

Strathard News

FREE
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Issue 50
April 2009

The voice of Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar & Inversnaid

www.strathardnews.com

Still nifty at 50!

We're celebrating! This is the 50th edition of Strathard News. Well, I say that but, as many of you know, there have been several incarnations of this publication. I am reliably informed that the first issue of the Strathard News rolled off the presses in 1985. It was apparently a single sheet paper which came out every quarter. I don't have a copy of the first one but do have Issue 2 dated May 1986 thanks to Ann Epps who has donated her back copies as an archive. Thanks Ann. This one actually runs to 10 pages with Tom Reay as Chair of Strathard Community Council "looking forward to Aberfoyle being tidied up, a large increase in visitors and the prospect of squash, badminton, tennis, indoor bowls etc. at Forest Hills"!

In these early editions there is so much material which I would like to share with you that I am going to make a regular feature of snippets from them. We're always looking for new ideas and welcome suggestions.

It's interesting to look at the number of people who have committed so much time and effort over the years. June Cloggie started it off and her little band expanded to four by December 1986 and then to six by 1987. I can't believe that that was when I first became involved! It was also run by a 'team' of two for a while.

In 1997, at the end of what I like to call the 'glossy period' when printing was provided courtesy of Leslie Williamson, they were desperately looking for volunteers namely: a secretary (3-5 hrs), treasurer (2-4hrs), editorial reporters x 4 (1-6 hrs), WP typists x 4 (1-2hrs): that's per month. There's also something about advertising and sales which is the only job that pays but I'm loathe to mention that in case any of our little band of willing helpers gets funny ideas.

That is a committee of 10 so I think our little team of six volunteers is doing really well.

This run has been going strong since 2002 and I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the committee members for their enthusiasm and commitment not to mention the wit and wisdom they bring to meetings!

To celebrate this particular milestone and as a reward for their hard work, we've let some of our reporters loose this month so look out for some of their wackier articles.

I'd also like to thank all who contribute: those who write letters and articles, businesses which allow us counter space for the boxes, people who donate so generously and the advertisers who enable us occasionally to produce a lavish edition in colour. I hope you enjoy our special edition.

Margaret Neufeld,
Editor

PS If anyone is looking for a home for past issues we would be happy to add them to the archive which we will pass on to future committees. In particular, does anyone have Issue 1 from 1985 or indeed any of these single sheets?



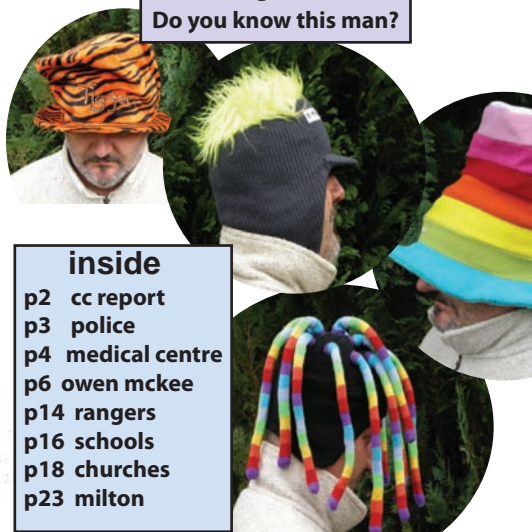
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are just some of the things that we do!

**Congratulations to Strathard News
on their 50th Anniversary!**

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Hugh he?
Do you know this man?



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We would like to thank Strathard News for putting in the time and effort for such a wonderful publication for the community, and wish you all a very happy 50th Edition! Here's to the next 50! *Stuart & Brenda, Chill Out*

Community Council Report

This edition I'd like mainly to focus on some of the liaison we have with Stirling Council on the services it provides. All the active issues are now listed on one schedule so they can be easily monitored, and there are about 25 live items! At some point soon, this information will go onto local notice boards. Over the last month we have helped resolve various problems with lighting, signs, potholes, gritting and white-lining where the Council needed chasing. Still on the list are queries on roads, drainage, refuse collection, signage, public telephones, the bus shelter, and a host of others where we will pursue the Council and our local Councillors for resolution. We will re-examine this option for 2010. Some of the main issues currently include:

B829 Resurfacing:

The Community Council and other residents have lobbied long and hard to get this type of work happening again. Over many years nothing was done by the Council which, combined with a poor reinstatement job by Scottish Water contractors over a long section, has meant that much of the road is now deteriorating to a critical level. There are also problems after Milton all the way to Kinlochard and Inversnaid. Please continue (as we do) to lobby for greater Council budgets at any and every opportunity.

More funds have now been allocated to the B829 than previously, but these are still far from sufficient to improve all of the areas urgently needing fixed. Re-surfacing priorities have so far been set reflecting a number of factors such as

the overall deterioration of stretches of road, amount of traffic, road safety etc. The recent resurfacing between Aberfoyle and Milton extended the previous section done at the school, and was on a heavily-used section of road – the next part needs drainage sorted before resurfacing. Stirling Council Roads apologised for having to do all the work here during daytime hours in March, but the same staff had to be available at nights for gritting because of the cold weather. However, as a bonus, an extra section at Loch Chon where we had reported that the road surface had totally deteriorated was also inspected and fitted into the budget before the current Council year-end.

Other bad stretches of road are well-recognised and 'on the list' although the pace of planned work is still very slow. In the meantime please make sure you keep reporting all the bad potholes – see the following section.

Roads Repairs & Maintenance and other Council Services:

Your first step for specific problems is to:

- contact the Council call centre on 0845 277 7000, or
- go into 'Online Services' on website www.stirling.gov.uk.

This is important – response by Council teams is monitored centrally, so the more calls that get logged for a problem, then the more evidence there will be that something needs done. Please try to keep a note of the reference number or date in case you need to call back or ask us for help. The speed of response will vary, for example

if there are health or safety implications it should receive higher priority. But if nothing seems to be happening in a reasonable timeframe then do get in touch with one of the community councillors, since we can pick up issues that have not been resolved and have them investigated.

Road Safety Improvements:

Suggestions from the community for increased road safety measures and improvements are now being taken forward after input from the Police. This includes looking at methods of ensuring traffic slows down when it enters Aberfoyle, road safety near the playpark, considering a '20's Plenty' regime in Manse Road, and safety measures to help people with impairments.

Outdoor Drinking Byelaw:

Following the survey carried out in 2007 the Community Council has looked at progressing this – many other villages and towns have adopted these bans now. A byelaw in Aberfoyle will be relatively straightforward and in the coming months we will be working towards implementing this, of course keeping everyone informed during the process so that we receive further community input. A ban for the B829 and lochsides will be more problematic since none like this exist anywhere in Scotland yet, so we are going to let Buchanan CC lead the way with East Loch Lomond as the test case. If that proves possible, which will not be known until after the 2009 tourist season, then we will re-examine this option for 2010.

Finally, the Community Council continues to help residents in the remotest part of Strathard

during their campaign to stop **Glen Arklet** becoming a forest. Hundreds of local people and many visitors have supported keeping this last area of open moorland. The petition had 2224 signatures by 11th March when members of the community went to Holyrood to meet MSPs. A strong environmental case was prepared to demonstrate that Forestry proposals fail to consider all the information legally required, including taking into account historic and cultural aspects of the landscape, and the impact on the wide vista across Glen Arklet. The National Park, as well as Forestry, recently admitted that afforestation here was 'public policy' – the government wants more trees planted hence this proposed 'long-term land use and landscape change over a large area'. But it seems unacceptable to plant here on moorland where the climate change argument is poor and the open landscape views are important to so many. The 2007-12 Park Plan, in addition to prominently featuring the Loch Arklet panorama, clearly states that the open upland landscape there is valued by local people and visitors and 'should be conserved'. However the exact opposite is now in its new Biodiversity Action Plan. There is still much ongoing activity with the campaign. Please do get in touch with your Community Councillor on any relevant issue where you would like our help.

Fiona

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Police Community Website

There is a community page for Aberfoyle on Central Scotland Police website www.centralscotland.police.uk 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.



Information Appeal

Between 1100hours and 1430 hours on Monday 9th March 2009 a housebreaking has occurred at a residential property in Lochard Road. If you have any information regarding this theft please contact police on 01786456000.

Between Saturday 14th February and Saturday 21st February 2009 a tax disc has been stolen from an insecure vehicle parked in Limecraig Avenue, Aberfoyle. If you have any information regarding this theft please contact police on 01786456000.

Concerns Grow For Missing Man

Tuesday, 3rd March 2009

Police are growing increasingly concerned for the wellbeing of missing Blane field man Adrian Park. Adrian was last seen on Saturday in Milngavie before he returned home with his van. Leading the search Inspector Brian Sharkey said: "We do not know where he has gone from there. His family and ourselves are growing increasingly concerned for him. There are no obvious signs of him preparing to leave. The weather has been inclement and with the forecast for snow we are concerned he may not be prepared for the cold spell."

Adrian was reported missing around 7pm on Saturday. "Understandably his family are extremely worried about him and want to know that he is safe and well. I appeal for anyone who may have seen him to contact ourselves," added Inspector Sharkey. Ochils Mountain Rescue Team, Lomond Mountain Rescue Team, Search and Rescue Dog Association (SARDA), Royal Navy search and rescue helicopter along with police search teams including police dogs have all been involved in the search.

Adrian is described being 5'11" tall, collar length brown hair and has a moustache. He is thought to be wearing a black North Face jacket, black polo neck and grey walking trousers with grey/brown trainers.

Anyone with information can contact Central Scotland Police on 01786 456000 or information can be given anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555111



Cash machine security

3rd, March 2009

The overwhelming majority of cash machine withdrawals take place crime free, but cardholders still need to be aware of the common sense steps to take when you use an ATM.

Here are some helpful tips and advice on how to minimise the risk of becoming a victim of this type of crime.

When withdrawing money from a cash machine

1. Be aware of your surroundings and others around you.
2. If there is anything unusual about the cash machine, report it to the bank immediately.
3. be aware of accepting help from seemingly well-meaning strangers.
4. Shield the keypad to avoid anyone seeing you enter your pin.
5. Discreetly put your money away and retrieve your card from the ATM before leaving the cash machine.

Trossachs 10K Run



Location: Aberfoyle

Date: Saturday 30th May 2009

Run through the beautiful Ard Forest, viewing some of Scotland's most amazing scenery. This 10K Run begins at the car park in Aberfoyle. Between the outskirts of Aberfoyle and the foothills of Loch Lomond lies the Great Forest of Loch Ard. Throughout the forest are many lochs and lochans, from the mighty Loch Chon and Loch Ard to the picturesque Lochan a' Ghleannain and the tiny Clansmore Loch. There is an abundance of wildlife in the forest including red and roe deer, capercaillie, red squirrels, woodpeckers and an array of plant and fungi.

The 10K Run starts and finishes at the car park in Aberfoyle and the route is mostly on forest tracks. The route will be fully marshalled and refreshments will be provided at the finish. The entry fee covers the cost of staging the event. This ensures that all sponsorship raised supports our lifesaving work.

Entry Fee: £12 per person

If you would like to raise sponsorship for this event please let us know and we will send sponsorship forms to you.

Contact us now to enter:

Jillian on 01877 382332 email: jillian06@btinternet.com

Ian on 07917869074 or at ian@idema-aqua.co.uk

Download an entry form from www.anthonynolan.org.uk/

Easter Eggheads Family Ceilidh



Kinlochard Village Hall

Friday 10th April

8pm till late

Kinlochard Ceilidh Band • Raffle • BYOB



Prize for best decorated hard-boiled egg

Tickets from 01877 387 219

Adults £7

Kids (under 13) £5

Strathard Community Council meets on

the 1st Thursday of the month, alternating

between Aberfoyle Memorial Hall, Kinlochard

Village Hall and Inversnaird Primary School.

The next meetings will be held in Aberfoyle

on Thursday 2nd April at 7.30pm and

Kinlochard on Thursday 1st May 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

Ward 1 Aberfoyle

John Clow

Ros Dingwall

Jimmy Quinn

Geraint Short

Ward 2 Kinlochard

Maureen Campbell

Mike Campbell

Fiona McEwan

Sue Russell

Ward 3 Inversnaird

Andre Goulancourt

Scott Provan

Ralph Wolfe

Please do get in touch with your Community Councillor on any relevant issue.



Aberfoyle & Buchlyvie Medical Practice



Patient Questionnaires

Once again thank you to everybody who kindly completed a questionnaire. As a team we are overwhelmed by the wonderful positive comments that we receive. As always our aim is to give you the best possible service. The results of the survey have been discussed with the Patient Participation Group and we have put together a list of priorities based on the information gathered from the results and from patients' comments.

Firstly we would like to recap on last year's priorities.

PRIVACY - we have been working hard to improve privacy for patients. Notices have been put up asking patients to be aware of this issue with regards to fellow patients. The receptionists are also more aware of this problem.

WAITING TIMES - we asked patients last year that if they had multiple problems to please book a double appointment for the afternoon or evening surgery. We have tried to make booking an appointment easier as patients are now able to book on line using our website.

EARLY MORNING SURGERIES - we now provide early morning surgeries for those patients who work and have to commute.

PHYSIOTHERAPY - there is now a weekly physiotherapy session at Buchlyvie Medical Centre.

HOSPITAL LETTERS - we now receive correspondence from the hospital more efficiently. This will be further improved when discharge letters start coming directly onto our computer system. The priorities this year are:

1. PRIVACY - we will continue to work on the privacy problem. We will aim to take as many telephone calls as possible away from the front desk and will experiment with using a white noise machine.

2. WAITING TIMES - this still seems to be a problem especially during an open surgery. If there are about 8 patients waiting to see the doctor waiting time can be up to an hour. The receptionists are going to keep patients informed on the likely waiting times and ask if patients would prefer to come back later or make an appointment for another day.

3. PATIENT TRANSPORT - Patients are now required to book their own transport. We are aware that some patients are having problems contacting the Patient Transport Service. To make a complaint on your behalf we need some evidence. If you have had problems contacting the transport office could you please write down the details of the problem, e.g. dates and times and how many times you attempted to telephone the office? Working with the Patient Participation Group we will write to the Scottish Ambulance Service and inform them of any problems.

4. PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION - Gartmore have an excellent prescription collection service run by volunteers. The practice would like to try to introduce a similar service for Kinlochard. If any patients would like to work with the practice to start up this scheme please contact Rowena Boome, Practice Manager at Aberfoyle Medical Centre.

5. FIRST AID COURSE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - it was suggested we try to run a first aid course for young people. The Patient Participation Group has taken this on board and will hopefully run a course later this year.

Once again, many thanks to those who took part in the survey. We appreciate suggestions and comments all the year round and there is a suggestion box at both Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres.

Visiting Doctor

On the 1st April Dr Claire Currie will be joining Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres. Dr Currie 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 Currie into our communities.

Medical Garden



The AGM of the Medical Garden will be held in the Medical Centre, Aberfoyle, on Wednesday 8th April at 2pm. Everyone interested in the garden will be made very welcome.

Please Visit Our Website

www.aberfoyle-buchlyviesurgeries.co.uk

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

Ranger's Corner



*Since this issue marks a secular moment in time
I thought I'd pay homage to a few friends of mine
Special individuals with a collective heart of gold
Who spend their free time looking for a story to be told
Always with the interests of the community in mind
And with no intention of seeking reward in kind.
First we have Margaret who, as editor, pulls all the strings
An inspiration to us all, understanding of all things
Then there is Marion, as laid-back a person you could ever hope to meet
Supplying the layout skills prior to the paper 'hitting the streets'
Ian, our advertising 'executive', is clearly a learned man
Who can be trusted to be soft, or hard, dependent on 'the plan'
Gwenda, out of Inversnaid, has an essential part to play
For, as treasurer, the utilisation of funds will be on her final say
Finally we have Dougie, a giant of a man blessed with a gentle soul
Yet, thankfully, possessed of an imagination prone to go out of control
It is a privilege to work with these people, and exchange views
As we strive to piece together each issue of the Strathard News
And despite a great deal of 'push and shove'
For us, this workload will ever remain a labour of love.*

Timber Haulage on Manse Road

Thinning operations continue in the Clashmore area of Loch Ard Forest, as part of ongoing improvements aimed at improving recreation, creating habitats and restructuring the forest. Most of the timber will be hauled through the Crinigart / Lemahamish exit, however Manse Road will need to be used to haul approximately 80 lorry loads of timber.

This timber will be hauled over the next three months – it isn't possible to give a precise lorry schedule, however it is expected that lorries will be operating throughout the period.

Hoish continues to be the main exit for most of the timber harvested in Loch Ard Forest, with the "roadtrain" hauling all of the timber from the forest to the Hoish pickup point. However, the distance from the Clashmore site to Hoish is fifteen times longer than the distance from Clashmore site to Balleich, and so is difficult to justify on emissions (timber lorries use twice as much fuel in forest compared to tarmac roads) and cost grounds.

Stirling Council's Aberfoyle Local Office

Just three events have been registered at the Aberfoyle office since the last issue of the Strathard News.

Megan Lily Rene Wright arrived with the Valentines, to the delight of her parents Julie and Edward. Welcome little Megan.

Local couple James Harrower and Wendy McPhie from the Milton, were married at the Forth Inn in Aberfoyle, while Ledard Farm at Kinlochard hosted the wedding of Jon Dickson and Katrina Wakefield from Derby. Congratulations to all. Both couples were married by assistant Registrar, John Boyle-Hannah; lucky John, my turn next week!

So in some ways a quiet start to the year at the Registration Office in Aberfoyle, but in fact, John and I have been very busy preparing the preliminaries for the many weddings due to take place this year. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries at all, when planning your events.

We have continued to be busy in providing access to Stirling Council Services, too, and recently we've found ourselves helping people to arrange such things as wheelie bin pull-outs, accessing housing forms, dealing with queries about grit bins and showing kitchen and bathroom fitting samples to households awaiting re-fits. If you think there might be something we can help you with, please ask. If we don't know, we promise to do our very best to find out.



The Registration and Stirling Council Local Office, on the upper floor of the Discovery Centre, is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am until 12 noon. Appointments can be made by telephone, on 01877 382986, or by dropping in to the office during opening hours. We hope we can be of service.

Sharon Johnston, Registrar



The Wee Blether Tea Room Kinlochard Lochside

Open for the season on 21st March

Open 7 days a week 10am - 5pm

Breakfast served 10am - 11.30am

Lunches served from 12 noon - 4 pm

Tea and cakes served all day until 5 pm



Pensioner's Special every Wednesday

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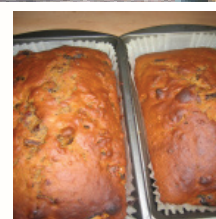
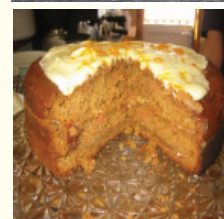
**Buy from us fresh bread and milk
as well as all our usual local essentials**

Post Office Services available

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9am - 2pm

**We're really looking forward to seeing everyone
again this season, it's been a quick winter!**

Kinlochard Lochside, Kinlochard, Aberfoyle
shonabaston@yahoo.co.uk



Friends of Aberfoyle & Buchlyvie Medical Centres

Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Patient Participation Group

The Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Patient Participation Group (PPG) meets regularly. It is a sub-group of Friends of Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres, a registered Scottish Charity. The PPG is a useful way for patients and medical staff to communicate and explore realistic ways of improving the service for the benefit of the health of all in the area.

There is much expertise among patients in the community that could be of help to the medical centres and it is hoped to harness some of this. Among other things, the group will look at suggestions made by patients as to ways in which the service could be improved. To date we have campaigned successfully for Podiatry and Physiotherapy services to be available at Buchlyvie Medical Centre. We also comment on the results of the annual patient questionnaire survey of both Medical Centres.

The PPG, in collaboration with its parent group Friends of Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres, also has a commitment to funding the purchase of some medical equipment and arranging sessions on health promotion and education for all age groups. A comprehensive list of all these activities is available at both Medical Centres. We welcome suggestions for topics you would like covered. Please leave suggestions and comments in the box provided at both Medical Centres, or e-mail us at: friendsabmc@googlemail.com

Rowena Boome, Liz Fuller (on behalf of Aberfoyle-Buchlyvie PPG)

Friends of Aberfoyle & Buchlyvie Medical Centres

"Medicinal and Culinary use of Herbs"

Virginia Irvine-Fortescue

will tell you how to use and grow them
at

Buchlyvie Medical Centre Outdoor Waiting Room

(*If inclement then usual indoor venue*)

WEDNESDAY 22nd April 2009 7.30pm



Admission Free

Members and Non Members---All welcome

Please note: questions will be welcomed by the speaker



Rural Walking Group Schedule April to May 2009

All Walks start at 11.00am—please be at meeting point by 10.45am

Day	Meeting Point	Walk Route
Thurs 26th March	BUCHANAN GOLF CLUB. Park in the clubhouse car park	PATHS AROUND BUCHANAN CASTLE ESTATE
Thurs 2nd April	BALLOCH. Main car park at Balloch Country Park	AROUND THE PARK
Thurs 23rd April	ARDINNING NATURE RESERVE. Park in the lay-by on left just past the Strathblane Country Club (coming from the north)	ROUND THE NATURE RESERVE
Thurs 30th April	CROFTAMIE Park at the Wayfarers	PATHS AROUND CROFTAMIE
Thurs 7th May	DALMARY. Car park near Water Board house on Drymen-Gartmore Road	FOREST WALK
Thurs 14th May	GARTOCHARN Park at the Guide Hut beyond the campsite	GARTOCHARN NATURE RESERVE
Thurs 21st May	GARGUNNOCK Park in Main Street near the shop	ROUTE TOWARDS KIPPEN
Thurs 28th May	KINLOCHARD Park at the village hall	PATHS AROUND THE LOCH

These walks are for gentle exercise and are led by trained walk leaders. They last for approximately 45 mins – 1 hour and there is no charge. Please remember to wear footwear with a good grip.

To join, please come along early on your first walk to complete a questionnaire.

If you require directions to meeting point contact : Susi: 01360 440849 or 07895 512266, Lindsey: 01360 440471 mobile 07836 786259 Ann: 07746453840

For general information, contact: Tricia Cumming on 01786 432323 or e-mail cummingp@activestirling.org.uk

Forth Valley Food Links

'Find it, Eat it' Local Food Directory 2009—54

businesses and projects have signed up to the local food directory for Forth Valley. We are now in the process of developing a GreenMap printed version for distribution to businesses, community venues around Forth Valley. If there are any businesses or community projects growing / producing / processing / selling or serving food originating in Forth Valley, then you can add your own listing on the website <http://www.fvfl.org.uk/> by following the links from the home page, or by contacting Diane on diane@fvfl.org.uk and we will do it for you.

Local Food Apprenticeship in Horticulture

Scheme—FVFL has been discussing the development of a scheme in Forth Valley with the Highlands & Islands Local Food Network (HILFN), Forth Valley College, Lantra, and LEADER. The scheme, initially developed by HILFN, has run successfully in Highlands for two years, and has generated much interest in Forth Valley. The aim is to run the scheme in 2010, to train people in fruit and vegetable production to set up businesses to enable them to sell directly to the local market. If anyone interested in becoming a trainee or has land suitable for training, then please get in touch with Diane at FVFL on 01786 449215 or email diane@fvfl.org.uk.

Tamworth Pigs Available—There are 7 well-reared, non-GM fed Tamworth pigs now available from smallholder Marius Kiemer of Aberfoyle and will be available as a whole pig (£200), or half pig (£100) straight from the abattoir, or as butchered cuts from the Aberfoyle Butcher. The pigs are 90 - 100kg live weight. If anyone would like one or more pigs, please contact Marius Kiemer directly on 07810 414753 or email: marius_kiemer@hotmail.com.

Pastimes Eleven

(It was actually meant to be 'Pastimes 2' but these Roman numerals confuse one so!)

And so civilisation did come to ancient Britain via France, or Gaul, as it was then known. This came as a complete surprise to the Gauls who had thought they were just like everyone else.

The ancient Romans (though not all were old), defeated Gaul but found they were getting help from the ancient Britons. (I suppose everyone aged rapidly in those days). The Romans found this galling and invaded Britain reaching as far north as Scotland. They were formidable and their numbers were legion but it did take them several centuries to conquer the native tribes. They did bring the kilt to Scotland

where, because of the weather, it was found that the leather chapped their legs and the chaps did not like it. The natives then designed a softer 'hands that judicious' feel to their manly wear and so was born the kilt. The Roman general Anthony, who was on first name terms with his troops, built a series of nine walls to keep the barbarians (us) out although only two have since been found (walls, that is), one in central Scotland and the other at the border. That is the legend. The truth is, according to recent excavations, somewhat different. It has been found that the wall is facing the wrong way round. It would now seem it was built to keep the southern Britons out of Scotland, the latter always looking for an angle to get into Scotland, their red hued hordes chanting obscure battle cries such as 'Angeland!' and Man U f'rever!' A strange people, indeed.

Yet this wondrous civilisation passed and with it, amongst other things, the knowledge to make candles and thus came the Dark Ages. There was a religion called Druidism in the land and its head priest was called Edwin. Fortunately the Christians arrived shortly after and the Druid religion sank without trace. No one to this day

knows what the dickens happened to Edwin the Druid. His life is a mystery.

The Christian faith was brought to Scotland by Saint Columbus, who sailed to America first in the ships, the Ninja and the Pointer. He also took the Santa Ponza as a last resort. He returned to build a monastery on Iona in the far west. He sent his convertibles around Scotland and he drove them hard. He made pact with the Picts. Brought peace in parts. Sowed problems for posterity. So came the discovery of electricity and thus dawned the Scottish Enlightenment and some of Scotland's great writers came to the fore - but first in the arts. Rabbie Burns gave us his great seminal work on the computer, 'To A Mouse'. In Edinburgh, Walter Scott wrote the definitive novel on the railway station, entitled 'Waverley.' And in Dundee we had a chap called McGonegal writing on the 'Silvery Tay.' A work that defies rhyme or reason.

In the next issue we hope to discuss world empires and the cult of bingo, Napoleon's Boney Parts and what decided the Ottoman Empire to make their seat of government in Sofia, Bulgaria. Really not to be missed!

By Dougie MacPherson



More rented housing on the way for Stirling

Funding for new homes for rent across the district of Stirling has almost doubled this year following an announcement by the Scottish Government.

A total of £7.3 million has been awarded mainly to Rural Stirling Housing Association and Forth Housing Association to build around 150 new social rented houses during the next financial year. These 150 homes are in addition to a further 8 in Callander and 34 in Cambusbarron recently announced by the housing associations, bringing the total number of new build for housing associations to 192 this year. This figure could rise to 230 if the Scottish Government approves Stirling Council's bid for a slice of the £25m that it has been designated to kick start Council house building.

The funding has been welcomed by Councillor Alasdair MacPherson, Portfolio Holder for Housing Strategy who said, "As the strategic housing authority Stirling Council has supported plans by both these housing associations to build more social rented housing. I'm delighted that the Scottish

Government has acknowledged that we have an issue with our levels of social rented housing here and have almost doubled the funding for next year. This will take some of the pressure off waiting lists in these areas as well as providing a much-needed kick-start to the construction sector.

Speaking on behalf of Forth Housing Association, Chairperson, Gordon Mason, said "We are delighted that the housing needs of the people of Stirling have been recognised with this increased award of grant. The close working relationship with the Council and other local agencies will allow us to take a coordinated approach to delivering good quality desirable housing in the coming year." Owen McKee, Chairperson of Rural Stirling Housing Association said, "This increase in funding is extremely welcome and essential if we are to progress our plans for new affordable homes in the rural area in the coming year. The support of the Council and the Scottish Government is very much appreciated."

Thistles Centre helps Keep Scotland Beautiful

Stirling based charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), is aiming to co-ordinate the most successful litter clean up event ever this April, and the Thistle Centre, Stirling has stepped into solve a rather large storage problem.

Last year 20,000 volunteers took part in litter clean up events during the month of April but this year KSB hopes to recruit tens of thousands of volunteers across Scotland.

And with high hopes of so many volunteers taking part in 2009 KSB has ordered thousands of bright yellow National Spring Clean tabards for volunteers to wear as they carry out their litter picks. The tabards are issued free as part of a litter clean up pack which is issued to every group which signs up to take part. Finding somewhere to store so many boxes of tabards proved difficult, but the Thistle Centre came up trumps, offering a free storage space until National Spring Clean ends.

Donna Niven, Programme Manager at KSB said, "We are extremely grateful to the Thistle Centre for identifying a space which Keep Scotland Beautiful could use during March and April to store the thousands of tabards required for National Spring Clean 2009. "This month long event provides an opportunity for those who are annoyed by litter to head out into the fresh air and make a difference to their local park, street, beach or open space. Wearing a yellow tabard, not only identifies group members giving them a feeling of belonging; it also plays an important safety role - making volunteers easy to spot."

There is still time to organise your own litter clean up event, or find out about one already organised in your area, online at www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/spring-clean.

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

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

Dear Editor,

Am I the only person who feels Sir Fred Goodwin's pension is fully justified? Have the general public considered even for an instant how much 'Mr.Muscle' would be required to keep all those houses he owns looking spick and span? Not to mention the monumental road tax forced upon him for his fleet of cars. Or the debilitating tailors' bills for his Saville Row suits. On the strength of the unwarranted backlash of opinion in the media, it appears to me that there are some individuals in our society who seem to have forgotten we have a sound class system in place which stretches back to the halcyon days of The British Empire. We should all do well to respect that. Richie Rich, Mayfair, London

A little girl recently wrote to one the Aberfoyle Fairies, sending a dummy that she was finished with, for the Dummy Fairy to 're-cycle'. Unfortunately, there was no return address, so the fairies have asked if they can use the Strathard News to say thank you to her.

Dear Catriona

Thank you for kindly giving your dummy to us. We will make sure it is turned into something new and put to good use.

With love from the Dummy Fairy,
Fairy Knowe.



Local Help Wanted

Teenagers or adults needed to assist with the care of rescued animals at weekends and/or during the week.

Help also needed at the many fundraising events held throughout the summer. Animals are in attendance and help is needed with them and the tombola.

Please contact me :

Mione Morrison

tel: 07748 351287

info@glendrickroost.org.uk

ABERFOYLE TODDLERS

enjoy catching up for a play (AND THE OCCASIONAL PARTY!!) every Wednesday in the Aberfoyle Memorial Hall between 10 and 12 am. EVERYONE WELCOME
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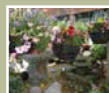
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Attention! DOG OWNERS

Puppy/beginner basic obedience classes are starting in Aberfoyle in the Memorial Hall

Wednesday nights 7pm -8pm

£30 for the six week course

Trainer: Jim Fraser

Phone 01360 660491 to book a place

(All dogs must be vaccinated and puppies must be over 16 weeks)



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Free Workshop for National Park Communities

**Energy Efficiency and
Renewables – What can your
community do?**

The National Park Authority and communities in the Park have come together with expert organisations for an event designed to help local communities take action to reduce their carbon footprint. Advice will be available on how householders can collaborate, community buildings can be improved and income can be generated using energy efficient and renewable technologies.

In this free event speakers from Community Action for Energy (CAfE), Community Energy Scotland, Strathclyde and Central Energy Saving Scotland advice centre (ESSac), Energy Agency, and Energy4all will be available to help you make your projects happen.

The event takes place on Saturday 25 April, 9.30am to 4.00pm Carrochan, National Park HQ, Carrochan Road, Balloch. For more information and to book your place please contact Hannah Dinneen at Hannah.dinneen@lochlomond-trossachs.org Tel. 01389 722627



Loch Lomond
& The Trossachs
National Park

National Park News

by Owen McKee

Is it just the contrast to the constant misery in the media or is the birdsong more cheerful this spring? Perhaps the birds know something we don't and they are telling us that all is not doom and gloom. No doubt there will be trials and tribulations linked to the economy but surely we have a little cheer to help us through. And there is.

Over the years I have been regaling you with all aspects of Planning and Development Control within the Park and where rules and regulation are involved it was difficult to be upbeat. So it is particularly pleasing to be able to highlight a success story. There were no surprises when our new HQ building won award after award. After all we are in the business of encouraging others to up there standards in design and sustainability and the best way to do that is by example. But chests were bursting with pride when the Park Authority's Director of Planning was called to London to collect an award from the Royal Town Planning Institute, UK. Not for a development of our own but for the work the Planning Department put into the development at the Carrick Golf Resort on Loch Lomondside. For that work the Department gained top prize in the "Rural Areas and Natural Environment" category. We can take extra pride in the fact that there were no other nominees from Scotland in any category and in granting the award the judges said: "The Authority's attention

to detail, the breadth of the issues it had to tackle and the quality of the resulting development were particularly impressive. The project is a classic demonstration of the way planning can add value for the developer and community alike." Having followed that planning application through its complicated history, I can say that the award was well deserved.

Over the winter months we have been in discussions with the local authorities on the dreaded litter problem. There are no easy solutions to the problem and the difficult economic climate does not help. There was general agreement that overflowing bins just invite more dumping of rubbish and fly tipping. Consequently bins will be placed only at high profile popular sites where regular uplifts can keep them under control. In all other areas the message will be "Please take your litter home". However it is recognised that is not an option available to everyone so there will be directions to the nearest bin facility. Discussion has also taken place with the Criminal Justice Service so that those on Community Service Orders will be made available for "Litter Picks".

Thankfully the very successful partnership of our Rangers, the Police and the Forestry Commission Rangers in Operation Ironworks is to be repeated this year in a beefed up form. Arrangements have been made for our some of

our Rangers to become Special Constables and there will be a dedicated Police Officer stationed at National Park HQ to help with the policing of the National Park.

Work has also been ongoing with Buchanan Community Council and the East Loch Lomond Management Group with a plan to introduce a byelaw prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in a public place. Such byelaws already exist in built up areas such as Callander and Luss but to date have not been tried in the countryside where enforcement may prove problematic. Naturally care has been taken to fully engage with the Police to ensure that the targeted area is fairly close to the road and popular camping sites and capable of control. Getting byelaws in place is a long and complicated process and there is a requirement that their efficacy is reviewed after three years of operation. Strathard Community Council is also investigating the possibility of a similar byelaw and will be gathering information from the Buchanan project to help inform them as to its value.

We have been working closely with Historic Scotland on schemes to help owners in conservation areas maintain their properties and introduced a pilot grant scheme in Killin. That scheme proved successful and as a result Historic Scotland has joined us in trialling another scheme in Callander. We will be exploring with Historic Scotland

the possibility of bringing schemes to all the Conservation Areas of the Park.

The Draft Local Plan Consultation closed on 28th February and the task is now on to take account of all the responses. Since in preparing the Draft Local Plan we had taken account of the views expressed by the Park's communities at our Local Plan Open Days I don't anticipate that there will have been too many adverse responses. Here's hoping.

August of this year will see the introduction of the regulations stemming from the 2006 Planning Act and I will bring these to your attention in the coming issues of the Strathard News. However there is a change which will be coming into place at the end of this month. From that date eplanning will be launched. Over the last couple of months we have been testing the system with a couple of friendly agents. It will be possible from the first of April to submit Planning Applications online and to be able to follow their progress through the system. With the Taxman and the Vatman already requiring returns to them to be done online, are we at last heading for a paperless society. I can be contacted as follows;

Post: Taigh Na Bhuth,
Lochearnhead,
FK19 8PR

Tel: 01567830214
owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk

Free Training for National Park Land Managers

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority is offering land managers in the National Park area a programme of free training events during 2009 to address some of the key issues and opportunities facing them.. The training will be delivered by specialist consultants from Scottish Agricultural College starting in late March:

Micro-Renewables 10am Tuesday 24 March at SAC Kirkton Farm, Crianlarich, a one-day workshop will explain the opportunities and constraints for incorporating micro-renewables into a rural business. Looking at energy generation from small-scale wind, hydro and solar plants, the course will also cover the

important areas of revenue generation and grant and funding sources.

Rural Development Priorities (RDP) 10am to 1pm on Tuesday 31 March at the McLaren Lesser Hall in Killin and Tuesday 26 May at the National Park Office, Main Street, Callander. A morning drop-in session with a short update on Rural Development Priorities delivered hourly, followed by the chance to raise your issues, queries or needs with our specialist consultant. RDP Case Officers with a range of specialist knowledge will also be in attendance to offer advice and support.

Managing Farm Woodlands for Wood Fuel in May (date and venue to be confirmed). This course will provide all the information you will need to manage and/or create a wood fuel

resource safely, sustainably and effectively. These events are free to land managers from the National Park area. Booking is required for the Micro-Renewables and the Wood Fuel courses. For the RDP sessions, simply drop-in! Other courses scheduled for 2009 include access management, upland management, further rural development priorities workshops, and a second course looking at micro-renewables. Dates and venues for these events will be available once confirmed. For further information on any of these events or to register please contact Linda Winskill on 01389 722043 or email linda.winskill@lochlomond-trossachs.org or Graeme Ligertwood on 01292 525285 or at training@sac.ac.uk

Let's Hear It For Our Bankers!

by Dougie MacPherson

Much has been made of the apparent faults of the banking industry, perhaps too much, in print, television and radio, and concerns regarding the current world financial crises. The banks are being blamed every time there is a fall in share prices, every time a company closes down and I do think this is quite unfair for, in the modern world, our banking system has been at the sharp edge of innovation and efficiency. Cast your mind back only thirty years. Things were so much different then.

Back then you did not have to pay bank charges so long as you were in credit. Now, in this new efficient age we pay charges for every small transaction, whether we are in credit or not and this is quite proper as any business must pay its way. I certainly would not criticise the banks as regards this. We must move with the times.

Back then you could telephone your local branch of your bank and speak to someone you knew, there and then. Now you get put through to a call centre where you don't know who you're talking to and they don't know what you're talking about. Some would say that was another backward step but, no, not me. I see it as yet another move towards greater efficiency. Back then you went into a bank,

had a chat with the teller and withdrew money – unless you were Bonnie and Clyde – then you forego the chat. Now banks have become something different from days of yore. Now they push sales and services in efforts to get you to spend your money there and then. But surely it's all to the good, say I! Back then if you wanted to buy a house you had to put up a good percentage of the money yourself before they would consider giving you a mortgage. How incredibly outdated! Now, for example, you may be a part time seasonal worker and can take out a mortgage of 110% on a property whose value is more often than not substantially less. But, hey, I'm not criticising. This is, after all, what the government calls a strong market economy. I don't understand it, maybe, but that does not mean that I don't agree with it, does it?

It has to be said that, despite much criticism, the people in power, in control of our banks, have had a bad press which I think is quite undeserved. These people work hard and devote their lives in the banking service and they get bonuses, quite substantial, I might add, for this sterling service. This is over and above the great sums they earn as salaries but they, too, have families to look after. They, too,

need the money – after all, a million or so doesn't buy you too much in the way of a comfortable life style today. The bonuses are a necessity, albeit some critics say that running a company at a loss hardly deserves such rewards – but not me.

Oh, no. I say these are professionals with a lifetime of experience behind them though some pedants might argue that having a CV showing most of your experience outwith the finance industry hardly constitutes a professional approach

to banking. But you will always get the knockers who are afraid of any new approach.

And what of the government and the criticism towards it? Twenty odd years ago and more you were taught to be frugal, to look after the pennies and to save up for a rainy day. Well now it's p***ing down – or so some say. Not me, I must add. I'm all for spending and that is what the government is asking us to do because it will help to promote a healthy economy, that's what. And so it has come to pass that younger people now are carrying heavy mortgages which they

were encouraged to take out on overpriced properties and their job opportunities are now less than a year ago.

And so it has come to pass that the older generation, that is those who were taught to save, are seeing their savings and their pensions drop to a drastic level as the lending rate goes down to 0.5%. I don't think you can get lower than that but I'm not a banker, nor am I

in government, so I don't understand these things. But both groups are professionals so they must know what they are doing, don't you think? After all, that Darling chap did say recently that the banking system, I think it was, would now be 'properly regulated and supervised'. Perhaps he meant that this had not happened before. But surely it must have. After all, they are professionals. So for the savers, change is what we need, even if it is only loose. And that is all you'll have from your savings! A brave new world is coming.



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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!

March's prize is a 2 night Murder Mystery break at the Winnock Hotel, Drymen worth £299

All That Jazz...

TROSSACHS GOT TALENT

We would like to find as many talented people as possible from the greater Trossachs area who would be interested in entering this new talent search competition.

The competition is open to instrumentalists and vocalists of all ages and will be held in three locations across the region: Callander, Thornhill and Aberfoyle. The entrants will be judged on their individual performances of Jazz, Blues or Folk music. This will be an elimination contest with heats commencing in April 2009 and culminating in the winners' final which will take place during this year's Jazz and Blues festival in October. In the case of folk music entrants this will take place at the 2009 Aberfoyle Folk Festival.

The competition winners can expect to perform with a professional band during the Festival Event and also be offered a series of live gigs at the establishments hosting the knockout competition.

Please note that the first round of this competition will take place at The Bridgend House Hotel, Callander on Friday 24th April at 8pm.

Entrants please e-mail info@callanderjazz.co.uk or telephone 01877-339455 to register your entry. Please indicate your name/age group/vocal or instrument/ musical style preferred.

THE TROSSACHS BIG BAND

One of the many positive outcomes of our previous festivals was the introduction to each other of a number of musicians who were ardent big band enthusiasts and this resulted in the formation of The Trossachs Big Band early in 2008, currently performing as a twelve piece big band playing Basie, Ellington, Miller arrangements plus many of the big band numbers made famous by Peggy Lee, Frank Sinatra and Bobby Darren and some of our own compositions as well.

With quite a few festival and corporate performances under our belt plus a memorable appearance at last year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe we are looking to recruit a number of local players into the band to strengthen the line up for 2009.

Are you a proficient player of the following instruments: Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone, Jazz Guitar, Keyboard?

Please make yourself known to Graham Oliphant on 01877-339399/339455 or e-mail details to info@callanderjazz.co.uk



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Wednesday 6 May at 7.30pm

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CLIMATE CHANGE – THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE!

It is a sad and unfortunate fact that this generation in time is forced to contend with far-reaching issues that transcend the already complex life of the average citizen. As if it is not enough that we struggle to deal with the escalating costs of food, fuel, household bills, property and domestic goods on a regular basis in our daily lives, we also have the ever-constant underlying fear of possible terrorist attacks. There is, of course, a far more sinister and serious situation developing in the shape of Global Warming. The problem here being the general populace are limited as to what they can achieve. Rather, it is the politicians and scientists of this world who have the power, and means, to make a real difference. Whilst there is no doubt this highly contentious topic will continue to be the focus of serious debate in the years to come, I feel we should look no further than Mother Nature in order to truly understand the alterations in temperature change. It is no accident that the breeding and migratory patterns of birds and insects have shown a significant shift of late. As a result, there have been several sightings of species not normally associated with The Trossachs, some of whom have presumably been drawn to the area through the increasingly warm climes of the Gulf Stream. By way of example, I submit with this article, an astonishing image of a group of penguins captured by a fisherman recently off the shores of Loch Drunkie. Subsequent sightings by Mr. David Anderson, from the Forestry Commission conservation team, confirmed the presence as that of the king penguin (*Aptenodytes Patagonicus*). When pressed for

comment by this reporter he stated that "...closure of the area is not an option as it would almost certainly invoke excessive media attention. Rather, we would prefer to set up a controlled situation in the shape of a hide, which would be manned round the clock by staff and volunteers. This would enable the general public to view the penguins in the wild." Mr Anderson further remarked that "...there is an ongoing initiative to restock the Loch with enough fish to not only ensure the penguins' survival, but also in the hope they choose to stay, and eventually breed."



Don't Believe The Hype

While National newspapers and television news programmes have been highlighting that due to the current financial climate, local authorities are reneging on their environmental promises, Stirling Council has issued a plea for calm. Stirling Council has not been affected greatly by the market challenge, mainly because of residents using blue boxes to recycle at source separated at the kerb side, it is clear that the media have done

Councils no favours by the extreme reporting. Stirling Council wants to reassure the public that they are not land filling recyclables. Waste Services Manager, David Hopper said: "Official national monitoring figures makes us fairly confident that in spite of difficult market conditions, material collected for recycling is finding a market, and there is evidence that prices are starting to stabilise. In Stirling, because of our high quality material which is

source separated at the kerbside, we have continued to receive the same level of revenues for our collected material, no collected recyclables are ever sent to landfill."

Stirling Council is currently piloting a food waste pilot in conjunction with the Love Food, Hate Waste campaign that will allow residents to deposit their leftover food in a specially designated bin. Food waste emits methane and by dramatically reducing the amount of food waste

going to landfill, which will reduce the areas carbon footprint.

Stirling Residents have one of the best rates of recycling in the country, expected to top 43% this year, and we ask them to continue to help us to reduce the amount of material going to landfill, which helps us to make better use of our natural resources.

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A Grand Night Out!

by Dougie MacPherson

Just recently, the Forest Theatre Company staged the musical 'The King and I' at Gartmore Village Hall. I went with my wife to the show, albeit with some trepidation as a man whose appreciation of musicals only extended as far as 'Buddy' and 'Paint Your Wagon'. I freely admit that musicals are not generally top of my list when it comes to entertainment! Now, how wrong can you be? You might be pleased to know that, as it turned out, I found the evening thoroughly enjoyable. The show was a joy - it had it all: the songs beautifully performed, the moments of humour, the choreography (particularly in the scene 'The Cabin Of Uncle Thom-as'). The costume design must surely get an extra mention. They were exceptional! It must have been hard work by many dedicated people over some weeks to achieve this standard of excellence. Overall, I do not think the production could be faulted in any way. The performances were extremely professional, especially those of the youngsters who put their heart and soul into it, showing great confidence and style.

It was running from the Tuesday 3rd to Saturday 7th March inclusive. We went on the Thursday, thinking it might be one of the quieter evenings only to find a full house, people coming from as far afield as Ruskie, Killearn and Kinlochard. Certainly not a mere local show it would seem, the Company's reputation having spread far and wide. If you failed to see the show this time, then you missed a grand night out. Certainly on the strength of its performance of the 'The King And I' I have to admit that should the Forest Theatre Company ever stage a play, I'll be first in the queue for tickets. Well done to one and all!



GREEN ROUTES

A new Social Enterprise based in the walled garden of Gartmore House. We provide training for young people with learning disabilities in an organically-managed, community garden. The new season has begun well with steady sales of pots of bulbs and bedding plants in the Gartmore Village Shop and to friends of Green Routes.

Our students have been busy from the beginning of term, learning about and doing the jobs needed to prepare the garden for a busy season ahead. Unfortunately the ground is still too wet and muddy for planting, but we intend to grow potatoes

in 3 of the beds along the wall in the larger garden, with root crops of beetroot and parsnip in the fourth bed which is already in good condition. Seeds of salad crops, annual bedding plants and vegetables are being sown and we look forward to warm spring days ahead.

The original polytunnel has been moved temporarily to the main garden, and is already filling up with seedlings of flowers, herbs, salad crops and vegetables. The ground is soon to be levelled for two new polytunnels in the upper garden - these will provide excellent teaching areas and allow us to grow more

tomatoes and cucumbers. The apple orchard is looking good - we were delighted with the response to sponsoring apple trees - and two pear trees will join the one on the lower wall. In May we hope to welcome the hens which should keep unwanted insects down among the apple trees. The ducks are beginning to lay - and duck eggs are delicious! We are most grateful to Guyana and Ward Toll Nursery for their generous support and look forward to our first Volunteer Day on 29th March, when we hope to welcome old and new friends for a day of spring jobs.

Green Routes

We are organising our first **Volunteers' Day**

of the 2009 season on

Sunday 29 March from 10.30am

Come along and help us to prepare the garden for the new season. Wrap up warmly.

Lunch will be provided.

Let us know if you are coming!

Contact Rosie on 01786 823 984

or rosemaryswords@aol.com

or Margaret Miller on 382418

maggie@theappleorchard.plus.net

For more information about

Green Routes contact:

Gillian Forster 01877 387231

g4star@aol.com

Janet Gill 01786 821837

igill@btopenworld.com

Charity no. SC039334

Ranger's Ramblings

A View from the Lodge!



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

A THANK YOU

It is almost a certifiable fact that each and every one of us can relate to several defining moments in our past which have altered our directional path in life. Some of these changes are pre-conceived. Some happen through accident, or loss. Some occur simply by chance. Marriage, divorce, unemployment, promotion, re-location or the birth of a child are just a few factors which can force us to re-evaluate our place in the scheme of things.

I have my own tale to tell, of course, and a combination of some of the above led to my arrival in the village some twelve years ago. Tiring of the oppression of the city, I settled on a decision to seek a complete change. It would turn out to be the most important one I would ever make. At the time, the idea appeared perfectly simple, despite the fact I had no specific plan in mind, other than creating a new life for myself.

I hired a car for two weeks, packed a suitcase and headed 'north' on my 'great adventure'. Trouble being...I never got any further than Aberfoyle. The experience was enough to convince me this was where I

wanted to settle. After spending the night in The Forth Inn, I sheepishly retired to the city to gather my thoughts. Much to do: have to find a place to stay; and a job - not easy. A chance phone call to The Trossachs Holiday Park owners, Joe and Hazel Norman, culminated in the offer of a six-month lease of a caravan. The kindness shown to me by the Normans during that period was instrumental in increasing my affection for the area.

A short time passed, and an advert appeared in the Stirling Observer. The David Marshall Lodge were looking for some help. Although I knew nothing of such a place, I gave them a call, and got the job.

Within a matter of days, it had become obvious I had stumbled onto something very special, even though my initial 'charge' was the dish-washing machine. Time stretched. My responsibilities grew as swiftly as my feelings for the ambient atmosphere of the building, and its magical setting.

I found myself a flat in The Baillie Nicol Jarvie and began to develop a keen interest in local history and events. So much so I started to write about what I

was learning (another change in direction). Five years in, and The Strathard News came calling. My recollection of the circumstances revolving around my early involvement remains somewhat hazy. What I do remember clearly, though, is feeling a sense of dread at being asked to produce articles for public consumption. In time, I would grow more at ease with this notion - drawing inspiration from the wonderful array of experiences available

to me in my working life at The Lodge.

This last decade or so, living in Aberfoyle, has proved to be the most rewarding and satisfying period of my life, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the community, my colleagues at work, and the committee of The Strathard News for their continued friendship and support shown toward this column. Here's to the next fifty issues!

David



THE POKER TREE PROJECT

At time of writing, both David Coleman and I feel the progress being made in the gardens has reached a tentative stage, as their prosperity may be reliant on a degree of funding. Clearly, this is an area of involvement far removed from the blood sweat and tears shed during last summer's exertions, and much will depend on Toto McLellan's thoughts for the future, as owner. In the meantime, I would like to offer a belated thank you to Diana Carmody for her very kind words in a letter published in issue 48. In complementing the work undertaken, however, she mentioned only two people. I would just like to set the record straight by stressing the efforts of the community as a whole. The under noted are all deserving of mention, having given of their own free time to help make a difference. In no particular order - John Digney, Walter Milne, Allan More, Chris Geddes, Diana Carmody, Stewart McGregor, Craig Walker, James MacDonald, Jim Malcolm, Sarah Hunt, Graham Kerr, Scott McPhee, Damien Davies, Scott Robertson, Duncan Mackay, Charles Stewart, Jim Scott, Karen Wilson, Jackie Stanford, James McArthur, John McArthur, Andy Malcolm, Katy Freeman, and John Clow.



FLYING THE FLAG

For me, the recent decision to replace the old weather-beaten Saltire flag which has flown over The Lodge for around four years, carried more than the usual degree of symbolism. The 'raising of standards' is a philosophy to which The Lodge staff and the District Office are totally committed. However, in seeking to increase the profile of the DML and enhance its facilities through the current essential maintenance work and the implementation of a Bio-Mass woodchip burning system, which is intended to heat the building, we would humbly request a degree of patience from our patrons, as the possibility exists that parts of the centre may be subject to closure at short notice during this period.



THE 'FAMOUS' DAY OUT

On February 18th, the intrepid DML recreation team were detailed to undertake a journey into the heart of Loch Ard Forest and deepest Perthshire, in an effort to increase our understanding of operations within the forest and to, hopefully, learn something that would help improve the quality of service at The Lodge. The staff were initially a little unsure of this aspect, not knowing exactly how to improve on perfection... nevertheless, we clamoured on board the mini-bus with appropriate anticipation. In truth, the first part of the trip, The Loch Ard Sculpture Trail, would take anyone's breath away - a truly wonderful example of the efforts being made behind the scenes by The Forestry Commission to enhance the beauty of the forest landscape. Against this, there were acute concerns that the amount

of cigarette smoke exhaled by our driver Jim Ferrall during pit-stops, would lead to a call out of the rescue teams, thinking there was a bush fire in progress. As we journeyed forth toward the world-renowned 'Famous Grouse Visitor Centre Experience', a whisky distillery based in Crieff, the group, upon learning the lunches would be covered by The Commission, were a little worried that the punishing time-scale of the day would not allow time for dessert on top of the first two courses.... In the end, as a fact-finding mission, this adventure to what is a five star visitor attraction, proved to be more than worthwhile, as the guided tour was excellent. However, I could not escape the notion its success is due in part to a very simple premise. Who, after all, would not go home happy from this place after several free samples of "goldies"



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From 10.00 A.M.

To celebrate opening week there is a special two for the price of one admission. Please contact 0845 643 1748 or www.goape.co.uk for details.

OSPREYS RETURN

SATURDAY 11 APRIL. 11.00 A.M. - 4.00 P.M.

Come along and watch all the drama unfold live on camera as the Trossachs Ospreys return from West Africa. Children's activities are included in the event along with a ranger led bird of prey walk at 2.00 p.m. There is a charge of £ 2.50 for the walk and booking is advised.

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

SUNDAY 12 APRIL. 11.00 A.M. - 4.00 P.M.

Our fabled curtain raiser of the season is packed with traditional Easter fun activities, including the legendary duck races at the waterfall, which start at 12 noon, 1.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. There will also be Spring guided walks at a cost of £ 2.50 per person. Check for times.

HEELSTER GOWDIE

SUNDAY 19 APRIL. 2.30 P.M.

SUNDAY 17 MAY. 2.30 P.M.

We welcome back our resident band for their fourth season for some fine music and witty repartee. This is a free concert, but donations to the groups chosen charity will be very welcome.

BAG BEN LOMOND

SATURDAY 2 MAY. 9.00 A.M.

A wonderful opportunity to climb Ben Lomond guided by local National Trust for Scotland and Forestry Commission rangers. This will take approximately seven hours and requires a high level of fitness. Check for costs.

DOG DAY AFTERNOON

SUNDAY 3 MAY. 12.00 P.M. - 4.00 P.M.

A fantastic day out for all dog lovers as we celebrate our most favoured pet. Rescue dogs, grooming, agility shows, training and much more. This is essentially a free event, though donations to the charities involved will be most welcome.

BLUEBELLS AND FAERIES

SATURDAY 9 MAY - SUNDAY 31 MAY 31 MAY

Not so much of an event as a happening. The bluebells in The Trossachs area have quite a reputation, and there are guided walks on offer leading from The Lodge to enable you to enjoy the spectacular displays more fully. These cost £2.50 and are bookable.

Please contact The David Marshall Lodge on 01877 382 258 for further information on any of the above events.

School Report.....



Aberfoyle Primary Red Nose Day

Inversnaid Primary

This term has been so busy that we are finding it difficult to remember everything that's been happening!

One of our biggest days was when two National Park Rangers and a whole team of volunteers came to help us clear the pond. The day turned out to be much more than that; the hedge, the cabin and the pond all underwent a huge transformation. The pond is three times the size that it was and the area around the pond now looks enormous because the hedge received a massive haircut! It was all really hard work but it was worth it in the end. When we were clearing the pond we found newts, water spiders, beetles and frogs - real ones and

toy ones! We even found the top of a police car and a toy ring! It was a fabulous day; the weather was beautiful, we had loads of fun and really enjoyed meeting new people (the volunteers were really nice, kind and cheerful as well as helpful!). Jamie especially enjoyed falling in the pond - again! And as if the day couldn't get any better we saw two Golden Eagles. We would like to thank all the volunteers for their help.

There has been lots more going on but we'll tell you all about it next time!

By Eilidh, Jamie,
Morgan-Leigha and Annie.

McLaren Debating Team

On Thursday 12 February McLaren Junior Debating team secured a place in the English Speaking Union's Junior National Debating Final.

McLaren High participated in the crucial second round of the ESU's National Debating Championship where we had two teams battling it out for a place in the Scottish Regional Finals. The teams comprising Kirsty Fingland, Eilidh Shearer, Megan Simpson and Megan Rhys were both proposing and opposing the motion: this House would elect its Police Chiefs. Up against tough opposition from Wallace High and St Maurice's the McLaren B team, Eilidh Shearer and Kirsty Fingland, took first place. The girls were highly commended for their passion and breadth of rebuttal argument. Credit must also go to the McLaren A team who, despite losing to their team mates, were commended for their ability to offer convincing arguments and effective points of information. McLaren are now part of the final sixteen teams left throughout Scotland and are looking forward to the even greater challenge of the ESU Regional Finals in March. We wish them luck and extend a special thanks to Tobias Paul (former McLaren Senior Debater and Scottish Debating Champion) who gave up a lot of time and effort to coach the junior teams in the run up to their tie.



ABERFOYLE ACTIVITIES YOUTH GROUP

A bit of a shortage on special events so far this year, and yet still Youth Club seems to go from strength to strength, with our increased number of members holding steady.

We've been very lucky to obtain not one but two grants recently! The first our Youth Work Development Grant from Youth Services at Stirling Council. This grant helps to pay for Youth Scotland Affiliation, materials and equipment and accommodation costs. This year this means that we will be able to make even better use of the hall, giving us more space for activities. Secondly, Lynne Wallace, our Chairperson, applied for CFSLA grant, again from Stirling Council, to buy a major piece of equipment. Her application was successful, and the Airhockey Table is on the way!!!!

Unfortunately, the Blood & Gore Workshop, rescheduled for the 6th March, was cancelled for the second time. We are very sorry about this cancellation, which was unavoidably caused by the illness of Sarah Winstone from Youth Services, who holds the workshops. We wish Sarah a speedy recovery, and hope she will be able to reschedule our

workshops soon. At the moment, we expect the scheduled Workshop on the 20th March to go ahead, but _ as usual _ you should keep checking the display board in the Co-op, on the Public Notice Board between the Clachan and the Co-op, and on the Notice Board outside the garage, for announcements about this and other events. We still expect to have quite a lot to announce and advertise over the next few months, so notices will be going up.

Again I'd like to remind adults that we are still short of at least one adult volunteer to help supervise the Senior youth club meetings, on Fridays between 8pm and 9.30pm. Please help? Remember, you do not need to be a parent or relative of any of our members, or have any special skills. You do need to be 18 years old or over, enthusiastic about preserving a youth club for the young people of the area, and free to commit to attending the meetings on most Friday evenings. If you think this might be you please contact Lynne Wallace on 382578, Marie Wardrope on 382568, or Sharon Johnston on 382571 or _ better still _ just drop in to Youth Club and check us out.



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Zanshin Kai

Aberfoyle teaches the art of Shotokan karate

The origins of karate dates back more than a thousand years, with Shotokan being developed in 1917 by Gichin Funakoshi. Karate means 'empty hand' and is taught as a practical means of self-defense. It is effective for both man and woman, young and old. It is both a physical and mental discipline where the student seeks perfection of technique.

Zanshin Kai Aberfoyle, a member of the Scottish Karate Confederation, has been established for 6 months now and has seen it's numbers grow. The junior class has expanded now with a healthy 12 kids training regularly but what is more suprising is how well the adult class is doing with at least 12 regulars who surprise themselves every week!! Sensei Davis 6th Dan, attended in January to grade all those students eligible, and we had a fantastic clean sweep with everyone passing their gradings (it's fab to see some coloured belts wrapping up the suits now!!). Students are now training hard in preparation for their next grading and the club looks forward to a calendar of events for the year, including courses, dan gradings and championships. Karate offers something for everyone whether it is self-discipline or fitness, but most importantly it is great FUN so come along and give it a go.

Classes in Aberfoyle Memorial Hall with Sensei Glen 3rd Dan
Thursdays 7 - 8pm Juniors (age 8 onwards) 8 - 9 pm Adults
Contact Julie Glen 382 296



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Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Parish Church

From the Manse

Do you remember the story of Icarus? Icarus and his father, Daedalus, were imprisoned in a labyrinth but escaped using wings of feather and wax made by Daedalus. Icarus was told by his father not to fly too close to the sun, for the heat would melt the wax that kept the wings together. But Icarus clearly fell in love with flying. He swooped higher and higher in the sky, the sun melted the wax and Icarus fell into the sea and drowned.

There is a 16th century painting by Pieter Brueghel that pictures the tragedy. But you have to look hard to see the frail white legs of Icarus disappearing into the green sea. Instead you see people going about their business as usual; completely oblivious to what is happening to Icarus. Centuries later, inspired by the painting, W H Auden would write in his poem *Musee des Beaux Arts*:

"About suffering, they were never wrong,
The Old Masters ... how it takes place

While someone else is eating or opening a window, or just
walking dully along."

To get to the joy of Easter, we have to travel through the misery of Good Friday and the numbness of Holy Saturday. While Jesus' death was happening on Calvary, the birds were singing, the shepherds led their sheep across the hills, families sat down for a meal. The first Good Friday was an unremarkable, ordinary working day, unnoticed for anything particular, except by a few. Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, would have passed quietly, no different from any other Sabbath, except for that same distraught and terrified few who mourned their friend and leader.

Easter Sunday, was Monday, so to speak, with a busy city getting back to work. So Mary did not make her way to the tomb against a backdrop of Holy Sabbath quiet. She found Jesus in the garden as the street sellers plied their wares in the nearby city, as soldiers marched and traders brought in silks and spices.

The resurrection happened in the hustle and bustle of a world getting down to business. Easter occurred amid the first century equivalent of the hiss of chips frying at McDonalds, and amid the sounds of children playing in the streets. I find I like that.

Linda

Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Guild

On Thursday 16th April we are invited to Killin Guild to hear about the work of the Leprosy Mission. We hope to leave in the morning and have lunch in Killin.



St Mary's Episcopal Church

No gain without pain.

During the week before Easter known as Holy Week, we remember the pain borne by Christ, first at the hands of his accusers, and ultimately on Good Friday upon the cross at Calvary. We shudder at biblical accounts of large nails piercing Christ's hands. On Easter Day however the pain of the previous week is swept away by the joy of the memory that Christ overcame the pain of death by rising from it. But have you ever wondered why pain had first to be suffered by Christ? The following lesson from nature offers food for thought.

Julius Caesar, so it is said, was eager to make Great Britain part of the Roman Empire because he believed its waters to be teeming with pearl oysters. If the Emperor did indeed come here hoping for pearls, then he is likely to have become bitterly disappointed. Pearls found in British oysters are of consistently poor quality. He should instead, had he been able, cast his ambitions further afield to the coastal waters of the Southern hemisphere, where infinitely finer pearls are found. The pearl has always been sought and prized. Kings and Queens have decorated their crowns and sceptres with them, and beautiful women have enhanced their elegance with pearl necklaces. Pearl oysters live in water. An oyster consists of two shells both different in shape. The lower shell is shaped like a saucer and very thick: the upper shell is much thinner and nearly flat. The two are hinged together by a strong muscle, which prevents the

shell from being opened whilst in the water.

This outer shell protects the soft fleshy interior of the oyster. The interior of the oyster is in turn surrounded by an outer sack known as the mantle. From time to time the mantle opens slightly like the gill of a fish to draw in water and tiny plants, on which the oyster feeds.

A digression: imagine grazing your finger. Hopefully nature will swiftly provide you a scar to stem the flow of blood, and seal the wound from harmful disease. This healing by a scar will explain why the oyster will produce nacre if it is hurt.

The oyster is hurt if it happens to feed on harmful or diseased bodies. These will scar the oyster's inner flesh and cause it pain. To produce a scar on its flesh and thus localise the wounding, the injured oyster will produce nacre. The production of nacre not only heals the wound: it is the nacre itself that forms the pearl. The greater the pain, the more nacre is poured onto the wound, and in time the more valuable the pearl produced. Naturally an oyster that has never suffered pain will not be able to produce a pearl. As an oyster suffers pain, so did Christ. But Christ's crucifixion, the ultimate pain known to the world became the act valued more than the finest pearl. But like the finest pearl, this could not have been produced save by the greatest pain imaginable.

Richard

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER AT ST MARY'S
Friday 10th April Good Friday 10.30 Devotion
Sunday 12th April Easter Day 11.15 Family Communion

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
PARISHES OF ABERFOYLE LINKED WITH PORT OF MENTEITH
Joint service for Good Friday, 10th April, 2009 at 7.30 pm
in Aberfoyle Parish Church. All welcome.

Welcome to the news from Glendrick Roost

The nights are getting lighter as spring approaches allowing us to work with the animals during daylight hours and getting most of it done in the light!

The big horses have moved across the busy Aberfoyle/Glasgow road into a lovely hilly field for the spring. The summer field was becoming more and more difficult to access due to the river being in spate and preventing us from going across.

Gwerthfawr, our rare Eriskay pony, is approaching her third birthday and the task of finding her a suitable mate is proving difficult. The 'local' stallion is unbelievably her father and others are few and far between. The search goes on. When we find him this will hopefully start our conservation breeding programme.

Hay is now being eaten in large amounts as the grazing in all the fields is negligible. This entails regular pickups of loads of hay to be transported from the farm to the fields, stacked and covered. If only we had our own place this task would be removed because hay could be delivered in bulk.

Dinky Doo (our miniature Shetland yearling) is at long

last allowing us to handle her a little. She is such a sweetie I am eager to cuddle her but we must make haste slowly to ensure her confidence is not shattered. I shall work on her over the coming months and hopefully she will become a lovely, affectionate pony.

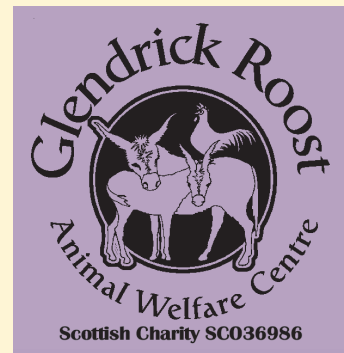
One of our junior volunteers is going to practise her balancing skills over the spring when we start to ride Patches, the donkey; Ebony, the Shetland and Jet her 3 year old son. Gwerthfawr is also old enough to be backed so a busy time is ahead. I just hope we can manage to do it with all the other work that has to be done. Volunteers are needed urgently - please see the advert below.

The credit crunch is being blamed for a large amount of animals looking for new homes. We are being asked to take a lot of different animals. Animals over the past few months have included: a macaw, two parrots, several rabbits, dogs and cats and unusually we have been asked to take in a couple of Rhea - South American flightless birds. We only take in what we have facilities for and most of these animals have been sent

elsewhere. We do now have more parrot cages for future use and the rhea may well be resident within a few weeks.

Three more rabbits have been taken in: Ash, a lovely lop with wobbly ears and Snapdragon a handsome boy who has now been castrated are resident with Burdock, Mistletoe and six guinea pigs in the shed running loose. I love to see them all racing around, jumping up, on, into and over the many boxes and branches we put in for them to hide/shelter in. That is how buns should live - not in a cage at the bottom of the garden sad, lonely and alone for their miserable lives. No animal should live on its own. Their welfare should come first not the whim of a human.

Our latest addition is a poor wee soul. He came yesterday - a pathetic, dirty, subdued little bun. It took me an hour to find the poor wee man's tail due to the amount of filth stuck to him. He tolerated the warm soak to release him of his burden. He will go to the vet to be castrated and then he will be incorporated amongst all the other buns and spend the rest of his life being



loved. We have called him Ragged Robin.

We have been asked to go back fundraising to Dobbies this year which is wonderful and we can be seen there on 14/15 March and also Easter weekend 11/12 April. Other dates - a weekend a month - are being worked out.

We have also been asked to go back to Briarlands and an open day is to be held in May. Please look out for posters advertising this event. Other fundraising events are in the process of being worked out.

If you would like any information on events or to have a community talk, please contact me:

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LOCH ARKLET: A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

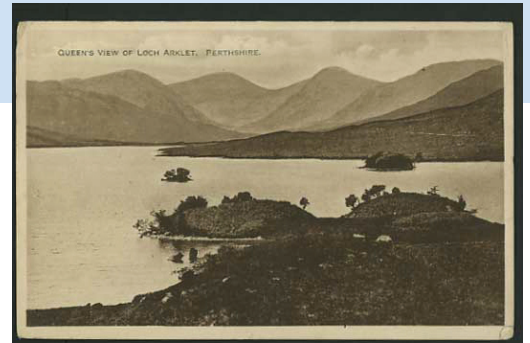
by LOUIS STOTT

It is highly unlikely that tree planting will in any way obscure the view at Loch Arklet, or detract from it. Indeed, it might eventually be held to enhance it, although this will be a matter of opinion. It is also inconceivable that Forestry Commission Scotland – even if it did its worst – would not have the provision of sight lines in mind. However, it is made very clear in proposals by the Great Trossachs Forest project that what is intended is to plant natural woodland and, furthermore, it is not intended to plant between the Aberfoyle road and the Loch where the most striking view occurs.

It is thus rather a pity that local residents are in conflict with the Forestry Commission about the proposals. The resolution put to the Scottish Parliament is not particularly well informed. For example, it may not be true to say that this landscape of "heather, moorland and blanket bog has lasted as long as human life in Scotland." There is clear evidence that Glen Arklet was once forested, and the glen was quite densely populated two hundred and fifty years ago and would probably have been strikingly different in appearance. Scott, Verne and others saw Loch Arklet before it was turned into a reservoir — not that the existing view is necessarily impaired by that. Clearly there will be changes, but what cannot be argued is that an "iconic view" will be spoiled.

Change can improve things. There is no doubt that the present view is highly attractive. However, it is the distant parts of it, which make it memorable, and the eye is likely to continue to be able to comprehend those aspects of the panorama, even with the coming of the new project. Clearly there will be alterations in the ecology. Both moorland and blanket bog are interesting, but the examples at Loch Arklet are unremarkable. However, neither they, nor the reservoir, which can look off-putting in the summer months, constitute the highest quality of foreground. It is true that they contribute significantly to the present whole, but I doubt whether it can be argued that they are superior to what is proposed.

The prospect is one of four views in the district sometimes called the Queen's View. "Queen's Views" may be said to resemble places where Queen Elizabeth is said to have slept; sometimes genuine enough, at other times legendary. Those nearby are The Queen's View, Loch Achray, The Queen's View, Loch Ard and The Queens View, Auchineden. At Auchineden various guidebooks assert authoritatively that it was from here that Queen Victoria obtained her first view of Loch Lomond. However, this is probably not the case, as there is reason to doubt that she ever traversed this road. The



site is probably named after Edward VII's Queen. The other three are connected with Victoria's visit to Inverrossachs in 1869. In her *More Leaves from the Journal of A Life in the Highlands* Victoria is quite fulsome about the panorama at the foot of Loch Ard, likening it to Switzerland. At Loch Achray she implies that it was at there that Scott was inspired to write *The Lady of the Lake*:

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;
Each purpled peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.

In *More Leaves* Victoria mentions "a fine view of Loch Arklet" but it is Nigel Tranter, approaching from Aberfoyle who characterises the place best: "In almost any weather the abrupt change and scale of the vista is breathtaking." Perhaps it is a pity that the energy which has been expended locally has not been devoted, for example, to the establishment of a car park at the Queen's View, which might provide visitors with a greater opportunity to enjoy the scene.

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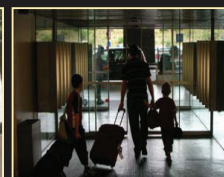
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ROB ROY RIDES AGAIN: THE LOCH ARKLET CASE

by CHRISTOPHER HARVIE MSP

Once upon a time, and a very good time it was, the 'Three Lochs Tour' existed. You took the train to Callander – 'Tannochbrae' of Dr Finlay's Casebook (brought to you by Scott's best-seller Rob Roy, 1817), then travelled by bus to Trossachs Pier on Loch Katrine. Thence down the loch on the old steamer 'Sir Walter Scott' to Stronachlachar, where another bus took you up to the mountain loch in Glen Arklet, and down alongside a torrent to Inversnaid, where you boarded the paddleboat 'Maid of the Loch' to Balloch and back to Glasgow by electric Blue Train. From scenes like these Old Scotia's grandeur sprang. Glasgow used Loch Katrine as its reservoir after 1859, and the Corporation exploited the resource brilliantly. 'Three Lochs' tours started. Queen Victoria made the trip, and Gladstone. Jules Verne wrote about it in (as ever) excessive detail. But it was a troubled young catholic priest, visiting from a slum parish in Glasgow, who was moved to write one of the greatest of all nature poems about glen, loch and torrent.

Gerard Manley Hopkins' sharp sensuality captured Glen Arklet's surrounding hills thrusting great shoulders of 'wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern', with heather in season as purple as in Brigadoon, and in winter the jagged summits of the Arrochar Alps, sighted across the gulch of Loch Lomond are crowned with snow. It is, to use an overworked governmental image, an 'iconic view'.

Which is now threatened. A project has evolved in the dense undergrowth which is the Scottish Administrative State, to create something called the Great Trossachs

Forest. This is supposed to sweep from Loch Katrine over Glen Arklet to the banks of Loch Lomond at Inversnaid. It is going to act as a means of capturing CO2 and also to enable wildlife to roam across a variety of habitats from east to west.

All very Blue Peter. But Glen Arklet has never been forested, since the first Scots chopped the Great Caledonian Forest for firewood

*This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.
A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.
Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.
What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.*

Gerard Manley Hopkins

three thousand years back. It is heath, moor, and blanket bog.

Had it been up to the local authorities the foresting of Arklet would probably have been a non-starter. But two prize quangoes are up to the job: the Loch Lomond National Park and the Forestry Commission. The first has not been notably successful in keeping Loch Lomond free from jet-skiing and the Bonnie Banks from alfresco bevvy. The second is obsessed by the old curse of 'arbitrary numerical targets', and wants to make

good the clearance of 20,000 sheep from the locality as a result of the hill-farming collapse. Hence the Trossachs Forest.

But as usual they reckoned without the locals, headed by the Community Council, who have petitioned and gained the support of the Provost of Stirling Council and the local MSP Bruce Crawford. This Wednesday, they held a consciousness-raising reception at the Scottish Parliament, convincingly presenting the visual and environmental damages that planting in Glen Arklet would do to MSPs, researchers and the interested public. My own reaction as the local MSP was: 'Loch Arklet is a miniature of the country: what makes Scotland Scotland: and within an evening's drive of Glasgow. If we allow ourselves to lose it, our entire tourist industry is problematic.'

Will this register on Park Authority and Forestry Commission? Both have been undiplomatic; no soft-sell (a usual tactic) has been tried on the locals. Shut up and accept our decision, would sum matters up. Such a line, deployed by lowlanders in the eighteenth century, notably didn't convince Rob Roy MacGregor. We may be in for another such stramash. But better than a bourach (the Gaels have the word for 'total cock-up'). And Manley Hopkins' words are graven on the 'speaking stones' outside the Holyrood Parliament: 'Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet!'

This article was first published on the guardian.co.uk website on 17th March 2009. More information on the Loch Arklet campaign can be found on the website www.locharkletview.co.uk. The petition can be signed online or on paper in Big Lottery Bid Shop, Aberfoyle PO and Gartmore shop.

Local Community makes its 'VIEW' known to LL&TNPA on a recent field trip to the area to launch its Biodiversity Action Plan.



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THE TROSSACHS SET FOR TOURISM BOOST

Legendary steamship ready for a second century of service



The veteran steamship Sir Walter Scott, synonymous with Loch Katrine and an icon for The Trossachs since its launch in 1899, will be returning to service in April on completion of a three-year restoration project, designed to ensure it can continue to serve visitors and tourists for generations to come. During the course of the last two winters extensive refurbishment of the Sir Walter Scott's hull has been completed, and the entire ship's superstructure has now been rebuilt. New boilers have also been installed to ensure the future operational life of the ship, which has been converted from being fuelled by coal to being powered by bio-fuel, providing real benefits in terms of economy, cleanliness, and environmental impact. This process included the complete overhaul of the ship's original 1899 triple expansion steam engine, work which was completed by the Sir Walter Scott's own engineers. The latest phase of the project has involved the addition of a new enclosed lounge area in the forward part of the ship, designed specifically to enhance for visitors the experience of a cruise on Loch Katrine.

"Travelling on the Sir Walter Scott in 2009 will be a totally different experience", Operations Director Gordon Allan remarked. "The refurbishment of all of the ship's accommodation, and the provision of extra facilities including the new lounge and refreshment kiosk, and fully accessible toilet accommodation, means that passengers cruising Loch Katrine will be able to enjoy a new experience - the magnificent scenery, excellent on-board amenities, and of course the timeless pleasure of sailing on a classic steamship". "Another significant aspect of the work undertaken this Winter was to ensure that the ship complies fully with the latest safety legislation - an important requirement to enable The Sir Walter Scott to remain in operation well into its second century" he continued. The main contractor carrying out the refurbishment work on The Sir Walter Scott has been Ferguson

Shipbuilders, Port Glasgow, who have been focused on completing the project on time to ensure that the famous steamship can re-enter service in time for the Easter holiday period in April, continuing through the main 2009 season when Loch Katrine will be welcoming tourists visiting Scotland during the 'Year of Homecoming'. The Sir Walter Scott's crew and shore-based staff from Loch Katrine have also been involved in assisting the main contractors. During the 2009 season The Sir Walter Scott will be operating a daily return journey from Trossachs Pier to Stronachlachar, as well as shorter 1-hour cruises during the afternoon.



Special savings for *everyone* to enjoy!

Your favourite Loch Katrine experience



A family *cycle ride* on the shores of the loch – a *cruise* to enjoy the magnificent countryside – or just a relaxing *lunch* in The Anchor's Rest?

Now with special savings your favourite Loch Katrine experience is even easier to enjoy!

ENJOY 20% DISCOUNT!

Present this voucher at Loch Katrine to receive 20% discount on all standard cruise fares, cycle hire, and from your total bill in The Anchor's Rest Bistro and Bar.

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NOT VALID IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY OTHER
PROMOTION OR OFFER

Information and Reservations - 01877 332000
www.lochkatrine.com

The Steamship Sir Walter Scott

Spring Timetable (Sat 4th April until Frid 22nd May)

Trossachs Pier depart 10.30 am (Return sailing to Stronachlachar Pier, arriving back at Trossachs Pier at 12.30pm)

Trossachs Pier depart 1.30pm (45-minute scenic cruise)

Trossachs Pier depart 2.30pm (45-minute scenic cruise)

Trossachs Pier depart 3.30pm (45-minute scenic cruise)

Summer Timetable (Sat 23rd May until Sun 6th September)

Trossachs Pier depart 10.30 am (Return sailing to Stronachlachar Pier, arriving back at Trossachs Pier at 12.30pm)

Trossachs Pier depart 1.30pm (1-hour scenic cruise)

Trossachs Pier depart 3.00pm (1-hour scenic cruise)

	Sailing to Stronachlachar	Scenic Cruise
Adult	£10.00 (Single) £12.00 (Return)	£10.00
Children (u16)	£7.00 (Single) £8.00 (Return)	£7.00
Concessions	£9.00 (Single) £11.00 (Return)	£9.00

Lady of The Lake

Trossachs Pier depart 11.30am (1-hour scenic cruise)

Trossachs Pier depart 1.00pm (1-hour scenic cruise)

Trossachs Pier depart 2.30 pm (Return sailing to Stronachlachar Pier and Glengyle, arriving back at Trossachs Pier at 4.30pm)

Trossachs Pier depart 5.00pm (1-hour scenic cruise)

	Sailing to Stronachlachar	Scenic Cruise
Adult	£9.00 (Single) £10.00 (Return)	£9.00
Children (u16)	£6.00 (Single) £7.00 (Return)	£6.00
Concessions	£8.00 (Single) £9.00 (Return)	£8.00

BIG LOTTERY BID UPDATE

During February it seemed that our Lottery bid attempt would have to be delayed a few months for reasons outside our control, but as from mid-March we are back to moving ahead as before, and have picked up the important issues of property valuation and funding again. Our solicitor was instructed to create the new company that would own the garage and we will soon be signing up members - we need 100 minimum for the bid, but already have well over 200 registered supporters. There have been yet more changes in the Big Lottery Fund regime which alter some aspects of submitting the bid for us - they do like to keep us on our toes! The Lottery Bid Shop will be open for a little while longer, so do call in at any time. Many thanks to Frances Rennie who has been a great help in the shop since it opened until very recently - if anyone has a few spare hours and would like to take her place then that would be very welcome. Also thanks to Marion Back who organised the recent successful car boot sale and made around £200 for our funds.

Milton

Hello Children,
This is the fiftieth letter I have written for the Strathard News and so many things have changed since I started. The twins are now old enough to have started school, while Braeval and I have moved up to the Big School. Dad still does what all otters do, catches lots of fish from the River Forth to feed a lot of hungry mouths. Mum looks after us all and keeps the holt clean and tidy, not easy when there are so many wet feet coming in and out all day long. Grandpa Otter still enjoys pottering in his garden and, at every opportunity, likes to tell us stories of long ago. And then there have been all the games and adventures with our friends, especially George the Hare. George has never been quite the same since his last encounter with the Aberfoyle faeries. It was great to see all that snow, more than enough to build snowmen, make long toboggan runs and have massive snowball fights. There was so much snow that everything was covered, not just the hilltops. George the Hare, whose winter coat was turned

white by faerie magic, is almost impossible to see in the snow. It must be fun, being invisible! The gang were out on the Aberfoyle golf course, looking for any stray orange golf balls that might have got lost, when we saw three strangers looking for something, too. It soon became clear that they were not on the hunt for golf balls. After a great deal of poking about they discovered a small plastic box. They opened the box, took something out, put something else in, wrote a message in a little note book from the box and secreted the cache where they had found it. Of course we had a look in the tupperware box. It was full of all sorts of things. On reading the entries in the note book, this seems to be a game called geocaching. All you need is a map, clues to where the boxes are hidden. When you find a cache, you are permitted to take one object and replace it with something of equal or better value. Oh, and put a note in the book. Easter is almost upon

us. I do love this time of the year because the days are getting longer. And now the clocks have changed, it does not get dark until much later. The daffodils are still in bloom, the birds are singing early in the mornings and the ospreys will soon be back from their winter holidays in Africa. The ospreys are our local stars of television, hidden cameras recording everything that happens at the nest site. I am

not sure that I would like to have cameras hidden in the holt. Although, we might just find out where the chocolate biscuits are disappearing to!

Perhaps I could discover what Braeval does to her decorated egg for the egg-rolling competition -- she always wins!! Maybe this year.....

Well, that is my fiftieth letter finished. Much better than an e-mail, don't you think?

Bye for now,
Milton.



CAR BOOT SALE

in aid of BIG Lottery Bid

Supported by Scottish Wool Centre

Sunday 5th April, 10am - 2pm

Scottish Wool Centre Car Park, Aberfoyle

Snacks & Refreshments available from Scottish Wool Centre

Site available from 9am for sellers. £10 car

Enquiries 01877 386222

Aberfoyle Bowling Club

extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to try flat green bowls. Everyone welcome, most days, weather permitting; residents or visitors, experienced or needing instruction. Its healthy exercise, inexpensive and great fun. "Don't knock it until you've tried it!" Check our promo-flyers on village noticeboards, come to the club house beside The Memorial Hall on Trossachs Road or ask at the Post Office for day by day details.



ANTHONY NOLAN TRUST TROSSACHS ABERFOYLE CHALLENGE

Sunday 29th March 2009

Between the outskirts of Aberfoyle and the foothills of Loch Lomond lies the Great Forest of Ard. Your path will take you through some of Scotland's most beautiful scenery.

The bike ride starts and finishes at the Forth Inn, Aberfoyle and the routes are mostly on forest tracks. A great day out for the entire family - the routes are clearly marked, with marshal points, radio backup and water provided. This event is supported by Lomond Mountain Rescue.

There is a choice of routes to suit all ability levels - 13, 26 or 39 miles. Please note there are some steep hills.

The entry fee covers the cost of staging the event. This ensures that all sponsorship raised supports our lifesaving work.

Entry Fee: £15 per person (£40 for team/family of 4)

Minimum Sponsorship: £75 per person

Contact Lindsey MacCallum tel: 01877 382149

Aberfoyle Post Office

Hop in to chick out our eggstra Easter offers!

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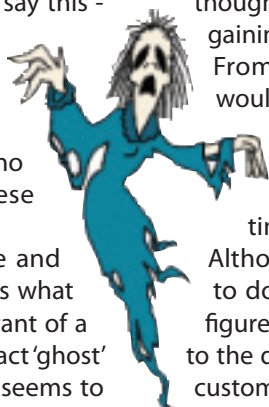
Mon-Sat. 8am-5.30pm; Sun. 11am-5.30pm

P.O. OPEN: Mon-Sat 9 am-5.30pm, (Wed-4pm Sat-1pm)

MUCKLE KATE

Aberfoyle has had, in the past, its share of the unusual and extraordinary, the story of Reverend Kirk and the legend of Doon Hill being just one. However, of recent months there have been developments in what can only be described as incidents or sightings of and - we hesitate to say this - the paranormal. The only reason we feel confident enough to print this is purely on the fact of evidence gathered from several - and indeed reliable - sources who have personally witnessed these incidents.

We have to bite the bullet here and use the word 'sightings' for that is what they are. We are talking of, for want of a better word, 'ghosts', or in actual fact 'ghost' singular, for that indeed is what seems to have been encountered by the witnesses. The spectre, if we may call it that, makes its appearance in public houses in the village although it tends to show itself in one particular establishment, ignoring the other three and only 'showing' itself in the fourth, and it appears in the hours where the pub is quiet with only a few customers. What several witnesses did notice was that the ghostly figure had the appearance of a woman and a large one at that which got



one or two of the older generation thinking that this might possibly be the ghost of 'Muckle Kate', a well known figure from the 18th century who worked in a bar in Milton just outside Aberfoyle. We have to say though that this is purely supposition, though it is the one hypothesis that is gaining ground.

From the observations given, it would seem that this spectral figure hovers around the bar area, not clearly seen, sometimes as a light shimmering, at other times, fading into the shadows. Although not specifically observed to do so, it would appear that the figure of Kate somehow helps herself to the drinks set out on the bar as the customers drinks do seem to diminish in volume. One punter, slightly the worse for drink as he himself freely admitted, called out to her, suggesting that she buy a round at which point she disappeared. Obviously a Scottish ghost, as another wag observed. He also added that perhaps she should lay off the spirits. Sadly, the humour did not end there although one would wish that some of the pub's customers would take the matter a little more seriously. We will, though, pass

on the remarks made by the village sages, purely from the viewpoint of balance, you understand. One did opine that if she drank too much someone might have to see her home at which another retorted with the remark that 'he didn't stand the ghost of a chance!'

To date, the whole matter of these ethereal sightings is in the air. There is no doubt that some individuals have seen something out of the usual. It is also true that a few local residents, some of long standing and others who have taken great interest in the history of this area, feel that if the ghost is a fact, then it might just be the lady known as Muckle Kate.

We are lead to believe that the Community Council are now taking an interest in this matter and are giving consideration to the starting up and maintaining of an official log should the number of such incidents continue. For the time being, we await further sightings and certainly require more evidence, but who is to say that such a thing is not possible?

Looking Back, Looking Forward

We are anxiously awaiting the return of the ospreys in the wildlife room at David Marshall Lodge. Last year the birds returned around the 13th/14th April which is quite late for an osprey nest. This was long before I was even in post here; I didn't arrive until May. Although my migration was only from Loch of the Lowes near Dunkeld, rather than the 3000 miles from western Africa the ospreys undergo every year.

2008 proved to be a good year for our local pair with 2 eggs successfully laid. This brought this female's total to 9. She has been coming here since 2005 and like me, originally came from the Dunkeld area too.

Although we knew the eggs had been laid, we were unable to tell how many eggs there were as the birds had built another 2ft on the nest, completely obscuring the nest cup camera. It wasn't until the beginning of June that we managed to see the chicks' small heads appearing above the rim of the nest and verified that there were two young. The chicks grew fast and

the wildlife room volunteers were able to go and see the chicks being ringed on the 4th July. Nobody however, saw the chicks fledge on 27/28th July as they did so once the cameras were switched off, and both together which is quite unusual. The adult female was first to migrate and was last seen on 6th Aug, the male and juveniles hung around until the 31st. The juveniles if they survived the journey to western Africa wouldn't be back until they were mature enough to breed at 3-4 years old. As shown with the Loch Garten osprey juveniles, which were satellite tracked, the journey is fraught with hazards and the male flew way off course and disappeared into the ocean around the Azores. The female juvenile followed the "correct" course and ended up in Mauritania.

Live cameras in the wildlife room also followed 2 nesting boxes of a family of 6 Great Tits which all fledged successfully and 3 Barn Owl chicks. One of the Barn Owl chicks died but the remaining two took off

one morning, after about 10 weeks of being in the box.

Red Squirrels have been aplenty on the live cameras at the squirrel hide, with a maximum of 10 being seen from the hide and 6 being seen on live camera. Since I have been at the Lodge, I have yet to see any greys. The Pine Marten was also delighting visitors with its appearance on the squirrel feeders. Needless to say when it appeared the red squirrels vanished from view. The Pine Marten is omnivorous and will eat squirrels, eggs, young birds as well as fungi, berries and of course peanuts! However, it does help the red squirrel population by "preferring" to eat greys, since the American cousin is bigger, slower and spends more time on the ground making it a much easier meal to catch.

Other birds of interest at the squirrel hide include the male Sparrowhawk, Jay, Treecreeper and Great Spotted Woodpecker.

In 2009 we are hoping to get the Peregrine on live camera as well as all the other wildlife so why not pay us a visit. The wildlife room is free

but if you want to show your support for the project you can join the RSPB here. Membership is from just £3 a month and without this and funds from the Forestry Commission, projects like this wouldn't be able to exist.

We are also needing new volunteers for the wildlife room, so if you fancy talking to the public about wildlife, please get in touch: andrea.williams@rspb.org.uk

Event: Ospreys Return Saturday 11th April 11am-4pm, Guided walk 2pm £2.50

Osprey fact: In keeping with the 50th theme: Did you know that a female osprey at Loch of the Lowes near Dunkeld has laid 50 eggs since 1991?

by Andrea Williams (RSPB/FC), Information and Education Officer, David Marshall Lodge, Aberfoyle

www.forestry.gov.uk/aberfoyleospreys



Loch Lomond
& The Trossachs
National Park

The Forth Inn

Main Street, Aberfoyle. www.ForthInn.com 01877 382 372

Our 1st Trossachs Beer Festival

27th - 29th March 2009

3 Nights 3 Different Bands

in the Gathering

^{Fri} 27th Trossachs Big Band

The Big Band Sound - Something new for the village 12 Piece + Singers

^{Sat} 28th Rusty Nail

A cocktail made from mixing Drambuie & Whisky...a serious Ceilidh night out with Stevie Gilles & Co.

^{Sun} 29th Hookares

A 4 piece Rock Band from the Highlands returning by request.



The Beer Prayer

Our lager,
Which art in barrels,
Hallowed be thy drink.
Thy will be drunk, (I will be drunk),
At home as in the tavern.
Give us this day our foamy head,
And forgive us our spillages,
As we forgive those who spill against us,
And lead us not to incarceration,
But deliver us from hangovers.
For thine is the beer,
The bitter and The lager.
Forever and ever,

Barmen

Tickets available from the
Forth Inn & Other Outlets
For more information
contact :-

The Forth Inn on
01877 382 372

or email:
reception@ForthInn.com

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Scotland

2009

homecomingscotland2009.com

Not here...but near!

Third Age Group Strathendrick / Balfon Heritage Group.

A visit to Stanley Mills in Perthshire has been arranged for Wednesday 22 April.

The coach picks up in Aberfoyle at 9am, Gartmore 9.20am, Drymen 9.35 am, Killlearn 9.50 am, Balfon Clinic 10 am, Cotton Street 10.05 am, Buchlyvie 10.15 am.

Book with Balfon Library 01360 440407 or with Joan on 01360 449253 noon-7pm Monday - Friday only. Be among the first to

enjoy the new hi-tech interactive visitor experience at the spectacular 18th-century water mill complex beside the River Tay. The visitor centre tells the stories of those who worked there and the products they made. The superb interactive displays let you discover if your fingers are as nimble as a child labourer's or compete to see if you are tough enough in business to make the mills profitable. Hear the clamour of the factory floor and see how engineers harnessed the energy of the Tay as well as the machinery that turned raw cotton into products sold around the world. Cost approx £4 depending on age. The hire of the coach is being met by a grant from the Co-operative Community Fund.

Whisky in the Frame



A new outlet for Scotch Whisky started trading recently.

The owners, Cameron & June McCann, best known for exhibiting and promoting Scottish art have dedicated a significant section of their new Ealain Gallery in Drymen to featuring a range of single malts.

"What we've discovered more often than not, it is the females who deliberate most over a piece of art or a gift, where her partner is left kicking their heels. We now have something to interest all.

Ealain is Gaelic for art and it is only fitting that we have the best of Scottish art and craftsmanship under one roof. With a full programme of art planned well into 2010".

"I've always had a passion for scotch and the size of the new gallery has given me the opportunity to exercise that passion" Cameron said. "I've had a great time sourcing some outstanding distiller's bottles for the shop. These include a complete set of Springbank 'Millennium Collection' some 1st release Port Ellen (2001), a couple of cases of Loch Dhu, some rare Bowmore's and a couple of very rare Auchentoshan 1965. In buying up some collections for the shop, I've also picked up some very rare Hennessy Cognac including a limited edition Paradis in a Baccarat Decanter thought to be pre 1980".



Planning Aid for Scotland

Planning Aid for Scotland is a national charity established in 1993 to deliver free and independent advice, information and training on planning and environmental matters to the public and community groups. It is delivered by 200 volunteers who are full-time planners from all over Scotland and who give up their time to provide free advice to the public. Planning Aid for Scotland, in partnership with Stirling Council, has successfully delivered two practical workshops on the Stirling Local Development Plan and Local Housing Strategy, helping local people to shape the future of their area. Under the guidance of these experts the delegates heard about the roles of both the Local Development Plan and Local Housing Strategy, the role of the community in planning and how these fit into a co-ordinated planning system. They were also given an insight into the new Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 which was described as the most fundamental reform of the planning system in 60 years, designed to make the planning system more inclusive and accessible. A Council spokesperson said, 'Using Planning Aid to run the training sessions has been a very beneficial process ensuring that our local communities are better informed about planning issues, how to access further information, and how they can influence and get involved in the process'. Planning Aid for Scotland provides free assistance from fully qualified planners and welcomes enquiries from Stirlingshire. PAS can be contacted on the helpline - 0845 603 7602 or via the website www.planningaidscotland.org.uk For further information contact: Rachael Pateman, Development Officer rachael@planningaidscotland.org.uk Phone: 0131 220 9730 Direct Line: 0131 220 9738



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The Strathendrick Film Society

The Band's Visit (2007)

April 3 7:30pm

Mystery Film Weekend

April 17th 7:45pm

The cinema returns to the McLintock Hall in Balfon for a weekend of films (Programme to be confirmed). There will be at least one surprise screening of a new or pre-release movie. Films will be shown on Friday, Saturday and Sunday promising a feast for all our film fans.

Hot Fuzz (2007)

April 24 7:30pm

Springtime in the Trossachs

The small birds sing and the woodlands ring to the sound of their joyous cry.

Swallows and martins in vigorous flight blaze patterns across the sky.

The patient heron in search of fish stalks the lochside shore.

The slumbering trees are in bud again and the land awakes once more.

The sparkling rivers leisurely flow on their journey to the sea.

Spring has come to the Trossachs again such a glorious place to be.

Agnes Ford

26 April 2009 SXC Round 2 Aberfoyle Event Description

Round 2, and the Sue-Me Buff SXC Series 2009 returns to a long-lost friend - the hills and forests of the Trossachs.

We've booked good weather for this one, so hopefully the technical track will nice-and-dry! Expect testing steep climbs, and challenging singletrack descents.

Times

Registration from 9am
Practice 9am - 10.30am

Race 1 - 11am - Juvenile, Youth, Junior, Veteran, Grand Vet, Super Vet, All Women, Fun

Race 2 - 1pm - Primary Schools
Practice 1pm - 1.30pm

Race 3 - Elite/Expert, Master, Sport
Contact Information

Local Organiser: Squadra Porcini
Entry Contact:

Email: ness.peter@yahoo.co.uk
Phone: 0131 556 1554

All other Queries: info@sx.org.uk
Enter online www.entrycentral.com

ABERFOYLE MEMORIAL HALL

Pilates

Mondays 7 - 8.15 pm

Step'n'Tone

Mondays 8.15 - 9.15 pm

Thursdays 10 - 11am

Contact Amanda Reid 07811633968

Tap, Ballet & Jazz Classes

Tuesdays from 3.30pm

Contact Carla Duggan 07815146462

Toddlers

Wednesday Mornings

Contact Julie Glen 382296

Scottish Country Dancing

Wednesday Evenings

Contact A Ralston 382847

Ballroom and Latin American Dance

Wednesday at 1830 for one hour

Contact John Epps 382 276

Shotokan Karate

Thursdays

7pm (kids from 8 yrs)

8pm (adults)

Contact Julie Glen 382296

or Jackie Bell 382142

Youth Club

Friday Evenings

Contact Marie 382568

WRI (Womens Rural Institute)

Contact Margaret Brown 382463

The hall is available for meetings, parties and other events (to book call Sandra Jardine 382673)

Coffee Morning

with musical entertainment.

In aid of McLaren High School Orchestra tour 2010.
Saturday April 25th. 11-1, Gartmore Village Hall.

IMPORTANT Information For Advertisers

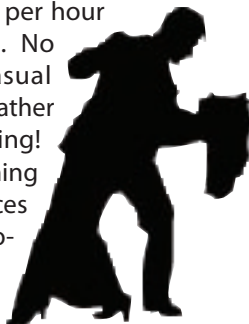
When you place an advert with the Strathard News we will continue to run it unless you tell us to stop or replace it. To place/cancel an advert contact Ian Marshall on 01877 382211 advertising@strathardnews.com. For design or to alter an advert contact Marion Back on 01877 386222 newsdesk@strathardnews.com

Ballroom and Latin Dance Class

Memorial Hall on Trossachs Road,
Wednesdays at 6.30 PM

Everyone welcome, residents and visitors; its gentle, healthy exercise, just £1 per hour session and great fun. No partner required - casual clothes are fine though leather shoes are best for dancing! Amaze everyone by learning the basics of lots of dances and never be caught two-left-footed again.

Contact John Epps, tel 382276 for more details.



Forth Inn Events Diary

March

22nd March – Mothers Day Menus, Booking advisable

22nd March – Pub Quiz in the Wallace Bar Fun starts at 9pm

27 to 29th March - Our 1st Beer Festival
3 FANTASTIC bands over 3 Nights.

Tickets available from The Forth Inn

April

18th April - Karaoke no Theme just a Great Night Out! Fun starts @ 9pm

20 to 26th April – Italian Food & Beer Week

26th April – Pub Quiz in the Wallace Bar Prize for Winning Team

Main Street, Aberfoyle FK8 3UQ

Tel: 01877 382 372

E-mail: Phil@ForthInn.com

Marinated Tuna Loin with a Berloti Bean Salad

INGREDIENTS:

4 x 6oz Tuna Loin Steaks

1 Red Onion

4 Cloves Garlic

1 Lime

20g Basil

4 Tbsp Olive Oil

2 tbsp Balsamic Vinegar

½ Tsp Sea Salt, 1 Pinch of White Pepper

1 x 340g Tin of Berloti Beans

Mixed Lettuce



METHOD:

Slice red onion, crush garlic cloves, chop basil and squeeze the lime juice into a bowl

Add the tuna steaks, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt & pepper – leave to marinade over night.

Place some mixed lettuce leaves onto serving plates, rinse off the berloti beans and arrange on top.

Next take your tuna steaks and place onto a tray, pour over the remaining marinade, grill under a Hot Grill for 2 mins each side. Place on top of berloti beans, drizzle the cooking liquid around the salad and tuna and serve.

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VEHICLES FOR SALE



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01 X REG LANDROVER FREELANDER 1.8 COMMERCIAL IN WHITE HAVING ONLY COVERED 24000 MILES £3250 +VAT

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Dear Readers of the Strathard News,

We have had a lot of customers asking us what is happening in the car trade in the current economic climate. At present there are still some 08/08 and 08/58 pre registered vehicles around and these vehicles look good value in comparison with a year ago. But they are running out and prices in the second hand market, which always rises in the first couple of months into a new year have risen at some 20 to 25% this year compared to 4% last year.

I am sure that is not what you are expecting in this current climate but demand is out stripping the supply of second hand vehicles at present. Mainly because the manufacturers are not pre registering and the fleets are not re-fleeting due to the fact all the manufacturers have put their prices up to the fleets and the exchange rates have gone against them, plus increased manufacture costs.

What's going to happen ???

Well I think that as the recession deepens and unemployment rises there will be a number of big car sales groups will become bankrupt. The combination of lack of credit, lack of consumer confidence and manufacturers having to increase prices because none of them are making any money will be just too much for some of the large highly debt geared retailers. This will create a very volatile car market with windows of opportunity for purchasers. As the big groups fail there will be large quantities of cars needing moved on quickly. The manufacturers will not be able to afford to offer big discounts as they will not be making any money - but beware of attractive finance packages from them (always read and understand the small print) especially the term "the vehicle must be returned in a condition commensurate with its age and mileage" This can cost you a lot of money when your agreement finishes.

If you are considering changing a vehicle now or in the future please give us a phone, hopefully we can help get you the right vehicle or at least give you some useful advice.