	

Tel. 01877 387200 Email. cc@strathard.org.uk www.strathard.org.uk



A Christmas Cracker!

So, once more Christmas time approaches and with it arrives the season of goodwill and merriment, of jollity and, hopefully, easy acceptance of the foibles of human nature and of life in general. Come the big day we will sit around the table eating and drinking our fill, wearing coloured paper hats, blowing on our whoopee whistles and laughing uproariously at the jokes as they are read out from the pulled crackers. And let us face it, at no other time would we find these jokes particularly amusing, but it is Christmas after all!

So you sit around the table with family and friends, many of whom you do not see from one year to the next and some whom you have never set eyes on before today! Yet on this day you sit back and enjoy their company, however strange or outlandish their behaviour. See! There's Auntie Bessie, your mother's eldest sister whom she hasn't seen for twenty years, come up from the south of England to be with the family at this time, a teetotaler on her third glass of ginger wine, God bless, giggling quietly, paper hat askew, breaking into the general conversation with a quiet 'Goodness' and 'Well, I never!' And there is Uncle George, not a real uncle, but a lifelong friend of your father's who you have been taught since childhood to address as 'uncle', a jovial man, one given to bouts of uproarious laughter and who has been self-elected to read out the jokes from the crackers. He has the sonorous voice of a frustrated actor with the flamboyant gestures to match as he bellows out yet another cracker joke: 'What did the landlord say when a sandwich and a scotch egg walked into his pub?'

A pause then: 'I'm sorry we don't serve food!' Cues for gales of laughter and some groans.

Simple enough jokes, you might say, yet this one time of year when families gather, is the one occasion when you can get away with it. Uncle George sits back, beaming and refilling his glass from the bottle of port by his hand. Gran asks him if he would not rather have a slice of lemon in his drink to which he booms, 'No, no. I've had my five portions of fruit already today!' - a cue for more merriment. And perhaps that is a fair example of true humour which could be interpreted as taking a quirky view or alternate slant on everyday things in life.

There are many well known examples of this style and not a few well-known practitioners of the art, Billy Connolly of early years being one. I've no doubt everyone can remember his first appearance on Parkinson when he described how he managed to 'park his bike'.

It also has a lot to do with the 'patter', the way we hear things and, if done professionally, it is a joy to listen to. It is not laboured nor is it underlined. It can be subtle and if you miss it, too bad, the story goes on. One great example of this is in the book-cum television series, 'The Beiderbecke Files' by Alan Plater. In one memorable scene, whilst the 'hero' Trevor Chaplin's girlfriend is at the town hall assisting with the local election ballot papers, someone calls at their home asking to speak to her. Trevor's response? 'I'm sorry, she's out for the count.'

The past master at surreal humour

though, must surely be the late, great Chic Murray, with his droll, dead pan delivery and quiet chuckle as he delivered lines you sometimes had to think about. Not everyone's cup of tea, even in my own household I have to admit, where my mother's lack of understanding was shown in the looks of puzzlement she gave my father and I, who were in stitches. Some of his jokes were memorable, 'out of this world', you could say. Take the story of the male patient visiting his doctor.

When called into the surgery, the doctor says, 'I'll have to examine you. Please take your clothes off.'

'Where shall I put them?' says the patient.

'Why put them on top of mine!'

Then there was the story of the man standing stationary at a funeral, some 100 yards from the graveside.

'Who's that?'

'I'm not sure. I think he's a distant relative.'

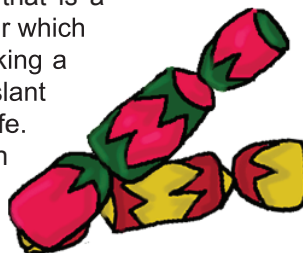
Or one of my favourites: A man goes to the birthday party of a mature lady who has the cake wheeled out with a candle for each year of her life.

'I don't know how old she was,' Chic said, 'but the heat was terrific!'

Ah, where are you now Chic, when your country needs you! And so, on a final note we would like to wish all our readers a very happy - and jovial - Christmas and thought to finish off with another 'party time' joke.

A Scotsman, an Englishman and an Irishman walk into a pub and the landlord says: 'Is this a joke?'

Now that is a cracker of a joke!



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Drum Spectacular



The 3rd annual Callander Jazz and Blues Festival was a great success with over 50 live gigs at 24 venues in Callander and Aberfoyle. It featured the best sounds in local, national and international Jazz alongside the cream of the UK's Blues scene. Festival organiser and drum instructor, Graham Oliphant, was pleased to introduce two of his pupils to an unsuspecting audience at the Dreadnought Hotel in Callander. Poppy Smith and Louis Stewart from Aberfoyle were the youngest performers at the festival and wowed the audience with their 'Drum Spectacular'.



Do you need a new home in any of these areas ?

Aberfoyle	Deanston	Gartmore	Locheearnhead
Balfron	Doune	Killin	Strathyre
Buchlyvie	Drymen	Kippen	Stronachlachar
Callander	Gargunnoch	Kinlochard	Tyndrum

If so, Rural Stirling Housing Association may be able to help.

The Association's aim is to support rural communities by providing affordable good quality homes for people in housing need. We currently have 450 rented homes and around 30 of these become available for re-let each year. We also build some new homes each year.

For more details and a housing application form please contact us at:

Rural Stirling Housing Association
Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA
Telephone : 01786 841101
E-mail: Enquiries@rsha.demon.co.uk
Website : www.rsha.org.uk
 Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849

Please note that we encourage all applicants to also apply to Stirling Council's housing list (Tel : 0845 277 7000). Being on both lists is the best way to maximise your chances of being rehoused.

HOGMANAY PARTY

80's Themed Fancy Dress Disco Party
9pm 'til the wee small hours

Fireworks spectacular at midnight to bring in the New Year with a bang!!



*Spot Prizes for:
 Best Dressed
 Most thought put into an outfit
 Best Co-ordinated couple*

- Cold buffet available all night
- Free glass of Champagne at midnight to toast in the New Year
- Hot Stovies after midnight

Dust off those ra-ra skirts and legwarmers and come to the best party of your life!!

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Tickets £8 (book in advance)
 or £10 on the door.
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Letters to the Editor...have your say!

Get it off your chest with a letter to the editor.

Send to Editor, Schoolhouse, Inversnaid FK8 3TU or email editor@strathardnews.com or hand in to Aberfoyle Post Office.

Dear Editor

We have been visiting Forest Hills at Kinlochard for over 25 years, usually in October, and enjoy reading the Strathard News in its various guises. We picked up October's edition at the tearoom at Stronachlachar. It's good to read about what's happening in the district and what local concerns there are.

Re Aberfoyle Motors - we can only remember buying fuel there once in 25 years, and can only remember one other occasion on which one of our guests, desperate for fuel, bought there. The fuel is extremely expensive and always has been. We know the problems of availability of all sorts of things in rural communities, but last week the Aberfoyle diesel was 15p per litre more than any outlet we saw in the Stirling area (we bought at Sainsbury's, but saw the same price at several other outlets). We would certainly be willing to support the local garage if the price of fuel was competitive, but 15p per litre difference is a great deal.

Re the Big Lottery bid - we agree with you that a better name is needed - how about "TRAC"? (Transport Resources for the Aberfoyle Community)

Now a note of thanks. On Thursday 23rd Oct we were driving past Aberfoyle School just as the children were leaving at teatime. You may remember it had been raining the entire day and there was a huge amount of water on the road outside the school. We managed to drive through the flood then back to Forest Hills, where we parked the car, not noticing that our front number-plate had sheared off due to the force of water.

The following day, the weather being much improved, we had a pleasant walk through the forest from Milton, round beside Lochan Spling, to Aberfoyle and back along the road past the school towards Milton. There was a front number-plate propped against the school wall. It was ours - and we hadn't even realised it was missing! How lucky was that? So thanks very much to whoever found it and what a lucky chance that we walked in that direction the following day.

All good wishes for your Garage campaign, and to all at the Strathard News. We look forward to our next visit.

Susan and John Saunders
Leeds, West Yorkshire

GONE FOR GOOD?

I'm talking of the best scenic view in the Trossachs if not one of the most beautiful in the whole of Scotland - the view down Loch Arklet. Only being a visitor, albeit a fairly regular one I, along with my husband, was astounded to hear that the Forestry Department is about to ruin this splendid view by the massive transplantation of trees all along this glen.

Do not get me wrong, I am all for afforestation, it has its place, but not here surely. Coming from Kinlochard one drives through several miles of forest then suddenly the vista opens to one of high moorland and the breathtaking view down Loch Arklet looking west to the distant Arrochar Alps. This is what is going to be ruined for visitor and local alike.

I am reliably informed that the vast majority of locals are against it yet still this programme seems to be going ahead. It would seem that the Forestry Department are not really interested in taking the residents' views on board. Yet if they did, not only would they leave the local people happy, the Forestry would save money by not planting in this area. Or am I being naïve? Perhaps there is outside money involved? If this is the case it would probably carry greater weight in the decision making process than that of the small community of Loch Arklet!

And what of VisitScotland and the National Park Authority? Surely they should be worried by this, not to put too fine a point on it, desecration of a well-known beauty spot? Particularly, the National Park!

I have to say that I, along with many others, have enjoyed the beautiful views of Loch Arklet - the windswept hills, the mountains and moorland which surround. Should this afforestation programme get the go ahead then all this landscape will be gone - for good.

M. Johnston (Mrs)
Kirkintilloch

Well Done That Man

Well two of them actually, David Wilkie and David Coleman. They have made an absolutely stunning start on reclaiming the Baillie Nicol Gardens from the grip of wilderness. It's lovely to walk down Manse Road and see through to the Baillie and the river as you cross the bridge. But most of all the magnificent view of Ben Lomond from the Main Street has now been restored to its rightful glory. That view is surely part of the reason for the original setting of our lovely Aberfoyle. It made me smile to see tourists taking photographs right down the street with the snow capped Ben in the distance. Thank you, thank you, thank you, fabulous work and very much appreciated, by residents and visitors.

Diana Carmody

"THANK YOU"

On behalf of the family, I would like to thank David and the staff at the David Marshall Lodge for the difficult decision they had to make regarding the re-location of the aspen tree and plaque in memory of my mother, Pamela (August Edition). We are very happy with the new location which is in a quieter position and does have a good view over the Strath. Many local people will know I have not been well enough to revisit Aberfoyle, but I am still aiming to come back and visit the tree and spend a quiet time of reflection and memories. My mother was a special person and is still very much missed.

Gordon Abraham

Reply to Susan & John Saunders

Fuel prices are indeed high in Aberfoyle Motors and there was a good debate on this at the Garage Open Day, with lower prices being high on everybody's priorities for a community-run garage. As Mr & Mrs Saunders point out there is a big difference between the prices in Aberfoyle and those at Stirling and Glasgow supermarkets which discount their fuel to attract customers. Prices in Aberfoyle are unlikely ever to reach supermarket levels, even in a community-run petrol station, because volumes sold are so much lower. But if we can remain competitive with other rural garages, rather than being the second most expensive fuel in mainland Scotland (as Aberfoyle was in December 2007!) then that would be a good result for the community.

Visitors who can drive outside the area are in fact more fortunate than residents who work locally or are retired, who may not always have the option of buying fuel elsewhere without travelling a long way. The folks in Inversnaid, for example, face a 50 mile round trip to buy petrol if the garage closes. Regarding the name: that was also discussed at the Open Day with plenty of suggestions. As a result, one clear favourite has emerged, which covers the area surrounding Aberfoyle as well as the village itself. Why not come into the BIG Lottery Bid shop in Main Street and give us your thoughts on the name, or anything else about the bid?

Lottery Bid Committee

Margaret,

Just a quick note to say what a difference the Baillie garden tidied up has made. You can see Ben Lomond clearly coming along the main street now those Leylandii are down - great stuff. Well done to all !!!

Regards,

Mark Crawford

Dear Editor

I am writing as a member of the community who does, in principal, support a proposed community buy-out of Aberfoyle Motors. I enjoyed the 'Big Garage Open Day', have been deeply impressed by the intensity of the huge amount of work being done by a few people on behalf of the whole community, and would love to become more involved, fundraise, become a member, maybe even a director!

Sadly, I don't yet feel able to join in wholeheartedly, and my own feelings of enthusiasm for the project are being marred,

...continued on next page

Save the Loch Arklet View



Following the article Loch Arklet – A view worth fighting for? published in the August 2008 Strathard News, the answer that came back from near and far was 'yes', with many people indicating they would sign a petition. Strathard Community Council and Loch Katrine Community Trust have continued their dialogue with Forestry Commission Scotland, which unfortunately has not altered its position on the matter. Although one small success has been that we managed to stop a Forestry 'error' in starting planting operations at East Loch Arklet, since they somehow managed to get confused by their own maps!

On 12th November representatives of SCC and LKCT were asked by Syd House, the Forestry Commission Scotland Conservator for our area, to urgently provide him with evidence of public support within a very tight deadline of 2 weeks (although we have requested an extension). Can we therefore ask all those interested in saving the view at Loch Arklet by not planting around it to become part of the 'Great Trossachs Forest' to please sign our petition as soon as possible. You can sign online at www.locharkletview.org.uk or on paper in Aberfoyle PO and the BIG Lottery bid shop. If you would like a paper copy of the petition to collect signatures yourself or to have a copy for your premises, please call into the Lottery shop, e-mail cc@strathard.org.uk or telephone 01877 387200.

Loch Katrine Community Trust Strathard Community Council

...continued from previous page

because I feel that I was (albeit unintentionally) being misled. I do understand that all figures so far are simply 'proposed and possible' figures (and that equally must apply to the figures I'm using here). However, I believe that the total purchase price of Aberfoyle Motors (that is, the whole thing including the coaches) that the 'community' might expect to pay, is a fundamental piece of information. As such I believe that this is at least one piece of information that should have been available to all of the 'community' right from the outset, in order for individuals to decide whether they wished to give their support, and if so, to give it wholeheartedly. I further believe that this piece of information should be given in as 'plain speak' as possible, in order to ensure that people like me understand it.

Yet I thought, upon reading the circulated literature, that the total purchase price, as above, was in the region of £800,000. That is the Lottery Grant of £750,000, and the 5% that the community would be required to raise. I thought that, because those were the only figures that were given. It was only after a great deal of discussion at one of the drop-ins that I then understood that the proposed possible total purchase price, as above, is over one million pounds (about £1.05m). The two figures I have already quoted, plus about a further £250,000, which it is expected that the 'community' can obtain by mortgage.

Have I got it now? If so, I believe that this is exactly the sort of information that all of the 'community' should have had from the outset. I'm sure it was unintentional (and indeed I looked at the literature and assumed that was the total price), but I am also sure that I am not the only person who was misled by the two figures which were released, and assumed that their sum would be the total price. Those working on the bid have been so inundated with pressures, that one's loathe to add to them, but hopefully this sort of information will be more readily available now the new 'bid' shop has opened.

Yours, etc

S Johnston, Aberfoyle



What do you call a group of...

- Antelope: A herd of antelope
- Ant: A colony or An army of ants
- Ape: A shrewdness of apes
- Baboons: A troop of baboons
- Bacteria: A culture of bacteria
- Badger: A cete of badgers
- Bass: A shoal of bass
- Bear: A sleuth or sloth of bears
- Beaver: A colony of beavers
- Bee: A swarm, grist or hive of bees
- Bird: A flock, flight, congregation or volery of birds
- Boar: A sounder of boars
- Buffalo: A herd of buffalo
- Buck: A brace or clash of bucks
- Caterpillar: An army of caterpillars
- Cat: A clowder or clutter of cats
- Cattle: A herd or drove of cattle
- Chicken: A brood or peep of chickens
- Chicks: A clutch or chattering of chicks
- Clam: A bed of clams
- Cobra: A quiver of cobras
- Colt: A rag of colts
- Cow: A kine of cows
(twelve cows are A flink)
- Coyote: A band of coyote
- Crane: A sedge or siege of cranes
- Crocodile: A float of crocodiles
- Crow: A murder of crows
- Cub: A litter of cubs
- Curlew: A herd of curlews
- Cur: A cowardice of curs

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BIG Lottery Bid

Many thanks to all the local residents and others who turned out in force for the BIG Garage Open Day, to show support for the proposed community buyout of the garage and buses through an application to the BIG Lottery Fund. We had been worried that road closures and flooding the previous evening would affect the turnout, but more than 200 people turned up, including 50 children. The workshop of the garage was a hive of activity with ideas boards for community input, musicians, stalls, facepainting and other children's activities, and refreshments. Local people had the chance to suggest ways the garage premises and buses could be used if they were community-owned. There was a lot of lively debate and discussion, with the final verdict being that a great day was had by all, and the event had exceeded all expectations. The BIG Lottery Bus Competition Draw was won by children from Port of Menteith Primary School who are looking forward to their prize of a school bus outing courtesy of Aberfoyle Motors.

Bruce Crawford MSP, Anne MacGuire MP, Provost Fergus Wood, local councillor Paul Owens and Bob Dalrymple Stirling Conservative candidate were all there to show cross-party political support for our attempt to buy the garage business, premises and buses for the community. So the main question that the Open Day was run to answer certainly seems to have been answered, which is that local folk are definitely keen to retain the garage, and feel that its loss would seriously affect the village in many ways. Many people signed up to show their support, and offered help in a range of ways. To date £8500, nearly a quarter of the total needed from the community under Lottery rules, has been indicatively pledged or raised and we have 150 support forms.

Thanks are particularly due to Callander Pipe Band including their piping learners and dancers, other musicians, garage staff, and Aberfoyle Youth Club who provided a carwash service. Also



to the 20 local people who set up and manned the various attractions and kept everything running smoothly.

This was a fantastic start to our BIG Lottery Bid project and a real boost to the campaign to keep these important facilities in the area and develop other new services. We really appreciate all your interest so far, but it's important to have evidence of that backing in writing for the Lottery Fund to show there is enough local support for the bid. So for those who took forms away to fill in at home, please do return them as soon as possible. Remember please that it's one form per person, not per household, since the Lottery Fund looks at the total number of supporters. We are on the last chance now to save the garage from being turned in a property development, but it will not happen unless local people get behind the bid. Once the garage is gone many people will miss it, and an opportunity will have been lost to develop new services along the lines of those identified at the Open Day.



The Next Steps

As you will see on these pages, now we've established that there is enough community backing to go forward, there is a lot happening, and a huge amount of work to do. So we are pressing on with detailed bid preparation and fundraising.

- We are still spreading the word and recruiting supporters. Every person who comes forward will increase our chance of success. There is competition for funds and we have to show that the community is solidly behind the bid. So everyone in the local areas of Strathard, Gartmore and Port of Menteith who indicates support helps reinforce that. Please don't just 'wait and see' - come in and talk to us in the BIG Lottery Bid shop.
- Legal issues such as forming a new community company are being investigated, including finalising a suitable name.
- A full Business Plan incorporating the new information from the Open Day is required, and that will take a lot of detailed work.
- There have been some changes to the advice we have been given by the Big Lottery Fund since it is now the end of the Growing Community Assets funding stream, and we are looking at what this means for our application and the information we need to submit.
- The valuations obtained last year for garage, buses and land all now need updated, so that they are up-to-date for the bid.
- All the funding sources identified for the last bid will now be re-visited to put the funding package together.
- Site surveys required by the Big Lottery Fund need to be carried out.
- Local fundraising in various ways has started and this will continue up to, and even after, the bid is submitted.

Christmas 'Open Day'

A date for your diary!

Wednesday 10th December - 1 till 8pm
Come along to the BIG Lottery Bid Shop in Main Street, Aberfoyle for some mulled wine, mince pies and the chance to support small local businesses when doing your Christmas shopping. Depending on the outcome of our grant application to Stirling Council, this may be our last day in the shop, or we may be celebrating getting the funds to let us stay there right through until the time the bid goes in.

Possible Sports Event

We're looking into running a sports event next spring, since raising funds can continue after the bid goes in. Maybe a triathlon or similar around Strathard with related family sporting activities. Would you be interested in helping to organise this? Or perhaps you are a sportsperson who can tell us more about what's required, or what type of event would be best. Please get in touch if you're interested in getting involved in this.



Grand Raffle

We asked on the Lottery support form if you would be willing to donate a raffle prize – these will go into a Grand Raffle at the 'Final Fling' on 3rd January. Do please drop prizes off in the shop, preferably before 10th December, while we know we still have the premises. After that if we are not in the shop please contact us to arrange handover of any prizes. Any other donations you would like to make, either goods or the offer of free services from a business, would be very welcome.

The 'Final Fling' Saturday 3 January 2009

Saturday 3 January 2009

Don't miss this last chance to celebrate in the festive season.

Since the New Year tourists will all have left, we're holding this at the Rob Roy Motel, which has recently been refurbished. There will be a host of attractions aimed at all ages, with the option of coming earlier and finishing with a buffet meal, or arriving later and starting with the food. We hope this will make the 'Final Fling' attractive to families and others who don't want a late night. Tickets will go on sale in December in the shop. We're still finalising the programme but so far this includes:

- A buffet supper (hot & cold), dessert, tea / coffee
- Activities for children during the early session
- The BIG Raffle draw
- Local musicians
- DJ and dancing
- Discounted B&B rate for those from further afield



Big Lottery Bid Shop

We're keen that this time everyone knows what's happening with the bid, so when we got the chance for a few weeks to have a community space in Aberfoyle we jumped at it! Many thanks are due to Liz MacGregor for offering us the previous Photograph Scotland shop to display the children's BIG Lottery bus panels. The shop has proved a fantastic way so far for people to pop in for a chat to find out what's happening, so we have applied to Stirling Council for a community grant to rent the premises right up until the bid goes in. Fingers crossed – we think we'll hear on 10th December during our 'Christmas Open Day' whether we've been successful. In the meantime, do come in and see us.

What's in the Shop?

At the moment we have all the children's artwork panels on display as well as some local products, such as:

- Fairyland Aromatics - natural remedies and essential oils
- Truly Trossachs - hand made cards and craft pictures
- Trossachs Creations - hand made jewellery
- Jim Bruce Woodturnings
- Paintings by local artists
- Local knitting

The local phone directory

'Table sale' of donated items

So do come along, buy locally and pick up some Christmas gifts when you are in the Main Street. The surplus funds raised after covering our heating costs will go towards the Lottery Bid fundraising total.

From Monday 1 December we'll have more space available for local products, bid details and other community information such as events. Also the Loch Arklet petition can be signed in the shop.

Do you produce arts, crafts or other products locally but have no shop? Come in and talk to us about using the shop to display and sell your wares.

Want to publicise an event you're running in December? Why not drop off some leaflets or information in the shop to help publicise it.

Volunteering

We are in the process of contacting everybody who said they could spare some time to help with the bid. Or do just pop into the shop and see us. For example we need:

- helpers in the shop so that we can open it all day, every day
- raffle prize organisation and collection
- more musicians / entertainment for 3 January
- local engineering, surveying, architectural & construction advice for preparing the bid.

If you want information at any time please call into the Big Lottery Bid shop, get in touch by phoning 01877 387200, e-mailing transport@strathard.org.uk or contact a community representative:

Ian Marshall of Strathard Community Trust
 Fiona McEwan of Strathard Community Council
 Ros Dingwall in Aberfoyle PO (Trust and CC)
 Margaret Neufeld of Loch Katrine Community Trust

Apprentice Help for National Park Businesses

Young people living in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park are getting a helping hand to find work thanks to a new initiative. The Business/Apprentice Support Project which was launched on Thursday 2 October by the National Park Community Partnership addresses the lack of training opportunities for young people in the Park and creates placements with local businesses.

A total of 13 small businesses have signed up to the project so far, each taking on an apprentice. The businesses offer 'taster training' sessions before moving on to the full modern apprenticeship. They include five electricians, one stonemason, two joiners, three builders, a plumber and a roofer/plasterer. The businesses cover all of the National Park including Callander, Thornhill, Gartmore, Dunoon, Balmaha and Croftamie.

Speaking about the Apprentice Support Project, Dr Ron Dalton, Director, National Park Community Partnership said: "I am delighted that we have been able to launch this project at a time when small rural businesses need extra support in providing a training place for an apprentice. Equally, rural based apprentices need help in getting to and from college, with accommodation and other issues.

All of the apprentices were present for the launch. Deril Wyles, an apprentice



John Park MSP with Dr Ron Dalton and the modern apprentices

stonemason with Tradstocks of Thornhill said: "The project has been great for me and I'm really grateful to have this opportunity to take up an apprenticeship with a local business. I'm looking forward to learning more about the trade."

Carron Tobin, Executive Director, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority, highlighted the significant step forward taken by the Community Partnership in addressing an issue affecting all communities in the Park: "This innovative project will directly tackle the evident lack of skilled tradespeople in and around the National Park but also the lack of opportunities for young people to undertake a trade apprentice in the place where they have been brought up."

The Partnership has been fortunate in securing generous financial help from a number of private and public sponsors who have recognised this project as an acorn from which oaks may grow. Our activities over the last few years have already trailed some of the main initiatives set out in the Apprenticeship (Scotland) Bill shortly to be presented to the Scottish Government by John Park MSP"

The launch took place at Carrochan, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority headquarters in Balloch. John

Park MSP, Shadow Minister for the Economy and Rural Skills was the keynote speaker and highlighted how his electrical apprenticeship had equipped him for life with essential skills including those of leadership and negotiation. John congratulated the small businesses and their apprentices present at the launch on their commitment to the project and hence, in a small way, to the future of Scotland.

Jackie Baillie, Local MSP for Dumbarton also attended the evening.

For more information about the Business/Apprentice Support Project contact Anne Mason (anne.mason@lochlomond-trossachs.org or Tel: 01389 722639)

Help Shape Your Community

The first National Park Local Plan will be formally launched for consultation on the 28 November for a period of 3 months.

This Plan will provide guidance for development in the National Park over the next 5 years including new housing, economic development, tourism, recreation and transport proposals. All new development proposals will be required to submit a sustainability checklist to demonstrate how sustainable development principles have been considered and incorporated. Most developments will also be required to incorporate a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions to help reduce the causes of climate change.

In 2007, over 1000 people including many Park communities got involved in the lead up to the preparation of the new Local Plan. Between February and August a series of Community Open Days were held across communities in the Park. Information and feedback gained from these events helped to inform the preparation of the draft local plan.

How you can get involved

This is an important opportunity to have a say about the future development of your local community. A series of events will be held during January and February 2009. Look out for posters, local newspaper adverts and the Park website to find out about events happening near you.

The Park Authority would encourage all communities to get involved in the consultation and have their say about planning and development in their local area.

To view a copy of the draft Local Plan visit www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

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Loch Lomond
& The Trossachs
National Park

National Park News

by Owen McKee

The Strategic Review of National Parks has now been published and can be viewed/downloaded at www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/environment/countryside/16131. And since there are recommendations which will require legislation before implementation the report's findings will be put out for public consultation until February 2009.

The original intention of the review was that it would be conducted in two sections with the first part dealing with such matters as whether there should be separate Boards for each Park, the size and composition of the Boards, whether the Park Authority should be answerable directly to the Minister, etc. The second stage was to review boundaries and areas of responsibility such as Planning. So what is recommended? The big surprise is that there will now no longer be a Stage Two. Instead there will be set up a Strategy Group under the chairmanship of the Minister with representation from both National Parks and other related groups such as SNH. All matters relating to National Parks present and future will come under the gaze of that group.

Less of a surprise is that the Review recommends that the two Park Authorities remain separate in the medium term and that they continue as Non Departmental Government Bodies. However since the Scottish Government is favourably disposed to National Parks it is possible that others may be designated in the future and, if

so, the Strategy Group will examine the practicality of an overreaching National Park Authority.

What of the size and composition of the Boards? The Report is of the view that 25 Board Members is too large a number. However it feels that the introduction of directly elected members has been a notable success. So whilst recommending a decrease in Board numbers it suggests an increase in the directly elected numbers. But with the relatively small number of people living in each Park, the Report acknowledges that this may not be easy to achieve. There is a feeling that the Board should consist of eighteen members - six directly elected, six local authority and six Ministerially appointed. The consultation seeks your views on that. Overall I am pleased with the Report, particularly in its view that the introduction of the directly elected members has been a success. It is also heartening to see a general acceptance that the Park Authorities have, in their relatively short existence, made a positive difference to the Parks' environment and the communities they serve.

Now back to our own Local Plan and its journey to fruition. The Draft Local Plan was launched on the 28th November and the consultation thereon will last to 28th February 2009. Oh no ! Sighs of Consultation Fatigue. It is a bind and it does seem to take forever but by remembering just how important the Local Plan is to our communities

it is imperative that we give them the maximum opportunity to determine what policies are contained therein. All those Open Days and Reviews we held were designed so that we could put forward a Local Plan which embraced our communities' views. There will be further local events to give you the opportunity to say whether we got it right or not. Will the Local Plan please everyone? I think not but I do believe it will have overwhelming support within our communities.

Now not exactly in the area covered by the Strathard News but certainly of interest to us all is a proposal to build a woodchip fuelled electricity generating scheme at Acharn between Lix Toll and Killin. Fuel for the scheme is to be harvested from woodlands within a 30 mile radius which does edge into Strathard. The fuel wood will generally be thinnings and brashings which currently have little or no commercial value. We await developments with interest.

Christmas is fast approaching so may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and notwithstanding the international economic gloom may you all have a prosperous 2009.

Owen McKee.

I can be contacted as follows:

Post: Taigh Na Bhuth,
Lochearnhead.

Phone: 01567 830214

owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk

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- Old swords, knives, pistols and rifles
- Old musical boxes
- Old toys
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RSPB Inversnaid

The trees in the woodland on the east side of Loch Lomond are still managing to hang on to their leaves despite the autumn gales. Deer and feral goats are scooping up the autumn nut harvest and, not to be outdone, jays and flocks of wood pigeon (in flocks of over 200) are constantly flying in and out of the woodland. A great spotted woodpecker with its distinctive deep undulating flight was also carrying an acorn. Badgers have been very active digging for worms and small invertebrate along the Woodland Trail edges. Small flocks of tits with one, sometimes two, treecreeper in attendance can be seen working their way through the tops of the trees. On the shore of Loch Lomond, dippers are bobbing on the rocks before diving into the water and there are still grey wagtails and pied wagtails working the shoreline debris for insects.

On the Garrison, golden eagles are still showing well and on a very windy day, I was privileged to see some wonderful flying displays from an adult pair. It is surprising how often you can observe raptors displaying their flying skills just for the sheer enjoyment of it. The

female would be circling whilst the male was rising and stooping (diving) very close by, sometimes coming very close to her and making her swerve, then they would circle together with the female taking a turn at rising and stooping in short bursts. They continued this display south all along the length of the reserve, stopping only to give some very close attention to the feral goats on Stob an Fhainne, much to the goats concern! Finally, they turned and flew

up the north side of Loch Arklet and the goats relaxed and went back to their grazing. A juvenile

female golden eagle unfortunately had a different flying experience. It was struggling to find a thermal on a windless day and after flying to and fro for over five minutes, eventually found some lift which took it up to the skyline where it circled and eventually drifted off out of view.

Thirteen goldfinches have been feeding on the teasel at Garrison car park. A flock of 100+ chaffinch, with some greenfinch

were searching the remnants from the Highland cattle fodder for food. Over 20 meadow pipits are still around despite the frosts and cold weather and reed bunting are now starting to gather in the area. The winter thrushes are about in small numbers too; redwing, fieldfare and, I had hoped, accompanied by a rare waxwing. Unfortunately, it was a silhouetted fieldfare with a small branch close behind giving the impression of a crest through the binoculars and only when I looked through the telescope did I discover my error.

Unusually for the reserve at this time of year, a single starling was on the telephone wires, however it did not hang around long before departing south. Four blackcock (male black grouse) were on the hill opposite the car park, partly lekking but mainly feeding, before they flew into the nearby birch.

*Duncan Cameron
Conservation Assistant*



HLF BOOST TO THE GREAT TROSSACHS FOREST PROJECT

Almost £1M of Heritage Lottery Fund support will help deliver the most ambitious landscape-scale woodland development project in the UK.

The £965,500 grant, secured by Forestry Commission Scotland, will help establish The Great Trossachs Forest - that will transform an area of patchwork woodlands centred on Loch Katrine into a forest landscape the size of Glasgow (16,650ha).

The bid - made in partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland - will part-fund the delivery of a programme of natural regeneration and woodland planting that will create the largest native broadleaf woodland in Scotland.

Set in the heart of the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, key features of the project, such as

improved and innovative access and interpretation, are expected to bring social and economic benefits for local communities.

The project has also attracted funding from the Scottish Forest Alliance, a partnership between Forestry Commission Scotland, Woodland Trust Scotland RSPB Scotland and BP.

Announcing the funding today, Minister for the Environment, Michael Russell, said:

"The Commission has worked closely with the Scottish Forest Alliance and the local community to secure this additional Heritage Lottery Funding.

"As the largest landscape-scale forestry project in the UK, The Great Trossachs Forest promises not only to be lasting

testimony to the work of this unique alliance of public and private sector but also a landmark achievement in environmental restoration."

Colin McClean, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland said :

"We are passionate about protecting and enhancing Scotland's cultural and natural heritage. This project is a great example of what can be done and the work to improve habitat will have a considerable impact on biodiversity.

"The change in land use and the positive impacts on the natural heritage will help sustain the health of Loch Katrine as Glasgow's water supply."

Once the project is completed, the Forestry Commission will continue ongoing management of the woodland.





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INTERESTING!!!

Motorists in the UK could save more than £100 million a year if they switch to independent garages for servicing, new Government figures show. But the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) says 86% per cent of business still goes to franchised dealers, despite new rules letting owners get work done outside the network without invalidating the warranty. A new OFT report says the average bill is 40 per cent cheaper at an independent garage but only 14% of owners took advantage of this. Those who left the dealer network in the two years after the warranty servicing rules were changed in 2003 collectively saved £30 million. But if every driver had followed suit, this could have been £214 million - or £107 million a year.

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Skoda Octavia 1.9 TDi 4x4 Estate Car (05/55) 1 owner, FSH, 39,000 Miles
£9,750.00

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call Keni or Sheena

Images for illustration purpose only

Ranger's Ramblings

A View from the Lodge!

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



Gaberlunzie* At The Dml

Every now and then, just every now and then, the hard-working Lodge staff are granted special dispensation to take a couple of days off in the midst of the busy season. And so it came to pass. As news filtered through that the legendary Gaberlunzie had been lined up to appear at the centre as part of the annual Mushroom Festival, I did some 'signing-up' of my own, and arranged for my mother, Ruby, to come up from Millport to take in the show. We did not allow the atrocious weather conditions during the Festival (which clearly had an affect on the outdoor activities and stalls planned) to 'dampen' our enthusiasm, as we made our way up to the DML for the Saturday evening concert. Contrary to initial concerns from the staff that the size of the venue would be prohibitive, the exhibition wing, with dipped lighting and candles on the tables turned out to be the perfect intimate setting. In the end, the quality of the entertainment, which included a fair amount of wise-cracking, in the two forty-five minute sessions given by Robin Watson and Gordon Menzies, together with the superb fayre provided by The Bluebell Café at the interval, made a mockery of the ticket price. In fact, I would go as far as to say the event was among the most enjoyable in all my time at The Lodge. Gaberlunzie. Check them out. They are as good as it gets.



DML Notice Board

For the benefit of our patrons, it is important to note that during the close season, major renovations are planned to improve the frontage of the building and improve the existing disabled access facilities. Due to the complex nature of the alterations, and the uncertainty attached to the time-span for the work, it is strongly advised that anyone wishing to visit the centre at the turn of the year check for opening times through the following contact numbers. The dates listed may be subject to change.

DML FOREST CRAFT SHOP

Closed from December 25 - end of January

01877 382 258

BLUEBELL CAFÉ

Phone for information.

01877 382 900

CHILL-OUT

Closed from December 25 - end of January

01877 389 302. Mobile 07791385240.

GO APE

Closed from December 7 - end of January

0845 643 2035

Unfortunately, the operations will almost certainly have an impact on the Christmas events programme. As a result, we have decided to concentrate our main activities on the weekend of the 13th and 14th.

Sunday 7th December

Winter Birds Day

An opportunity to get some valuable advice on feeding birds during the winter through special presentations from Andrea Williams and the RSPB volunteers

Saturday 13th December:

A day of carol singing, book signing sessions by local authors, treasure hunt

Sunday 14th December:

Lomond Mountain Rescue Team, Fun Day, Tombola, Mulled Wine And Mince Pies, Chainsaw Carving Demonstration, Prize Raffle, Treasure Hunt ...And Santa Claus !!

XMAS TREES WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE 29TH OF NOVEMBER.

RANGER'S CORNER

*Under the 'guise' of Halloween, we all seek a little 'fear'
Though the notion it is anything but theatre should be abundantly clear.
Sadly, this harmless masquerade held at this particular time of year
Swiftly gives way to an event with implications far more severe: Bonfire Night.
Now here have we an occasion with the ability to cause REAL fright
To some, the rockets taking off appear to be a beautiful sight
But these people seem oblivious to a pet-owner's plight.
Let me introduce you to Heather. She is a dog, normally classed as a pet
Though a better companion in my life, I have not yet met.
As the affection she shows me in her own special way
Inspires me to be what I am each and every day,
A gentle soul, fashioned with a black mane and white 'socks'
Happy to make friends with everyone on our daily walks
Until...November the fifth...Guy Fawkes Night
The first firework is all it takes. No sleep for me tonight.
Frothing at the mouth and shaking like a leaf
Heather's stress levels move way beyond belief
Clinging to me like a limpet, I feel powerless to help
Sharing the suffering of every whimper and yelp
Her senses seem heightened a hundred fold
And it proves virtually impossible to keep her consoled.
I despise this night of the year above more than any
And for those who have spent 'a pretty penny'
Burning away money in the name of 'fun'
I hope through this message, you gain an understanding of the damage you have done.*



DML PHOTO GALLERY



Who is that man in the mask?



Looks like Stuart would not even scare 'scooby-do' judging by the face in the foreground!



Length of queue for a burger proved too much for one customer!



'Doughnut' be fooled - these are only costumes

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The Shoes at the Back Door

A short story by Hazel Stuart

"We learned all about that in school today, Mummy. Mrs Bird told us all about the planets and the sun and how the planets go round the sun in a perfect circle," Lucinda said as I picked out her shoes from the higgledy-pigglety row at the side of the kitchen door, all slung off after school or shopping and never put away. My little Lucie-Loo looked at me for confirmation that her teacher had been right.

"Well, yes, you know about the planets already," I replied, doing up the fiddly buckles for her. "Remember that documentary we watched? The one with the colourful tubes where the stars are born? They showed us how the planets went round the sun, remember?"

She nodded, thoughtfully.

"I don't think the planets go round in a 'perfect' circle, though," I added, as we left the house, locked the door and started to walk along the pavement, with held-hands swinging in the early evening sunshine. My eyes followed the flexed line of our bare arms, linked by fingers and palms that were so used to tensing and relaxing together as the dangers of the world went by, and I looked down at her golden head, with warm love, and continued:

"I think they travel in more of an oval shape, the planets, a bit like the shape of an egg, and that has something to do with how hot the summers get and how cold the winters get. That documentary said that the Earth was warmer – obviously – when it went closer to the sun on its course, do you remember?" Her furrows of concentration evaporated, leaving relief as its residue. "I'll tell Mrs Bird about that tomorrow. I don't think she knows about that. I wish you could be our teacher, Mummy. You always know more than Mrs Bird."

"I think we just know different things sometimes. Anyway, she's probably just making it easy for everyone to remember. The planets do go round the sun and that's all you really need to know at the moment. I'm sure Mrs Bird would be impressed that you had found out a bit more though. To be honest, even the scientists, who spend all day studying outer space, are still learning new things about it all the time."

I paused. "Now, are you still okay about going to Brownies? We'll be there in a minute. I wonder if Ellie and Tess will be there."

They said they went to Brownies, didn't they?"

The arrival went smoothly, though Ellie and Tess weren't there. The church hall looked just like any other church hall. It could have been the same one, really, as I'd been to all those years ago, when I used to go to Brownies. There was perhaps a different shade of paint on the walls, and the war memorial plaque on the foyer wall must have had different names, but the old swing doors to the hall and the row of coat pegs seemed just the same. It seemed a long time ago since I'd last been in a church hall and I didn't take it too seriously anyway, the whole brownie-guide thing. The camps were good fun and I got a few badges. That's what I hoped for Lucinda now.

We paid the 'subs', I signed the obligatory permission slip and handed her over to the two middle aged village women, who introduced themselves respectively as simply 'Brown Owl' and 'Tawny Owl'.

Suppressing the urge to insist on their real names, I turned to Lucinda and we had our reassuring cuddle, kiss and parting wave, a secret-silent pact that she would look after herself, be good and tell me honestly afterwards if anything went wrong – you heard the most terrible things these days.

The parting went smoothly, all just like nursery, or the childminders, or school. Except I had nowhere to rush off to this time. No university. No work. For a few minutes, I just stood outside the church hall, unsure what

to do. There was time to walk home and research a bit for my essay, sew that button back on to Lucinda's red cardigan or start tidying her room, but this hour of freedom seemed to demand a more selfish use. Being a mother was wonderful, but so restrictive. I had to find some adult thing to do. Something that was not for Lucinda; something I could only do without Lucinda.

In the end, I walked, rather aimlessly, around the village, looking in the windows of the shops, now closed, and feeling self-conscious about being alone and unoccupied. With a nagging sense of wasting precious time, I lost that hour and was relieved to find myself outside the church hall, with their doors opening to let the new Brownies spill out with their new Brownie books in hand.

Perhaps that was it. There was nothing to find. Nothing 'adult' to miss.

Our walk back home from the hall wasn't long, but I could sense a change in my Lucie. Whatever it was, I wasn't worried. In fact, perhaps it wasn't her, but me. I carried on thinking about my lost hour of freedom, and only half paid attention to Lucinda's bright chatter. I wasn't disappointed, I decided. I loved being a mother. There really was nothing I'd lost and nothing to find.

At home we unlocked the door and kicked off our shoes, leaving them in the pile next to the door. I went to put the kettle on, as normal, so that we could sit down and I could finally give her my full attention.

"I'll make the cups of tea, Mummy" she said suddenly, stopping me in my tracks. "You go and put your feet up."

"Oh, do you want to try doing it?" I said, surprised. "But the kettle is very hot, so let Mummy pour it for you when it boils." I felt strangely as if she'd pulled the rug from under me. Wasn't it my job to look after her, not the other way around?

"Don't be silly, Mummy," she said, her reassuring tone disconcerting me, whilst taking my hand and leading me to the sofa in the next room, and briskly plumping a cushion for me. "I've made it lots of times with you. I know what to do. I'll just let the kettle cool down a bit before I pour it. That way you don't have to worry."

To begin with, I sat on the edge of the chair, listening to the sounds of the water gushing from the tap, too fast, to the sound of the clinks and clatters as cups and teabags were reached, by stool, and the milk was hauled from the fridge, by tiny muscles straining. I held myself back, weighing up the dash I'd bring her confidence if I interrupted and the potential scald or burn I'd look at for years to come, and never forgive myself for. But she was right. She had made cups of tea many a time under my watchful eye. I supposed I had to trust her sometime, so I stayed where I was.

Lucinda reappeared a few minutes later, with a lukewarm, but successful cup of tea, and thankfully no burns. I asked her why she hadn't made one for herself and she explained that she



was planning to tidy her room before bedtime. My offers of help were firmly declined and she explained that that was what Brownies did.

"Oh, right," I said, "I see. You liked Brownies then?"

"It was great" she began, her eyes becoming far-away. "I have to learn my promise, but that'll be easy and I know most of it already. It's in my Brownie booklet. Brownies are really good you know. They do good things for other people. God likes Brownies, you know, and the Queen is sort of the head Brownie – well, she's not a Brownie, but anyway, she tells God about it if Brownies are good and I think God knows if Brownies are naughty, so you have to be good. I'm good all the time anyway, so I'll be fine."

I looked at my daughter's familiar features as she continued to talk: her baby-down skin, the smooth curves of her cheeks and chin, her little body, in her red t-shirt and her new dungarees. Her body seemed unnaturally upright, a clumsy tool, inadequate, with which to express this new found marvel that Brownies had placed before her. The light of new vision seemed to spill from her eyes, which focused somewhere beyond the curtain-rail on the living room wall, whilst she spoke.

She got up, off to tidy her room, leaving me empty, sipping my cool tea like a rejected lover. Where had my child gone? Where had this pure unadulterated belief come from? She looked like Lucinda, my Lucie-Loo, with her hair in rats-tails after her busy day, but the way she stood, the things she said... What can those two, seemingly harmless, middle-aged village women have done to her? How did they bring about this dramatic conversion in just one hour? This wasn't one of the dangers I'd worried about. I'd never even anticipated this! Now we were four of us, not two. The Queen and God had entered the house and stood between me and my Lucie, right here in the living room. I couldn't reach her; in love with an idea and no longer with me. How dare they?

I picked up the Brownie booklet, put down by the sofa earlier, as she'd freed her hands to plump my cushion. I

opened the cover and read every word; a puzzle book come Bible, God and the Queen (there they were).

Upset, I ripped apart the language. Disengaged and deconstructed. I couldn't make out the bit where it said don't worry what your mother thinks. I couldn't see where it said dispense with her and all the things she thinks and does. The godliness of little girls. Mothers had no mention. No place.

I stopped myself. Sixes, Pixies, the magic of innocence and here was me, the jealous ogre. A fraud. She was happy and I was upset. Her new-found independence had dispensed with my mothering and I felt bereft.

I staggered, still shocked in my sudden selfishness, towards the kitchen, with my half-emptied cup of tea. I thought of our earlier conversation. But now it seemed as if the planets hadn't just stopped; they had ceased to be – such a ridiculous concept. What did God care about the silly scientists and what they thought? Not scientists, not teachers, not mothers. None of them mattered. Nothing I said would matter ever again. What match was I for the Almighty?

Oh, I knew she must grow up... up, up and away someday. I knew I'd not always be the one who knew everything, was everything. But so far away? And today? I wasn't ready.

And then, entering the kitchen, I saw the shoes. There, at the back door, Lucinda had sorted out the higgledy-piggledy pile of shoes and there they stood, regimented and in their pairs, very neatly stretching from one side of the door to the other.

I smiled. She must have done this whilst waiting for the kettle, whilst making the cup of tea. Being the perfect Brownie. Helpfully, tidying things away into a place – where, bless her, they didn't belong. They would all have to move for us to get out of the door tomorrow. I felt suddenly better, for it dawned on me that God and the Queen may have come to visit, but it was me my little Lucinda was trying to please by making the tea, plumping the cushion and tidying her room. It was me she told not to worry; me who would carefully move her line of shoes to one side and not draw attention to it. Things had returned to normal.

Milton

Hello Children,

Don't you just love this time of the year? As autumn turns into winter the leaves on the trees seem to take on so many different colours, from the red of the rowan trees, through the bronze and browns on the beeches and oaks to the small pieces of gold falling from the stands of birch. Then there is the great fun of running through and jumping into deep piles of dead leaves, except if the heaps had been carefully swept up by Grandpa Otter. Unfortunately, that is exactly what the twins did! Duke and Katrine got such a telling off and had to sweep them all up again. No sooner had they tidied them into one huge mound than the urge came on them again.

This time everyone joined in and soon we were all frolicking deep in autumn leaves, even mum. So much has happened in the last few weeks. The Big Garage Open Day was a lot of fun; Braeval helped out with the car washing and, like everyone else, got absolutely drenched. Sadly, for my sister, the water washed off her face paints too. There was so much to see and do: there was music and lots and lots of food to eat. Even the faeries had waved their magic wands and five pence a litre disappeared off the price of petrol and diesel. Then it was Hallow'e'en and all the usual fun and games at the David Marshall Lodge, freaky costumes, spooky stories and a frighteningly black night. The faeries must have waved their magic wands again - it did not rain!

The one thing young otters like, almost as much as water, is snow.

With the arrival of quite early snow on the high hilltops, George the Hare was keen to see if the faerie spell cast on him a couple of years ago still works. If he touches snow will his brown coat turn white? There was only one way to find out. So, early one morning the usual gang set off for Inversnaid and the lovely hill of Stob an Fhainne. With no Post Bus service any more, we caught the first Aberfoyle Sprinter to Kinlochard and walked the rest of the way. At the east end of Loch Arklet it looked as if a giant mole had been digging, but none of us was brave enough to go for a closer look! It is a long climb to the 2,000ft/655m summit of Stob an Fhainne, standing behind the Garrison Farm.

There was enough snow to play in and, in no time at all, George practically vanished from sight, his coat turning the colour of snow.

Only the very tips of his ears stayed black. From the top of the Stob we could see for miles. Down below, flying in the school playground, the green flag won for their work on environmental projects was fluttering in the breeze. Flame and Fury, our golden eagle friends landed alongside our newly built snowman and pointed out the distant monster, howling the soil beyond Loch Arklet. It was a great big, yellow forestry digger. That means more trees and even less moorland for the eagles to hunt over and find food. And wouldn't it be a great pity if that magnificent view, admired by everyone who has looked westward down Loch Arklet to the Arrochar Alps, was going to be blighted by the spread of afforestation.

Back at the holt, Grandpa Otter said that the Forestry Commission do not have permission to plant anything around Loch Arklet. That's naughty!

Bye for now,
Milton.



School Report.....



Extract from the School Log

Nov 1st 1927.

"A day of torrential rain. By 12.00 the roads were flooded, indeed the whole valley was a loch. School was dismissed at 1.15 and many of the children had to take to the hill in order to reach home."

ANTI- BULLYING WEEK

Primary 1/2 had a special afternoon about bullying. They talked all about what bullying means, how they would feel if they were being bullied and what to do. They thought you would feel sad, hurt, left out or sore. They agreed the best things to do are to 'tell someone', 'walk away', 'ignore it' and 'tell the bully you don't want it'.

Here is a poster about bullying by Beth Dunlop, P1.



HORRID HENRY, LIVE AND HORRID

On Thursday 23rd October Martin Malcolm P6 went to see Horrid Henry, Live and Horrid at the Kings Theatre Edinburgh. Martin had won a competition in the Primary Times to see Horrid Henry Live. Martin is a BIG Horrid Henry fan and knew that the author of the Horrid Henry books was Francesca Simon in order to win these free tickets to see him live. After returning from his expedition to Edinburgh Martin said, "It was the best play I've ever seen." Martin sat in the very front row of the theatre and ate lots of ice cream. Martin even found time to read his new Horrid Henry book. Martin looks forward to winning many more Horrid Henry Competitions.

LITTER AWARENESS WEEK!

This involved a great deal of work!

Each class had assigned a litter monitor to collect litter and give out litter points -1 point for a packet of crisps or something like that and 2 for a healthy snack unless you were in primary 7 then because of the class size, it was 2 for a packet of crisps and 3 for a healthy snack. This is one of the things we need to do to achieve our green flag. We already have our bronze award mainly for starting an ECO committee and having regular meetings!!!



This is a very good thing for schools to be doing. It involves greener things happening in lives of children!



Jack and I will be off to high school when we get our green flag but this was worth the effort!

We all had a great time doing this and hope that the school continues to do things like this!!!!

Kirsty Crawford P 7
Jack Jennings p 7

BOOK GROUP TRIP TO ABERDEEN

Aberfoyle Primary School Book Group went to the Awards Ceremony of the Scottish Book Trust Royal Mail Awards in Aberdeen. There were around 700 people at the Awards Ceremony and we felt very lucky to be there. There were 3 categories: 0-7, 8-11 and 12-16. In our category (8-11) there were 3 books - one was called HOX, one Darkisle and the other was Robe of Skulls. When we voted 4 of the six of us enjoyed Darkisle, 1 HOX and 1 Robe of Skulls.

At the Awards Ceremony Kirsty Wark, BBC journalist and broadcaster announced that Darkisle was officially the best Scottish book of the year in our category. Most of us were pleased at this news! We would like to go back next year as it was a very good experience.

Finn Manders (on behalf of Aberfoyle Book Group)

As part of The Aberfoyle Primary school book group, several pupils went to Aberdeen to the Royal Scottish Book Awards on Tuesday, 18th November.

It was really interesting, and there were several authors there, many of whom gave interviews. There were performances of the stories from the books, but the best part was when we found out who won overall - DARKISLE (by D A Nelson)!

(A really good book)

But the other short listed books were really good too. It was really fun! BUT IT TOOK 4 HOURS TO GET THERE! AND FOUR HOURS, TEN MINS TO GET BACK!

A good day out!

Bethan Peddle P7
Megan Gardner P7

WORLD WAR EXPERIENCE

Primary 5/6/7 of Aberfoyle Primary School are learning all about World War 2 this term. They have been doing some cooking recently, having made trench cake, beehive cake, raisin crispies and Anzac biscuits. A couple of weeks ago we had to go around the school with a gas mask and gas mask box. If they lost their gas mask they would get a stamp on the back of their identity card.

We have learnt all about the start of the war and the Battle of Britain and how America got involved in the war.

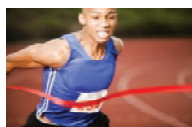
On Monday 25th November we are having a Tea Dance in which P 5/6/7 will be singing old war time classics and having a few dances.



By Scott McCoull

MUGDOCK RACE

A group of children from Aberfoyle primary school are competing in a 1.5 mile race at Mugdock Country Park outside Milngavie on Saturday the 22nd November.



The people that are taking part are Natasha Wilson, Megan Patrick, Emily Palau, Jack Jennings, Louis Stewart, Jordan Campbell and many more.

Aberfoyle primary school has also started up an Athletics club after school on a Monday, run by Gillian McLean and Stuart Fielden. It is very popular even in the bad weather.

Lyndsay Mackenzie p7
Megan Patrick p7

Where do birds meet for coffee?

In a nest-cafe'

Did you hear about the trainee woodpecker.

It was learning the drill.

Waiter! Waiter! Do you have chicken legs?

No, sir, I always walk like this.

Why should you never whisper in front of corn?

Because it has ears.



SYNAGOGUE VISIT

Primary 5 6 and 7 went to Glasgow synagogue on Thursday 6th November. Everyone saw the Torah scrolls (the Jewish bible) and we were allowed to wear the kippahs and also were allowed to wear a tallit. There were wooden planks on the wall with names on them and the date that the person died. If they died on that day a couple of years ago there would be a light at the side. We were also allowed to go up onto the stand where the Rabbi stands to read from the Torah and other prayer books. The ark that the Torah is in always faces Jerusalem. No one is ever allowed to touch the Torah scrolls so instead you use the Yad, a metal stick that you use to keep your place. There was a light called Ner Tamid (eternal light) that is never turned off. We also went to the People's Palace in Glasgow. We had lunch and went into the World War 2 part of the exhibit. We split into groups and had a fabulous time. There was an Anderson shelter and you could go in and listen to the air raid siren. We had a great time and would definitely go back.

Leah Bancroft P7, Nathan Laird P7

P5/6/7 Trip

On 6th November primary 5, 6 and 7 went on a trip to Glasgow to see a synagogue and the Peoples Palace, because they have been learning about it for the past term. At the synagogue the lady there talked to us about Judaism and the Hebrews. Then we got to look around and see lots of different things that we hadn't seen before. The boys had to wear hats to cover the top part of your head. Everybody enjoyed it and it would be a lovely place to visit in the future.

At the Peoples Palace they learnt lots of interesting parts of the war and other historical things. They thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the people's palace and the synagogue and would like to thank the parents who helped out.



By Emily Palau

Homophones

An old joke tells of someone asking the assistant at a paper shop: 'Do you keep stationery?' and she replies: 'No, I wriggle about a bit.' She clearly thought he meant the word that is spelt 'stationary'. There are many pairs of words like this, which sound the same but are spelt differently. They are called homophones or sometimes homonyms.

Identify the pairs of homophones from the following clues.

Example: One word means a place for keeping aircraft; the other word means a shaped piece of wood, metal, etc. on which you can hang clothes.

Answer: Hangar/hanger.

- One word means simple; the other means an aircraft.
- One word means expected; the other word means condensed vapour.
- One word is nautical; the other is central to the body.
- One word means connections; the other is an animal.
- One word means an occasion; the other is a herb.
- One word means to hit; the other is a vegetable.
- One word means permitted; the other means audible.
- One word is a singer; the other is a sum of money.
- One word is an animal; the other is an undercover fighter.
- One word means kind; the other means searched for.
- One means excluded; the other is a poet.
- One word is a day; the other is a sweet.
- One word means pursued; the other means pure.
- One word means a woolly South American animal; the other means a Buddhist monk in Tibet or Mongolia.
- These are the names of two particular people; one is a macho man; the other is a poet.

Answers on page 27

Why is Milk white?

Those chalky-white mustaches that color our lips after chugging down a refreshing ice-cold glass of creamy milk is caused by the protein called Casein. Rich in calcium, Casein helps contribute to milk's white color. In addition, the cream that is found in milk contains white colored fat. The more cream in milk the more white it is.

Low and non-fat milk appear more grayish rather than white because they contain less cream. Another reason milk looks white to our naked eyes is because some objects do not absorb very much light. Rather than absorb light, these objects reflect light. For instance, red colored objects reflect only red light and absorb the other colors of light in the rainbow spectrum. The molecules that make up Casein and cream reflect light. That's why milk is white.

Did you know?

- Calcium and Vitamin D are the two ingredients of milk that make it such a healthy beverage. While calcium is a major nutrient for us that gives us strong bones and healthy teeth, Vitamin D is a nutrient that is needed by humans to produce healthy bones.
- In order to make 9 gallons of milk a day, a cow must drink 18 gallons of fresh, clean water (2 gallons of water for every gallon of milk).
- Doctors and nutritionists recommend that everyone should drink about 2 glasses of milk a day to stay healthy and prevent osteoporosis (the disease that causes the deterioration of our bones)
- Chocolate milk contains the same essential ingredients as white milk—calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B12, high quality protein, and magnesium. The only difference between white and chocolate milk is that chocolate milk contains about 60 more calories because of the sucrose and other nutrient sweeteners that are added to it.



Aberfoyle Activities Youth Group

Aberfoyle Youth Club entered into the 2008/2009 session with more support and enthusiasm than we have had for a long time. We now have among our numbers (in alphabetical order) Alistair Ferrie, Chairperson; Ricky Govan, Midas Bus driver; Richard Grosse, Midas Bus driver; Sharon Johnston, Administration Secretary; Campbell Mackenzie, Treasurer; Megan Scott, Young people's activities; Lynne Wallace, Senior Meeting Secretary; Marie Wardrope, Junior Meeting Secretary.

There are now also more people attending meetings at the Memorial Hall, with two meetings most Friday evenings. The Junior meetings (P6 – S1) run from 6.30 – 8pm, and the Senior meetings (S2 – S4) from 8 – 9.30pm.

In addition to the Youth Club meetings we also strive to organise other events and activities. Thanks to an idea from Fiona McEwan our members recently provided a car wash service at the 'Big Garage Open Day' in October; in November Lynne Wallace and Richard Grosse took Senior Group members to Stirling University for Trampoline instruction; and it is hoped that Youth Club members will help at the St Mary's Church sale at Dounans in December.

Further events are in the pipeline. Lynne Wallace has pending the Junior Group trampoline trip, Ricky Govan is looking into football tournament trips, and Sharon Johnston will shortly be asking members to register an interest in possible Panto and PGL trips, and a variety of workshops are planned. The committee is even considering a disco (as long as they get to dance) and would welcome assistance with provision of the music, if anyone does a bit of dj'ing.

Members are advised to check the public Notice Board beside the Co-op, for information of forthcoming events (or better still, make sure Sharon Johnston has your email address, and notice will be sent to you directly). We look forward to Youth Club continuing from strength to strength, and meantime would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.

Forth Inn Events Diary

December 2008

6th Dec: Gordon's Karaoke - No Theme just a great night! Gordon has been our karaoke guy for the last 4 Years, this will be his last karaoke at The Forth Inn to be held in The Gathering - Free of Charge

15th – 24th Dec: Christmas Menus
Festive Menus for both Lunch & Evening available – booking is recommended for the evenings

25th Dec: –CLOSED

Well except for an hour or so over lunch time
NO MEALS – BEER ONLY!

28th Dec: – Pub Quiz
Prize for wining team as always

31st Dec: – Hogmany Karaoke
£7.50 per Ticket - No Pay on the Door, Tickets are restricted in number its first come first served!

January 2009

1st January: CLOSED

18th January: Pub Quiz starts 9am

24th January: Karaoke in The Wallace Bar Fun start 9pm

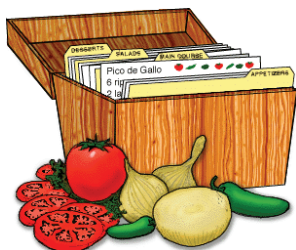
26th – 31st Jan: Mexican Food Week

Main Street, Aberfoyle FK8 3UQ
Tel: 01877 382 372
E-mail: Phil@ForthInn.com

Escalope of Turkey with Chestnut, Bacon and Mushroom Confit

INGREDIENTS:

Turkey Escalope
Button Mushrooms
Chestnuts
Shallots
Bacon (Smoked)
Thyme
Vegetable Oil
Salt & Pepper



METHOD:

In a hot pan add a little oil, seal the escalope for approx 2 mins on each side. Take out and place in a tray and transfer to the oven at 180 deg C. Slice the bacon into thin slices.
In the same pan as the turkey was in add the chopped shallots, mushrooms, chestnuts and bacon. Season with pepper.
Saute until the mushrooms and shallots are soft, stirring occasionally. Take out of the pan and place on the plate.
Add half a cup of red wine and a sprig of thyme to the pan and reduce by half. Place the turkey on top of the confit and pour over the juices.



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www.centralscotlandfire.gov.uk

APPLICATIONS FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE DAY COVER WOULD BE PARTICULARLY WELCOME

Tris, Phil & all the staff at The Forth Inn would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas & A Happy Healthy New Year



for more info; www.ForthInn.com

Over the Christmas Period we will have available both a Festive Lunch and Dinner Menu.

The Forth Inn will be open as usual over the Festive period except for Christmas day (12 - 3 Bar Only) and New Years Day (Closed!)

The Forth Inn, Main Street, Aberfoyle 01877 382 372

THANK YOU

The committee would like to thank
Trossachs Business Partnership for the
£50 donation to the Stathard News.

Malapropisms

A malapropism is the mistaken use of one word for another. It is named after Mrs Malaprop, a character in Sheridan's play *The Rivals* (1775), who was fond of using malapropos (i.e. inappropriate) statements like 'Illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory' (meaning 'obliterate') or 'My affluence over my niece is very small' (meaning 'influence'). Can you correct the mistakes in the italicized words in these sentences?

Example: *The muscles around the stomach are known as the abominable muscles.* **Answer:** Abdominal ('abominable' means 'detestable').

1. A prospectus is someone who searches for gold.
2. After a long air flight, it is reassuring to get your feet back onto terracotta.
3. I couldn't change his decision: it was a Fiat accompli.
4. I can assert the truth of it, without fear of contraception.
5. You can darken your eyelids with cascara.
6. If you swallow poison, you should take an anecdote.
7. I was prostate with grief.
8. She ate with a veracious appetite.
9. The garden was brightened by the red flowers of saliva.
10. A triangle with all its sides equal is called an equatorial triangle.
11. He was on the horns of an enema.
12. The doctor had told him he had very close veins.

Russian Dolls

These puzzles are like 'Only Connect' but they involve putting one word inside another word to make a third word. As with Russian dolls, you find one doll inside another doll.

Example: *Put the woman into a young fox or lion to make an angel.*
Answer: *Put the word her inside the word cub and you get c-her-ub, that is cherub.*

1. Put an insect into tarts to make underwear.
2. Put a word for 'always' inside an animal to get excited.
3. Put a word for 'representing' inside an insect to make a word meaning 'earlier'.
4. Put a word for 'exists' into your artistic inspiration to make a word meaning 'ill-treat'.
5. Put the sixteenth letter of the Greek alphabet inside the residue of burning to make a word meaning 'like a monkey'.
6. Put a condiment inside a word for 'each' to make a collection of psalms.
7. Put a heavenly being into a game to make a word for eternal.
8. Put a word meaning 'moved quickly' inside a French house to make a tough stone.
9. Put a word for 'on' inside a dog to make a line on a map.
10. Put human males into a doctrine to make a block of flats.
11. Put a silicate mineral inside a word for 'talented' to make a word meaning 'friendly'.
12. Put 'to rise' into a peel to make gliding on a wide parachute.
13. Put a large vase into a gratuity to make a vegetable.
14. Put a conjunction inside a male admirer to make a headband.
15. Put a negative inside a number to make a projecting piece of wood.
16. Put a word meaning 'insert' into access to make artistry.
17. Put a word meaning 'perform' into miraculous food to get the Virgin Mary.
18. Put a song inside a fishy man to make a ship conveying merchandise.
19. Put a coarse word into chronic alcoholism to make dry periods.
20. Put a word for vomit into an evangelist to make one sign of pregnancy.

Why does hair turn gray?

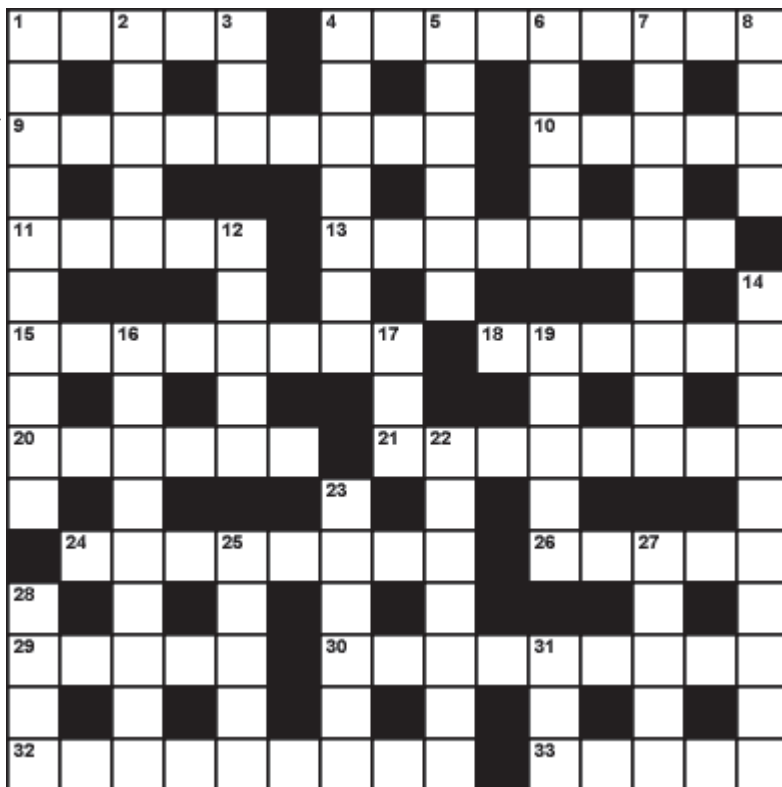
Hair goes gray because pigment cells in the hair base at the roots of the hair stop producing melanin. It doesn't matter if you are fair-haired or dark-haired you have the same chances of getting gray hair. However, it is more noticeable in darker haired people. Graying of the hair generally starts at the age of around 30 for males and 35 for females however since the onset of this phenomena varies greatly from person to person, age is not the most accurate indicator. The graying of hair appears to be genetically determined but the connection isn't at all clear. So for now, your hair turning gray is just one of those mysteries of science that we have yet to solve. But salt and pepper hair always did look distinguished.

Did you know?

Poliosis is the graying of the hair. It comes from polios, the Greek word for "gray."

LINES TO MAKE YOU SMILE

1. My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God and I didn't.
2. I don't suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.
3. Some people are alive only because it's illegal to kill them.
4. I used to have a handle on life, but it broke
5. Don't take life too seriously; No one gets out alive.
6. You're just jealous because the voices only talk to me.
7. Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder.
8. Earth is the insane asylum for the universe.
9. I'm not a complete idiot -- Some parts are just missing.
10. Out of my mind. Back in five minutes.



Across

- 1 Deduce (5)
- 4 Persistently harass (9)
- 9 Very probably (9)
- 10 Unusually energetic (5)
- 11 Reasoning (5)
- 13 Unreal (8)
- 15 Compellingly attractive quality (8)
- 18 Notify (6)
- 20 Platitude (6)
- 21 Abstaining from alcohol (8)
- 24 Promontory (8)
- 26 The same thing again (5)
- 29 Topic (5)
- 30 Cocktail of tequila and citrus fruit juice (9)
- 32 Sulkiness (9)
- 33 Research deeply (5)

Down

- 1 Tactless (10)
- 2 Thrown (5)
- 3 Informer (3)
- 4 Amount regularly paid for insurance policy (7)
- 5 Outcome (6)
- 6 Characteristic spirit of a culture (5)
- 7 Highest (9)
- 8 Deserve (4)
- 12 Plagiarizes (5)
- 14 Make better (10)
- 16 Fun (9)
- 17 Skill (3)
- 19 Well known (5)
- 22 Approve (7)
- 23 Opera by Bizet (6)
- 25 Reside (5)
- 27 Test (5)
- 28 Pace (4)
- 31 Annex (3)

	4	6				5		8
3			9				6	4
	5			4				
4			8	1			5	
	9			6	2			1
				3			1	
9	1				6			5
2		8				6	3	

Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Parish Church

From the Manse ...

One of the best things about my job at Christmas is watching the Nativity Plays. I just love seeing the children sparkle in their angel costumes, or dressed as shepherds in dressing gowns and tea-towels. But what makes a Nativity Play truly magnificent, is when something goes wrong. Perhaps one of the 'sheep' develops a mind of independent turn and will not stay in place at the manger. Or King Herod suddenly abandons his kingly demeanour to wave to Granny watching proudly in the audience.

I heard of one nativity play which didn't go at all to plan. Mary and Joseph arrived at the Bethlehem inn. The innkeeper came to the door and instead of saying, "No room, sorry," smiled and said, "Of course I have a room for you. Which one would you like?"

I don't know where I read it, but this one has also always stuck in my mind. A nine-year old boy called George was a great supporter of the underdog. He had learning difficulties, and worked very hard in his part as innkeeper. Joseph knocked on the inn door. George, the inn keeper, flung it wide open, saying, "What do you want?"

"A room," said Joseph. "You see my wife Mary is expecting a baby."

"Sorry, no room here," said the innkeeper. "Try next door."

"Please," said Joseph, sadly, as he had been taught.

A tear came into George's eye. He looked at Mary and Joseph. "You can have my room, if you like."

Out of the mouths of babes ...and it reminds me of this anonymous poem.

Blessed art thou,
O Christmas Christ,
That thy cradle was so low
That shepherds,
Poorest and simplest of earthly folk,
Could yet kneel beside it,
And look level-eyed into the face of God.

Have a wonderful, deeply peaceful Christmas,

Linda

Services:

Sunday, 7th December – Communion – 11.30am

Friday, 19th December - School Service (am - time still to be fixed - Maxine currently off sick)

Sunday, 21st December - Family Service, to include the gift giving, which is the 'shoe box appeal' for Blythswood Care - 11.15am

Sunday, 21st December - Joint Carol Service with St Mary's to be held at the Parish Church at 3pm

Christmas Eve - Watchnight Service - 11.30pm - Aberfoyle Parish Church

Christmas Day - Joint service with the Port of Menteith - 10.30am - Aberfoyle Parish Church

The first of the Six Churches Together for Advent is being held at Aberfoyle on Sunday, 30th November at 7pm

7th December - Gartmore

14th December - Port of Menteith

21st December - Kippen

all starting at 7pm.



Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Guild

Our Christmas meeting will be held on Monday, 15th Dec. at 2pm in Church House, when we will celebrate Christmas in the traditional way with carols and readings.

On 19th Jan. we hope to have a Scots Afternoon with some toe-tapping music and Scots songs enjoyed by everyone.

The February meeting is now on Monday 23rd – please note the change of date. At this meeting Quint Slem will speak about the Lake of Menteith, a topic which should be of interest to men as well as ladies. So come along, gentlemen; you will be made very welcome.

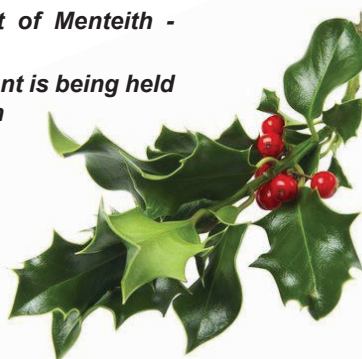
Jumble Sale

"Have yourself a merry Christmas clearout", or perhaps "Jingle bells, clear some shelves..." Well this is your chance to declutter as St Mary's Church, Aberfoyle, is having a jumble sale. The Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday December the 6th from 10.30am up at Dounans Camp. The sale hopes to raise funds for the renovation of the church. The work has already started and will include a complete service of the glorious organ, repairs to the one of a kind slate roof and maintenance of the floor and porch.

But we need your help – or more precisely your good quality jumble. We'll cart off your old clothes, sell your unwanted shoes, gamble away your golf clubs, flog your furniture, barter your books, vend your valuables, trade your trinkets and exchange your electricals. You can drop your jumble off anytime at St Mary's vicarage (next to the garage) or up at Dounans Camp (up the lane next to The Medical Centre). If you need help with your items call Hannah to arrange a pick up.

The Fair will also have a home baking stall for you to stock up on tasty treats and a tombola full of quality items ideal for that last minute present. A Christmas decorations stall will be on hand to help you jazz up your home and we hope to have a stall of hand made fair-trade international crafts and foods from Traidcraft.

Come along and find a bargain – there is even a karaoke machine worth £80 up for grabs. If you would like to be involved in the Fair in any way please ring Hannah to discuss (01877 389314).



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St Mary's Episcopal Church

Leonardo da Vinci was born in April 1452 near the town of Vinci in Tuscany, the son of humble parentage. He had no formal education, but was nevertheless blessed with a remarkably fertile mind. Over the next 67 years da Vinci was to apply this mind in many directions. There follow a few examples of his genius. Da Vinci noticed soldiers struggling with heavy and hopelessly inaccurate weapons of war on the fields of battle. He improved the accuracy of armaments by inventing a new design of barrel, and for good measure had it mounted on wheels. He was appalled by the lack of protection afforded to soldiers from gunfire in battle. Thus he devised an armoured vehicle to shelter troops, propelled by eight men inside turning cranks; this was the forerunner of the tank. Away from the battlefield he designed a lens to harness light. Had he known a way of preserving the images so created, he would have doubtless invented photography. Turning his mind to water, he made the first diving bell, and drew plans of the first submarine. Turning his attention aloft, he carried out experiments to create lighter than air machines. Several pilots in his employ perished in the course of these experiments: in his sorrow, da Vinci invented the parachute.

To maintain his income, da Vinci painted. In the fifteenth century, great wealth lay within the Church. Religious leaders would commission paintings depicting well-known events in Christian history by way of self-advertisement. This explains how da Vinci's painting 'The Adoration of the Magi' came to be commissioned. But da Vinci as we know was a busy man. This commission was laid aside for periods whilst other matters arrested the artist's attention. Some experts say the canvas had to be taken to the studio of a contemporary, Filippino Lippi, to be completed.

But no matter: the work is quite beautiful. Try and see it reproduced on a Christmas card on your mantelpiece this Christmas. It depicts the stable at Bethlehem as little more than a makeshift shelter of twigs. Much that the earth can offer God is of the barest minimum. The centre character is Mary. She is present because her heart was pure. 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God': what of ourselves though? Joseph is at her side but may not have been but for his unflinching loyalty and devotion to Mary. Would we be there in the same circumstances? The Wise Men clothed in their finery were there because of a desire to seek the Divine. Do we share their curiosity and are we prepared to go out of our way to find God? The shepherds are there distinguished by their rough clothing. They were ordinary men undertaking an ordinary job. Mistakenly it is believed that knowledge of God's purpose is just for the clever: the shepherds remind the world otherwise. Finally the artist includes a variety of unknown onlookers. Was one of them the innkeeper? He was there because he felt sorry for someone in difficulty and tried to do something to help. It is a reminder to the Church in particular that feeling sorry is never quite enough. We have always to do our best to put concern into action, however inadequate that action may seem.

Come and join us at St Mary's at 16.00 on Sunday 21st December when this story of the nativity will be remembered in words and music as well. A Happy Christmas to you all.

Richard Grosse, Rector

Services at St Mary's Christmas 2008

Sunday 21st December; 16.00 Nine lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve; 23.30 Midnight Mass

Christmas Day; 8.00 Holy Communion at St Anthony Balfron

11.15 Family Communion St Mary's Aberfoyle



St Mary's Renovation Project



After 115 years service as the Episcopalian Church serving the local communities of Strathendrick and the Trossachs, St Mary's is at last undergoing its first major renovation project. Three years since a full survey identified the need for essential fabric repairs, contractors arrived on site in October and for the next 5 months the building will be under scaffolding.

Over this period, the fine Aberfoyle slate roof will be overhauled, all defective stonework and harling replaced, woodwork repainted, the porch stabilised, under floor ventilation improved, the Vestry room re-organised, and the Church provided with improved disabled access, modern toilet facilities and visitor interpretation. Our fine Binns / Willis pipe organ will also be fully restored to concert standard. The total cost of the project is £300,000 and although we have received generous grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other sources, it has been the magnificent response from members of St Mary's and others to our Renovation Appeal that has made it possible to go ahead.

The slate quarry workers in Aberfoyle who first built St Mary's as their place of worship have bequeathed to us a beautiful and much loved building, appreciated by a growing number of visitors. Our aim is to pass on this legacy and make the Church fit for another century's service to the Christian community.

We still need to raise a final £10,000 to reach our Appeal target and contributions from anyone in the local area will be very welcome. Copies of our Appeal leaflet can be picked up in the Church, which will remain open throughout the coming months. All profits from the forthcoming Christmas Fayre at Dounans will go to the Appeal, so do please support this event as generously as you can.

Nick Cooke

Treasurer to St Mary's Vestry

It was only yesterday.....

Picture a lovely summers day, well yes I know hard to do given the last couple of summers, but we did have a few sunny days. Anyway there I am, with a little time on my hands, children have all flown the coup and my brain has some space to think and I have time to look around me. I noticed that the berries and fruits seem plentiful this year, probably because of all the rain. I know, my brain says, how about making some lovely jams and jellies, you've done some good ones in the past. Maybe even bottle some of the apples. So I trundle up to the loft and extract a large cardboard box where my old kilner jars are stored. It felt good to get them out and I found my old large jam pan. Then off I go to pick the fruit. Apples were no problem of course but oh those blackberries and the rosehips. I forgot how painful that can be. Why are all the best berries right in the heart of the thorns! And why are the thorns so big! Never mind I was enjoying the summer sun, the taste of the berries and generally having a real feel good moment.

Later back in the kitchen I pop the fruit in the pan and start to boil, or at least I should be boiling. I completely forgot that when I did this before I had a gas cooker. My modern hob could hardly raise the large pan to steam. Now as every good cook that makes jam knows it really needs to boil not simmer otherwise you don't have a hope of jam – just a runny liquid. Several hours of

trying and not a hope! So next day having been to town to buy pectin I add it to the mix and re-boil with my pressure cooker pan. Thankfully that looked more successful but I decided it should be jelly not jam so out comes the newly purchased straining cloth. Straining is slow so I get a spoon to help squeeze it through – bad move again as modern straining bag isn't a patch to the old muslin cloth I used to have! Never mind I think as I clean up the mess all over the work top, I'm getting there. I have some jam jars but a few of the smaller kilner ones would be good so I go for the cardboard box. And then in, that moment, all that feel good euphoria is

gone. Unwrapping the kilner jars from the paper protecting them, it was only yesterday, oh yes, oh no! The newspaper was dated January 1987, three months before my son was born. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Surely not, but oh yes it was. What have I been doing for 21 years? Obviously not bottling or making jam! I could have sworn I made some just a few years ago. In the words of a famous actor "I just don't believe it". Where had my

life gone and what have I been doing for 21 years? Maybe that is normal for women, wives and mothers? Or is it modern life? Another attempt at not progressing into a grumpy old woman was slowly going down the pan!

To make it worse I actually started to read those papers and what did I find? The economy in crisis, local companies laying off employees, complaints about fuel costs, mortgages, government policy and lack of money to repair roads. So nothing is new it seems we have just gone round in a big circle. How sad, gone was the feel good moment, back to reality with a

thud. What did I learn from all this. I really haven't a clue except I think I must have failed somewhere, losing 21 years without

doing all the things I wanted to do. Remember those lists you make "must do by the age of 30, 40, etc., I think I need to rewrite the one at 40

to 60! What happened to the jelly well actually it turned out quite nice in the end, but what an effort, I was exhausted and the kitchen was a real mess. Will I put it in for 1st prize in the WRI competition – I think I need more practice – about another 20 years should do it!

Dese Dee



ABERFOYLE MEMORIAL HALL

The committee are pleased to announce the following classes have recently started in the hall so why not keep fit while supporting your local amenity.

Pilates

Mondays 7 - 8.15 pm

Step'n'Tone

Mondays 8.15 - 9.15 pm

Thursdays 10 - 11am

Contact Amanda Reid 07811633968



Shotokan Karate

Thursdays

7pm (kids from 8 yrs)

8pm (adults)

Contact Julie Glen 382296

or Jackie Bell 382142



The usual clubs and classes listed below are also still running and the hall is available for meetings, parties and other events (to book call Sandra Jardine 382673)



Toddlers

Wednesday Mornings

Contact Julie Glen 382296

Youth Club

Friday Evenings

Contact Marie 382568

Scottish Country Dancing

Wednesday Evenings

Contact A Ralston 382847



Tap, Ballet & Jazz Classes

Tuesdays from 3.30pm

Contact Carla Duggan 07815146462



WRI (Womens Rural Institute)

Contact Margaret Brown 382463

The Committee would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Stirling to appoint Makar

The search is on to appoint a Maker (poet) for the Stirling area. Stirling Council is seeking to appoint a Makar who will promote poetry throughout the area for the next three years. The Council, spearheaded by the Provost of Stirling Fergus Wood, is looking to set up a nominations panel made up of various members from local writing and literary groups. The panel will consider local poets, or poets with a strong connection to the Stirling area, who might be suitable for the appointment. As well as promoting poetry generally throughout the area, the Makar will compose one poem annually about the area and select one poem a month for publication. Provost Fergus Wood said: "This is a magnificent opportunity for Stirling to promote its tremendous literary heritage in the 21st Century. I look forward to working with the nominations panel and the Makar on making sure that the opportunities for raising awareness of poetry are maximised throughout the whole Stirling area."

Further information can be obtained from Jean Houston on 01786 443380 or houstonj2@stirling.gov.uk

Historically, Stirling was the favoured court of the Stewart Kings, and the Makars were very much associated with the patronage and place of the court.

Stirling has a rich and glorious literary tradition, which flourishes to this day with the many contemporary writers and poets who live in the area. The Stirling Literary Society is also one of the best and busiest societies of its kind in Scotland.

The Legs Of Cherie Lunghi

Boab and Rab are standing in the pub, leaning on the bar side by side, staring straight ahead at the drinks gantry, pints in their hands.

'You know,' says Boab, 'It was a shame about that Cherie Lunghi.'

'What are you on about?'

'You mean you don't watch it?'

'What?'

'Thingummy – Strictly Come Dancing.'

'Good Lord, no. Why, do you?'

'No, no, heavens, no. But the wife does.'

'So?'

'Well, you know, she sometimes calls me through to see it.'

'Oh? and you go?'

'She calls out, she shouts through that there's a nice pair of legs I might like to see.'

'You're into legs?'

'I confess a liking for ladies' legs, yes.'

'Don't you think you're a bit old for that sort of stuff?'

'A man can look – and admire. Anyway, Miss Lunghi is no spring chicken herself but she does have a lovely pair of legs. And she can dance, too.'

'You're taken with her legs.'

'Oh, yes, they go on for ever.'

'You appreciate female legs?'

'Yes, indeed. Not much time for my own, I have to say. Like pipecleaners, they are, tucked into my boots.'

'I'll take your word for that.'

'True, though. My legs are not great but I'm attached to them, and they in turn support me.'

'Fair observation.'

'You could say it is natural symbioses.'

'I knew you'd say that.'

'True, though, we get along, make great strides together.'

'They do say puns are the lowest form of humour.'

'I thought that was sarcasm?'

'I was being sarcastic.'

A pause while they supped their beers, still gazing at the gantry.

'She lost, you know.' Said Boab.

'What? Her legs?'

No, no, the competition.

But Malcolm Sargeant got through.'

'John.'

'What?'

'Never mind. So she's out?'

'Alas, yes. I propose a toast.'

'Oh, good. I love toasts.'

'Raise your glasses to – The Long Legs Of Lunghi!'

'And to alliteration, wherever you may find it.'

'Eh, right. Well, cheers.'



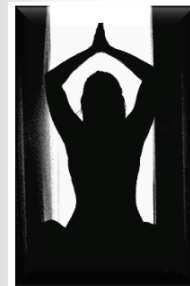
Chill Out

Stuart & Brenda's wee place at
David Marshall Lodge, Aberfoyle

tel: 01877 389302

email: chill@chilloutscotland.com

www.chilloutscotland.com



The media is full of the economic-downturn doom and gloom of higher consumer prices, the end of virtually free money and a return to austerity. Strangely something that could prove to be of benefit to society as a whole as we are forced to move away from idle consumerism to more sustainable ways to enjoy life.

A lot of us are now revaluating not only our mortgages but also our lives. This leads to questioning beliefs, values and behaviours leaving some of us feeling scared and depressed as we face a different and uncertain future. But there is an alternative to fear and uncertainty. The reason I say this is that, at the bottom line of experience, is a choice between fear (which we all have at some level) and love (which we are all capable of at some level). What holds us back from positive change is the fear and what propels us into a positive future is love. It may be love of this and that, or just the love of the sheer fun of being. I personally aim for the fun of being with positive expectations for the future.

Here endeth the sermon... we will talk more about this in January – in the meantime have a WONDERFUL Christmas, a happy New Year and endless strength and courage for 2009!

We will be closing ChillOut for January, and heading to The Gambia in West Africa. Besides getting some sunshine, we are hoping to see the Ospreys, and planning to set up a project of some sort when we are there. We will let you know in the February edition if we were successful and tell you all about our adventures.

Our weekend workshop on 25 & 26 October with Salvatore Zambito (author of *The Unadorned Thread of Yoga: The Yoga-Sûtra of Patañjali* in English) and Swami Saradananda (meditation and Chakra meditation) was a great success (in-between the floods!) and well worth it. Swamiji explained the chakras really well, many who attended mentioned they had studied the chakras before but never had they really made sense.

Salvatore blew us away with really interesting ideas and concepts, not only on yoga, but on life in general. We will be looking at inviting him back again, and I can really recommend the time spent with him, whether you are into yoga or not!



The last class of the year will be on Friday 19th December, followed by our annual Christmas Party, where we all bring a wee bite to share, with mulled wine on tap! Even if you don't come to yoga but are curious, you are welcome to join us at the party at 11.15 – 1-ish on the Friday, when I will be giving a sneak preview of the yoga plans for 2009 – please

let me know if you are coming to join us!

Regular classes start up again in the first week of March 2009.

Regular drop-in Yoga classes

Open to all!

Tuesdays 9.30-11am

Fridays 9.30 – 11am

Saturdays 10am – 11am

(not every week, please check dates)

Sundays 9.30-11am

(not every week, please check dates)

The William Smith Seat

A few miles west of the Perthshire village of Aberfoyle, where the road laps the very edge of Loch Ard, a wayside seat nestles quietly among silver birches. The path leading to it is almost completely overgrown. Ivy clings to the stonework and the grass around is almost knee-deep. The seat has been there for over 70 years and, though the plaque has been vandalised with graffiti, it is still legible and reads simply To William Smith A Member of The Orpheous Choir and a Distinguished Singer of his Country's Songs.

Picture in your mind a murky day. A flotilla of small boats quietly rippling the tranquil waters of Loch Ard, Ben Lomond's peak shrouded in mist and the sweet harmonious strains of "By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill" echoing across the hillside.

This was the scene all those years ago when over a thousand people gathered to pay tribute to and honour a man whom they loved and admired. The man was William Smith. The singers were members of the prestigious Glasgow Orpheous Choir. Founded in 1901, the Choir earned a worldwide reputation over the course of its 50 years of existence. Prospering under the leadership of Sir Hugh Robertson (1874-1952) it made many celebrated recordings before disbanding in 1951. It reformed later as the Glasgow Phoenix Choir.

Performing the unveiling ceremony was Britain's first Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald. I was six years of age at the time and was with my father and elder brother in one of the small boats on the loch. My mother,

who had a phobia about water and had opted to stay on dry land, was fortunate enough to obtain Ramsay MacDonald's autograph.

From time to time, over the years, and especially when visiting my birthplace of Aberfoyle, I wondered just who William Smith was. Recently, I was fortunate to discover his son, retired Doctor George Smith; a youthful eighty-something-year-old who lives with his wife Dorothy in Larbert. I spent two very pleasant mornings in the company of George and Dorothy and over numerous cup of coffee, learned something of the life of William Smith.

George told me of his father's love of the countryside, especially Aberfoyle and its surrounding area. Whether tramping the hills or fishing on Loch Ard, William Smith was at one with Nature here in this peaceful part of Perthshire.

I gathered that William Smith was a man of compassion and understanding with a strong sense of devotion to whatever cause he believed in. He had been a member of the Orpheous Choir for ten years. It was written of him in The Lute (a publication of the Choir), "He was at the beck and call of everyone; singing, conducting, lecturing, assisting at elections, running about in his car showing friends the beauties of the countryside, laughing, joking, arguing, night or day, there was Willie wherever help was needed."

His friendship with Ramsay MacDonald came about through his involvement with the Labour Party. He was to have been on the platform at a Party meeting in St. Andrews Hall, Glasgow on the 15th May 1929. Sadly, he died the previous day.

Born in Old Cumnock on the 25th November 1878, he was the third child in a family of six. His father, also William, was a stonemason. His mother, Agnes Gibb, came from Catrine in Ayrshire.

On leaving school at 17, he became a junior clerk with the Glasgow South Western Railway. Later he moved to Sheffield to work for one of the early mail order firms. Here he met and married Sarah Ellen Baker in February 1909. Having gained experience in the clothing trade he came to Falkirk where he took over a Ladies and Children's Outfitters business.

Being one of the few people to own a car in those days, he had easy access to the countryside and, whenever time presented itself, he was off out to the village of Aberfoyle and Loch Ard. He made many friends in the area and was always willing and ready to sing at whatever gathering was taking place. When the village got its own telephone exchange in 1928, he was guest of honour and sang at the ceremony. The same year he sang with the Orpheous Choir for King George V, Queen Mary and the Duke and Duchess of York at Balmoral.

Doctor Smith told me that the stonework of the seat, designed by a Mr. Watson, is symbolic in style and depicts the cutting off of life. William Smith died in his prime. He was 50 years of age.

George bears a striking resemblance to his late father and has inherited much of his father's talents and attributes. I am grateful to him for helping me to get to know William Smith.

Agnes Ford



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11am – 4pm
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Trossachs Trails

National Park Senior Ranger, Craig Walker explores walking routes, throughout the Trossachs and Breadalbane area: looking at access, discovering wildlife and unveiling where to find those spectacular views.

Please tell somebody where you are heading for, take ample food, good quality clothing and sturdy boots. But most of all please take time to enjoy the walks for as John Muir said, "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks".

Ben Venue from Ledard Farm

Distance: 6 miles return

Time: 5 hours generous

Park in layby opposite Ledard Farm, (no overnight parking). Take a moment to soak in the freshness sweeping in from nearby Loch Ard and, if you have time, it is well worth a stroll down to the loch side to relax before beginning the walk. Please respect livestock and any anglers who may be around the banks, contemplating the one that got away.

Heading north there is a small section of access track to Ledard Farm, please keep dogs on leads during this section and clear any mess they may leave behind; the rest of the walk is great for dogs although they should be kept under call and away from livestock. A few hundred metres

along the track head through the self closing deer gate and over the small bridge over the fast flow of the Ledard Burn. This little burn has super deep pools and can run as clear as day; see if you can catch a glimpse of any wily trout or hatching fly life. I also once caught the blue flash of a Kingfisher as I crossed. From here the path leads up into the mixed deciduous forest that can be found around the Lochs throughout the area. Listen for the call of Buzzards and 'tink tink' of Long Tailed Tits as you climb. There is a small section of boardwalk and a deer sized kissing gate. About halfway through the forest take care to take the path marked by a small post and arrow for missing this will lead you through very boggy scrubby woods, frustratingly back to the dryer path that was overlooked.

The deciduous wood gives way to conifer plantation and at around one mile the path breaks on to the open hillside; a little further on there is a small river crossing and larger style to negotiate. This is a unique vantage point to turn and look down upon the Loch Ard Forest in all its moody glory, framed by hillside. Every time this view astounds and if you haven't the time or notion to climb the full mountain, a half hour stomp to this point is truly fulfilling.

From here the path winds along next to the Burn until bearing east along a small glen between



Creag a' Bhealaich and Beinn Bhreac. Keep an eye on the track as it fades and returns through the rushes that grow along the shelter damp areas. Through the glen you will see Loch Katrine, source of water for Glasgow and home of the SS Sir Walter Scott. The isolation and true mountain peace become apparent whilst traversing the north western slope, away from the prevailing wind and with limited sunshine hours the air is truly eerie here, right in the heart of Macgregor territory. Next the route brings you to a peat bog, so tread carefully as there is evidence of many an expensive boot becoming lodged a metre down in the peat. I tend to take the lower ride and look for patches with good vegetation, however it is rare to come through without at least one half leg

covered. It is a quick steep climb from here to the summit (727 metres above sea level) through some crags and over two scramble areas. Now is the time to soak up the atmosphere - the wisps of clouds and sparkle in the schist seem poetic.

There may be ice here at any time of year but be especially prepared during winter and be aware of rocky outcrops; some drop off fairly steeply. Once at the summit the view is outstanding (of course there is a chance that it may be grey clouds). You can look down directly on to the islands of Loch Katrine. Loch Achray and Loch Venachar stretch away to Callander in the East and Southerly there is the Loch Ard forest with the Kilpatrick Hills and Campsie Fells visible on a clear day. Keep an eye for Snow Buntings, Ptarmigan, Black and Red Grouse and even Eagles (both Golden and Sea). Ospreys are common on the lochs during the summer and you may even spot a Mountain Ringlet butterfly in August (please tell me if you do). Please access land responsibly and I hope you find this walk enlightening.

Craig Walker, Senior Ranger
Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority,
Trossachs Discovery Centre, Aberfoyle
01389 722113
craig.walker@lochlomond-trossachs.org

Celebrate Safely

Protect your home from fire



Decorative Lights

- Check the maximum amps that can be handled by the fuse in the plug.
- If the bulbs blow, replace them.
- Turn decorative lights off at night and when you go out.
- Don't let bulbs touch anything that can burn easily, like papers or fabric.



Candles

- Make sure candles are in a secure holder on a heat-resistant surface.
- Don't leave them unattended.
- Keep them away from anything that can catch fire like Christmas tree, decorations, curtains and so on.
- Put them out completely at night.



Decorations

- Keep decorations and greeting cards away from fireplaces, candles, heaters and lights.

Electric Blankets

- Every year in Britain 20 people die and 250 are injured because of electric blanket fires.
- Always follow the manufacturer's care instructions.
- Check the blanket, flex and plug regularly for damage and if in doubt discontinue use.
- Never leave an electric blanket switched on whilst you are in bed unless it is marked 'suitable for all night use'.
- Under blankets should be tied securely to the bed.
- New blankets should be BEAB approved or marked BS EN 60907 and preferably be fitted with an overheat protection safety system.



Smoking

- Never leave a lit cigarette unattended.
- Make sure all cigarettes are put out in an ashtray properly.
- Never smoke in bed. It's too easy to drop off to sleep.



Remember – it's easy to be careless when you are tired or if you have been drinking.

Smoke alarms save lives!

Fit one on every floor of your home and test the batteries regularly.

If there's a fire....
Get out – Stay out
Dial 999!

Malapropisms: Answers

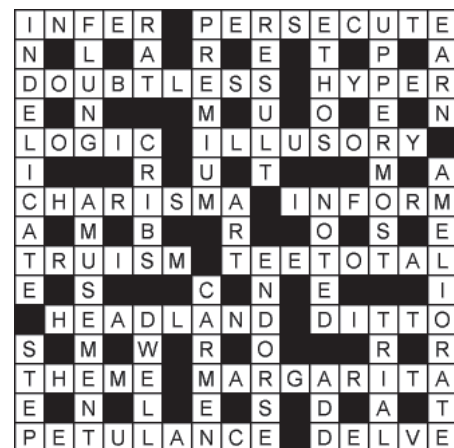
1. prospector (a prospectus is a brochure advertising a school, enterprise, Etc.).
2. terra firma (terra firma means solid ground or dry land; terracotta is unglazed earthenware).
3. Fait accompli (a fait accompli is something that has been done and cannot be altered; a Fiat is a make of car).
4. contradiction (contradiction means denying the truth of something; contraception is the intentional prevention of pregnancy).
5. mascara (mascara is make-up used particularly to darken the eyelashes; cascara is a laxative).
6. antidote (an antidote is a medicine that counteracts a poison; an anecdote is a short account or story).
7. prostrate (prostrate means lying down; prostate is a gland in male bodies).
8. voracious (voracious means greedy or ravenous; veracious means truthful).
9. salvia (salvias are scarlet flowers; saliva is a liquid secreted in the mouth).
10. equilateral (equilateral means having all sides equal; equatorial means of or near the equator).
11. dilemma (someone on the horns of a dilemma is faced with equally unattractive alternatives; an enema is an injection into the rectum).
12. varicose veins (varicose veins are not necessarily close together: they are swollen).

Russian Dolls: Answers

1. ant + pies = panties.
2. ever + fish = feverish.
3. for + bee = before.
4. is + muse = misuse.
5. pi + ash = apish.
6. salt + per = psalter.
7. angel + chess = changeless.
8. ran + gite = granite.
9. onto + cur = contour.
10. men + tenet = tenement.
11. mica + able = amicable.
12. ascend + paring = parascending.
13. urn + tip = turnip.
14. and + beau = bandeau.
15. no + ten = tenon.
16. interline + pass = painterliness.
17. do + manna = Madonna.
18. chant + merman = merchantman.
19. rough + DTs = droughts.
20. retch + St Mark = stretch mark.

Homophones: Answers

1. plain/plane.
2. due/dew.
3. naval/navel.
4. links/lynx.
5. time/thyme.
6. beat/beet.
7. allowed/aloud.
8. tenor/tenner.
9. gorilla/guerrilla.
10. sort/sought.
11. barred/bard.
12. Sunday/sundae.
13. chased/chaste.
14. llama/lama.
15. Rambo/Rimbaud.



Not here.....but near!

Premiere of Hard Hitting Drama for young people.

A sparkling toast to today's young film makers with a Laser light show.

Its not everyday that Balforn is the centre of attention of the silver screen, nor have there been many red carpet occasions. But as befitting a Hollywood first night, Tuxedos and evening gowns will be turned out to a backdrop of popping Champagne corks at this film premier as young stars enter for the first screening of this latest B.Begg Media film by Michael Ferns.

The co-op membership are providing the funding for a Laser light show to bring even more Illumination to this event, the successful application for the money was applied for by Third Age Group Strathendrick. This is to promote an event where all ages get together.

This Drama is set to make an impact on audience members with straight talking truths of youth culture today in Britain. It delves into the lives of three very different young people - West, the 'troubled and sensitive' young man, Jasmine, the caring middle class girl and Kieran, the 'obsessive bully.'

Written in the language of young people, this hard-hitting piece of drama gets to grips with the pressures faced by young people today. The 17 year old director Michael Frens is not afraid to shock or depict disturbing scenes relating to issues relevant to today's youth - bullying, peer pressures, parental expectations, self harm, the danger of carrying knives, and obsession. What has emerged is a piece of work that is powerful, lively and thought provoking.

This 30 minute film will strike a chord with young people, their parents and teachers and indeed anyone who remembers that awful, exhilarating period - adolescence.

Make sure of your ticket. Suitable for audiences 15+

Don't miss the premier of this Michael Ferns Film. 'When I Grow Up' at Balforn Campus on Friday 12th December at 7pm.

Tickets £5 from joanmacp@aol.com and Fresh and Frozen Fruit shop in Balforn.

Third Age Group Strathendrick

There are still spaces on the Twixmas trip to Grantown on Spey from 27-30th December.

CFSLA Payroll Lottery

Over £4000 in donations of equipment and cash was awarded by the CFSLA Payroll Lottery committee at its last meeting. Among the organisations who will receive funds to buy new equipment are ;

Alva Swifts Youth FC, Ineos Star, Gairdoch United, 7th Stirlingshire Scout Group, 2nd Torwood Scouts, Clackmannanshire Guide Association, St Ninians Playgroup, Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

The equipment ranges from footballs to PC's

Fundraising by employees and ex employees of Clackmannanshire, Falkirk & Stirling council's, Police, Fire & Assessors services was also supported with additional donations to Stirling Carers, British Red Cross & CHAS.

Application form for staff support, equipment requests from charities and community groups and application to join the lottery (with monthly prizes of £2000) are available from lottery_russell@hotmail.com.

The Lottery committee will probably meet late November or early December for one more meeting this year.

Applications should be submitted a.s.a.p. as first meeting in 2009 will be in February

Art, Whisky & Gifts Prove The Right Blend for New Drymen Gallery

Good taste will soon be a word synonymous with the village of Drymen, by Loch Lomond - and for a combination of reasons.

Ealain Gallery, already a respected name in the Scottish art business, has put down roots in the village's main street, finding a permanent home after two years on the road promoting and exhibiting contemporary Scottish art across the country.

Having opened to the public on Saturday, 15th November and with a stellar line up of artists poised to exhibit this Christmas including Joe Hendry, Mark Holden, Donald MacDonald, Steve Johnston, Dot Walker, Iona Crawford, Ricky Wiatrek, Ritchie Collins and others, the gallery looks set to draw the crowds this festive period.

Not content with providing a feast for the eyes in the form of the established Scottish artists and emerging talent that they plan to showcase, June and Cameron McCann, will, from January 2009, add a whisky gallery, offering something to whet the palette of enthusiasts.

The gallery will hold regular whisky tasting and master classes, bringing experts from the industry to pass on their knowledge and enthusiasm with whisky selected from their own range.

June McCann explains: "With these fabulous roomy premises, it seemed a natural progression to add another dimension to the business. And in what better form than whisky? Ealain Gallery will hold up and celebrate two of Scotland's finest achievements. We have a tradition of talented Scottish artists - and our whisky is held in high esteem the world over. Why not allow customers direct access to the two under one roof?

Being located in such close proximity to Loch Lomond and in the heart of the National Park, the business is ideally placed. With tourists flocking to the location throughout the summer season and with Glasgow and Stirling a stone's throw away, the gallery is guaranteed footfall. Adding quality crafts and gifts to the equation in the form of ceramics by Alex Johannsen, glass by Zoe Gadsby and pottery by John Macguire as well as bags, jewellery, cards and children's and baby toys means also that there is plenty to sustain the appetite of visitors and locals as well. *Ealain (gaelic word for 'art') - the name also reflects June's gaelic speaking family connections.

Ealain Gallery, 36 - 42 Main Street, Drymen, G63 0BG. Tel: 01360 660996
e-mail: info@ealaingallery.com web: www.ealaingallery.com



BEGINNERS' CLASSES IN BEEKEEPING

The Dunblane and Stirling Beekeepers' Association will be running classes for beginners entitled "The Basics of Beekeeping" on Tuesday evenings from 7:30-9:30 pm in the St. Andrew's Hall, Leny Road, Callander, FK17 8AL.

Classes will start on February 3rd 2008 for 7 weeks.

A donation by students of £14 to cover costs is suggested.

To enrol, please contact the Secretary: Peter Hunt, Wildenmore, Main Street, Gartmore FK8 3RW. Telephone: 01877-382594 or email: pd.hunt@virgin.net



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Boost for community projects

Are you a community based group or organisation looking for funding if so then Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust (CSET), may be able to help you. The Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust (CSET), which administer landfill communities funds, are looking for applications from community groups. The Trust funds community groups within the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council areas to implement a wide range of projects ranging from the provision of picnic benches in local parks to footpath improvement works and improved play areas. CSET Chairperson Terry Barlow, explained: "Community groups have an important role in understanding and improving their local environment and the Trust has been set up to help empower local people to implement their projects. In the past year groups across the area including in Plean, Dunblane, Tullibody, Tillicoultry and Sauchie have been awarded funds, so now could be your groups' chance. Applying is simple and we have set four deadlines for applications next year 13 February, 8 May, 4 September and 13 November 2009." A board of 18 manages the Trust, including representatives from Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, Scottish Natural Heritage, and local Communities from both council areas. Further information, advice and application packs can be obtained from the Trust's Development Officer Audrey Morrison at CSET Tel. 01786 462824



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THORNHILL	1935	2150
BLAIR DRUMMOND	1945	2200
MURRAY PLACE	2000	2215
CINEMA (Vue)	2005	2220
BUS STATION ARRIVE	2010	2225
BUS STATION DEPART	2015	2230
MURRAY PLACE	2017	2232
BLAIR DRUMMOND	2030	2245
THORNHILL	2040	2255
PORT OF MENTEITH	2050	2305
ABERFOYLE TOURIST	2100	2315
KINLOCHARD	2113	2328
FOREST HILLS	2115	2330

This Service is available until 20th December, although it can be extended if enough people use it.

The Byre Inn



Brig O' Turk
Tel. 01877 376292

**Festive Season
Events**



Christmas Menu

served from 13th December 12-4pm & 6-9pm

Christmas Eve Lunch

served 12-4pm. Live music in the evening.

Christmas Day Special Lunch

served from 12.30. Bookings only!

Boxing Day 12.30pm

Free Punch & Mince Pies

Hogmanay - Entertainment all evening!
Haggis, Neeps & Tatties (Veggie option)

New Year's Day

Traditional New Year's Day menu

Closed 2nd January

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thebyreinn@hotmail.com

