

Teapot up the Spout!

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Early this month saw the sad demise of the Teapot, the 16th century cottage situated on the outskirts of Kinlochard. It was razed to the ground by bulldozer to allow for development of the next-door property. The building was used for hundreds of years by travellers stopping for some refreshment. The house got its name from the custom of travellers who instead of taking for a cup of tea, would ask for a 'teapot', to indicate they wished whisky. It was a unique building and although the roof had to be removed some 20 years ago because of sagging, the walls and gable ends were still intact. Experts reckoned it would only have needed the original turf roof once more to return it to its original appearance.

The National Park authorities apparently could not stop its demolition as the building was on private land and did not have listed status. Apparently the cottage had appeared on Historic Scotland's non-statutory list of buildings with special architectural or historic interest. But following a re-survey in 1979, it was decided not to include it on the statutory list.

Sadly it is now gone, as has another piece of Strathard's history.



Pictures: The Teapot in 1900 and how it looks today

ABERFOYLE GIRL

WINS AWARD

Melissa Wardrope from Aberfoyle came top in a poetry competition which attracted entrants from all over Central Scotland. Melissa, 15, a pupil of McLaren High School, pipped 80 other young hopefuls to win first prize, £50 worth of book tokens at W.H.Smiths. The competition was part of the Drinkwise Campaign in Clackmannanshire and Stirling, exploring youth culture and alcohol and the poems submitted reflect the problems of drink and how it can affect young people. This collection of poetry has been brought out in book form.

Melissa (and her mother) have given permission for her prized entry to be reprinted here. Melissa's winning poem is entitled, 'Never Again.'



Never Again

*Mind is blank,
Body aches,
What did I do last night?
So many stupid mistakes,
A wasted day lying in bed,
Trying to tame your throbbing head,
Your day consists of a bed and a loo,
Your mind keeps saying "silly you"
Never again is what they all say,
Yet the pubs are crawling, yet again,
The next Saturday...*

Weird History *continued.....*

- The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway, hence, a "thresh hold."
- In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite awhile. Hence the rhyme, "peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."
- Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man "could bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

The Aberfoyle Traders' Association was reformed in 2000 when it was felt that the interests of local businesses would be better served by working together rather than against one another or in isolation.

The Association provides a forum, encourages collaboration and cooperation between all businesses within Strathard and surrounding area, promotes the area nationally and internationally, calling on the resources and expertise of Stirling Council and Leader +, Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority, AILLST Tourist Board. It was not long after the Reformation – of Aberfoyle Traders Association – that they learnt we meant business, and since then have offered encouragement and support, including financial support, for our ventures and plans for the future.

Aberfoyle won the 2002 FX Tourism Best Village Award in recognition of “the work and dedication of a number of individuals including the Aberfoyle Traders Association” which has been highly successful in raising the profile of the village.

Improving the profitability of members' businesses and building a vibrant local economy with employment and career prospects, are at the heart of the Association's activities.

Membership continues to grow. Members come from Kinlochard, Aberfoyle and Gartmore, with interest from Port of Menteith, Brig o' Turk and Buchlyvie. Tradesmen, Service providers, Retailers,

Accommodation Providers and Caterers, ‘home workers’, and from Sole Traders to National Companies, are represented. All have an interest in seeing the local economy flourish.

Meetings are lively and well attended, and are normally held monthly on Monday or Tuesday evenings, but for those who cannot make the meetings minutes are circulated to all members.

The first year culminated in the production of the Aberfoyle brochure, designed ‘in house’. Then came the Mushroom Festival – a weekend of Food, Fungi, Fairies – and most importantly, Fun! Mushroom Festival 2002 built on this success. Look out for MF 2003, it will be 23rd to 26th October.

www.aberfoyle.co.uk introduces the world to Aberfoyle and Strathard and is a community facility for use by local groups and ATA member businesses.

Christmas lights have been purchased, and thanks to the hard work of some of the members, usually in bitter conditions, the local communities are decorated, adding a special seasonal sparkle! Shops on Aberfoyle Main Street have a pre Christmas late opening, with mince pies and a glass of wine on offer to shoppers. Carol singing adds to the occasion.

At Easter 2002, Tramping Through The Trossachs, in unbelievable sunshine, showcased the wealth of opportunity locally for enjoying this outstanding area of the National Park. Again, during two weeks of unbelievably great weather a brilliant programme of over 180 events and activities, catering for all ages and abilities was on offer this Easter.

Hanging baskets now bring colour to the Main Streets in summer and plans are afoot to repaint and replant the tatty looking planters in Aberfoyle Main Street.

Wireless Broadband has been brought to the community in a pilot project supported and funded by Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley and Leader + and over 20 businesses have subscribed to this innovative initiative.

As a direct result of ATA members being involved, upgrades to Aberfoyle village will be rolled out over the next few years as funding becomes available. The Aberfoyle Initiative is now closely associated with Community Futures.

As a member of the Association you will have opportunities to ‘network’, advertise for minimal outlay in event programmes, be a part of **www.aberfoyle.co.uk**, take advantage of training opportunities and most importantly, become involved with a dynamic, enthusiastic Association aiming to revitalise the economy of these rural communities for the benefit of all residents, and get ahead of the local, national and international competition!

If you are in business locally, whatever your business, please join us!

Whatever your business, you will benefit more from the collective efforts of the membership to improve profitability, than working in isolation. Support the hard work of the Aberfoyle Traders Association! Become involved! Join us!!

Subscriptions, based on the number of employees range from £25.60 to £100

For more information contact any ATA member or Mary Phillips, Tel: 382 696 Email: **ATA@forthhouse.com**

Peter Sunderland Tel: 382 991 Email: **peter@gartmorehouse.com**

John Samson Tel: 382 559 Email: **john.m.samson@btopenworld.com**

Norman Quirk Tel: 387 210 Email: **norman@quirk.co.uk**

30 Years Service for *J the P*



Last month, Jimmy Ferguson, was presented with a certificate commemorating 30 years completed service with the Post Office.

Jimmy, native born, brought up at the head of the glen, attended McLaren High School. In those days and so far from home, he had to live in a hostel during the week whilst at school.

On leaving school he joined the bank but, perhaps finding that too restricted, he entered the Post Office instead, where he has been ever since, delivering our mail always with a smile and a friendly word. Actually, with his pastimes listed as golf, fishing, golf and summer ice, it's a wonder he ever had time for work! All the best to you, 'Jimmy the Postie'!

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MAIN STREET ABERFOYLE

Brolum

"After taking Celtic Connections by storm last year, this band are likely to conquer the world...their deftly arranged material is bound to please any audience. Catch them before they are too famous."

I went to see Brolum perform live in Dunblane on 17th May, as part of the Doune & Dunblane Fling - if you weren't there then you really missed a great night out. Brolum is a seven piece band and features local girl Eilidh Campbell, who grew up at The Kirkton here in Aberfoyle. Eilidh attended Aberfoyle Primary School, and began learning the fiddle under the enthusiastic guidance of the late Jacqui Mengler. She then went on to graduate from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, in 2001, with a BA (Hons) in Applied Music. She now plays with various bands, and has performed in many



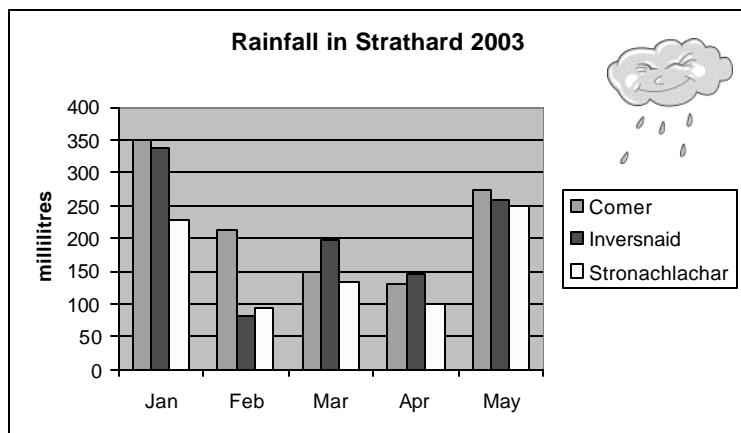
countries throughout Europe, the Czech Republic, Singapore, the USA and Scandinavia, and completed a six-week tour of New Zealand in 1998.

In addition to performing and teaching, Eilidh is also part of the late Yehudi Menuhin's Live Music Now! Scheme, which takes live performances to a wide range of community venues (specialising in working with youngsters with special needs). She has recorded with Brit-Award winning band, 'Belle and Sebastian' and, as part of a group including Brolum members Andy Webster and Martin O'Neill, was a finalist in the 1999 Radio 2 Young Folk Award. She also performs in a duo with pianist James Ross, and with the local Kinlochard Ceilidh Band. Having only formed a short time before, winning the prestigious Danny Kyle award at Glasgow's Celtic Connections Festival in 2000 exploded Brolum into the public eye. It was only 6 months later before they also walked away with the equivalent award from the world's largest Celtic Festival: the "Festival Interceltique de Lorient" in France.



Since then, Brolum has built up a following not only at home, but also in countries such as Italy, Belgium, England, and of course France. The band's debut album "7:11" was released in January 2001. They have been working on new material over recent months, and are eagerly looking forward to recording their second album in the near future. All seven of Brolum are graduates or students from two of Scotland's major institutions of music. This makes sense not only when you see the expertise shown by each member, but also when you hear the quality of arrangement that band produces. The full line-up is: Andy Webster (guitar/vocals), Eilidh Campbell (fiddle/backing vocals), Martin O'Neill (bodhran), Kathleen Graham (vocals/clarsach), Duncan Lyall (double bass), Sarah Wilson (fiddle/backing vocals) and Ali Hutton (pipes/whistles/bouzouki/backing vocals). Twin fiddles, pipes and whistles, backed by one of the most solid rhythm sections around, combine to create one of the most driving sounds you will have heard in a long time. Add clarsach as a bridge between the two sections and you have the complete outfit. Well, almost complete. Complete is when you consider that Brolum is one of the few bands around today which can boast having both Gaelic and Scots vocals as part of the line-up. Brolum's next local gig is Monday 14th July at Stirling Folk Club. For a full list of tour dates, or for more information on the band, check out their website at www.brolum.co.uk

Rainfall in Strathard



On average it looks as though Comer is the wettest place in Strathard, closely followed by Inversnaid. It would be interesting to also compare rainfall in Kinlochard and Aberfoyle, so if anyone is monitoring these areas please contact us on 01301 702972 or email newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk with the figures.

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EDITORIAL

On Friday night the 23rd of May I was privileged to be part of a small group of people who attended an event organised by our local Forest Enterprise Environmental Ranger Mr. Mike Stewart. Mike took us with him as he travelled round some five Owl nesting boxes, in the hope that some of them at least would be inhabited, to our delight all five boxes were inhabited, three with Tawny Owls, the other two with Barn Owls, four with chicks all at different stages of development, the fifth a Barn Owl still sitting on eggs. There's no doubt that everyone in our group were impressed not only by the dedication and professionalism of Mike and his fellow Ranger Miss Katie Freeman, but also appreciated the way that they took us in hand and made us all feel very welcome. We must now play our part by not returning to or directing others to these very special sights, unless under the supervision of the Forest Enterprise Environmental Ranger Team. It's very easy for well meaning individuals to destroy years of dedicated work simply through over enthusiasm or ignorance. It gives me great pleasure to welcome two new contributors to the Strathard News Forest Ranger Mr David Wilkie who will be contributing on a regular basis with updates from Forest Enterprise. Secondly for the gardeners amongst us we will be featuring a regular gardening column from "Wellie Boots". Myself and the committee of the Strathard News would like to thank everyone for their encouragement and especially to our friends who have shown their support by adding their names to our list of annual subscribers.

Jimmy Campbell
Editor



Proposals are afoot to extend one of Europe's top wildlife sites, the River Teith candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC), special for its populations of salmon and an ancient type of fish, the lamprey.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) have been asked by the Scottish Executive to consider extending the boundaries of the current site, which follows the main stem of the river from Stirling up to Inverlochlarig, to include those tributaries accessible to salmon and lamprey.

Roddy Fairley, Area Manager for Scottish Natural Heritage explained: "The River Teith supports an important population of the well-known salmon and the lesser known lamprey, an eel-like fish that has a distinctive suckered mouth instead of jaws like most fish. All three native species – the sea lamprey, the river lamprey and the brook lamprey – are found in the Teith.

"The river provides excellent habitat; the water quality is usually pristine and it has few man-made obstacles, like dams, which can stop the fish migrating. The high quality of the river habitat is thanks to careful management of the river and nearby land by farmers and land managers.

"Throughout Europe both salmon and lamprey have declined due to a range of factors including pollution, land-use change, river engineering and problems in the marine environment. The proposal to extend the site will help fulfil the UK Government's commitment to look after internationally important populations of salmon and lamprey." The tributaries proposed for inclusion in the site are the Ardoch; Annet; Coillechat; Keltie; Greenock and Leny Burns; the Allt Mor and

Ardchullarie at Loch Lubnaig; Kirkton Glen Burn; Calair Burn and its larger tributaries, Monachyle Burn; Allt Carnaig; Invernenty and the River Larig and its larger tributaries. The system from the Achray and Finglas Waters downstream to the Teith is also proposed for inclusion. This includes Loch Achray and Loch Venachar; Drunkie Burn; Milton Glen Burn and the Eas Gobhain.

SNH has been consulting with people who have a direct interest in the above tributaries, including angling bodies and other interested organisations.

"We think we have managed to speak to most people informally already" said Colin Castle, Area Officer for Scottish Natural Heritage, "but we are keen to make contact with anyone who owns or lives on land adjacent to the tributaries that we might have missed. They can contact us at our office in Stirling on 01786 450362."

The consultation runs to the 23 July 2003. All comments received will be taken into account and detailed in a consultation report which SNH will submit to the Scottish Executive. After they have fully considered all of the views contained within the report Scottish Ministers will decide whether to put forward the extended site to the European Commission as a candidate SAC.

editor@strathardnews.co.uk

Listed Buildings of Strathard

In the wake of the Tea Pot being demolished without any thought or due ceremony, I decided to have a look at the list of building's that have been listed within the Strathard Area. There are a few that are conspicuous by their absence. Here is the list as it stands at the present time. *Ed.*

1. The Garrison – Inversnaid.
2. The Garrison Farm - ".
3. McGregor of Glengyle burial ground.
4. Various aqueducts in Duchray Valley.
5. Tea Pot Bridge.
6. Towers & Shafts Glasgow Water Works.
7. Basin House.
8. Duchray Castle.
9. Meall Mhor
10. Dundaroch – Lochard.
11. Corrienessan.
12. Milton Mill.
13. Jean McAlpines Cottage.
14. New Parish Church Aberfoyle.
15. Aberfoyle School.
16. Aberfoyle Bridge – Manse Road.
17. Old Parish Church.
18. David Marshall Lodge.
19. Craiguchty Terrace.
20. St.Marys Episcopal Church.
21. Braeval Farm House.
22. Braeval Mill.

Listed Monuments.

1. Duke Murdoch's Castle.

The Aberfoyle Firefighters

by
Dougie MacPherson

Strathard in common with many country communities relies heavily on local help to solve local problems. Nowhere is this more evident than in our local Fire Brigade.

Based at Aberfoyle Fire Station, our local brigade's 'home district' covers all of Strathard and as far afield as Mugdock to the south, Ruskie to the west, Cardross Bridge on the Lake of Menteith to Arnprior road and the Achray Hotel over the Duke's Pass. A pretty large area, it has its fair share of emergency call outs throughout any given year. Yet the Aberfoyle team can call on other areas for back up. Fire engines from the nearby communities of Balfour, Callander and, indeed, fire headquarters at Stirling can and do attend in our area to give assistance. Correspondingly, the Aberfoyle team is often in attendance outwith their own area. It is a team effort, reflected both on a local level and all across central Scotland.

And what of the Aberfoyle firefighters? As with most small communities, they work purely on a voluntary basis. They are not professionals, most of them holding down other jobs. Yet they are a dedicated group, the Aberfoyle Retained firemen, so called because they give a commitment to devote a certain number of hours each week to the brigade. They are paid a retainer, dependent on the number of hours they are able to give. This may vary from individual to individual. They are also paid for the hours they are out on call which, it has to be said, is a lower rate of pay than the regular firemen. Nevertheless, it surely is a small price to pay for our safety as well as peace of mind.

I asked Larry Gilmour, a local man who has been in the fire service for more than 20 years and, incidentally, Sub Officer in charge of Aberfoyle for the last 11 years, what it is that attracts a person to the job. Larry made it quite clear that it was not for the money. Although paid a retainer and an hourly rate when called out, it was still insufficient reason for volunteering. It could be excitement perhaps but as with most emergency services, it usually involves 90% boredom with 10% action. No, Larry considered the main motivation to be commitment to the community.

The Aberfoyle 'firefighters', which is perhaps what we should be calling them because the composition has changed, with females now playing an active role. In Aberfoyle fire station, both sexes are represented and from 'all walks of life'. All members are subject to rigorous training with an initial one week course at Bo'ness. Even after that there is still more training based at the home station where two hours a week is devoted to maintenance of vehicle and equipment along with further instruction. The Aberfoyle fire brigade has a strength of 8 at present, 2 short of the ideal, but these 2 are being recruited shortly. 24 hour cover is a constant problem due to members' work commitments. Some members living locally are only available evenings as they work away. Conversely, those who live outside Strathard but work in the area can be called out during daytime hours. It is a fine balancing act but it works.

The team is called out on average about 100 times a year, for variety of reasons, the most prevalent being road traffic accidents. Incidentally, most call outs occur during daylight hours. They did, however, have a series of calls of a slightly



different nature this Easter past, when there was a surge of forest and grass fires due to the dry weather, from the Duke's Pass and Ben An to Buchlyvie. Helicopters flying in with water were used which may look ineffectual on television, but if you are standing underneath when the water is released, the force of it can knock you to your knees! Finally I asked Larry what advice he could give to householders. His answer was immediate: never hesitate to call out the Fire Brigade, no matter how small or seemingly inconsequential the fire may seem. He could give instances where this advice was not taken, where the householder thought the situation was under control and did not want to bother the brigade, much to the householder's cost, alas! When in doubt, call them out or, to use another old adage, better safe than sorry! That is why our fire brigade is here. They're willing to serve, willing to assist, so do not hesitate! The team is part and parcel of our community. This can be seen by the extra work they do, such as giving guided tours of the station to the local playgroup, just as one example. They have also supported, on a total voluntary basis, local galas such as that at Gartmore and at last years' Jubilee celebrations at Kinlochard by attending with their appliance and crew to chat to members of the public.

Community Council Report



With a classic piece of mis-timing our May meeting was held on election night and looked set to be held amongst the ballot boxes in Kinlochard Hall. We were fortunate enough however to re-arrange things and the meeting moved next door to Kinlochard School. Whilst on the subject of the election, Strathard CC would like to offer congratulations to the successful candidates and commiserations to the runners-up. One subject seems to dominate our discussions at the moment, and that is traffic.

It was reported to us that the double yellow lines opposite the Co-op recently had a double decker bus parked on them whilst the driver went shopping! I have since learnt that the driver duly received a parking ticket. We all know how difficult it can be to find a space for a quick pop into the shops, but I would urge people to be more thoughtful. Please use the car park if you are going to be more than a few minutes, so that those who cannot carry shopping very far can use the permitted parking spaces. And if you want to park on the double yellow lines - you will be booked.

The traffic calming on Lochard Road was under discussion again following a letter from a resident expressing

dissatisfaction with the scheme, with the consultation process and with the right of the Community Council and Community Futures groups to act on behalf of the community. Whilst it was agreed that everyone is entitled to express their opinions on the success or otherwise of the scheme, the meeting felt most strongly that every effort had been made to allow members of the community to express those opinions. Comments were received from just two residents and only one person came to the advertised meeting to hear the discussion. All points raised have been passed on to the Council Traffic Management department, and we have received prompt replies and explanations as to the reasons for the chosen layout.

With regard to the right of the Community Council to speak on behalf of the community, that is what we are elected to do. We would love to receive more feedback and participation from residents and if someone feels strongly that they are not being represented then please remember that the next Community Council elections are in the autumn. A last comment (I hope) on the traffic calming. Since the last meeting I

have received feedback from the Council on traffic speeds before and after the installation. Speed has reduced significantly overall and the highest recorded speed is 10mph lower than it was. I have to say that all complaints which I have heard about the scheme have been due more to bad manners and aggressive driving, than to anything else, but communication continues with Stirling Council and all views are, and will continue to be, represented.

Hopefully we will see a good turnout for our next meeting, in Inversnaid Primary on 5th June. The community groups in the Loch Katrine area and Scottish Water are hoping to meet soon with National Park Authority representatives and all major stakeholders in the area, for discussions on the future of the catchment area. Report next month - watch this space.

And finally - we were pleased to hear that the Outdoor Centre at Inversnaid, formerly Inversnaid Church, has been bought by local residents who will be turning it into a hostel for walkers and cyclists thus providing a much-needed facility whilst providing employment.

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Letters to the *Editor*

.....*have your say!*

What do you think? If you have something on your mind, let's hear it. There's no better way to reach all the residents of Strathard than through the Strathard News. Send your comments to The Editor, Strathard News, Kirkton House, Duchray Road, Aberfoyle FK8 3XB, or email: editor@strathardnews.co.uk

Demolition of Local History - The Tea Pot

I cannot believe the story unfolding before me in local and now in national media, as to the loss of one of our local landmarks. The Tea Pot has been destroyed; the history and stories that accompanied it are now all that remain!

After spending the last decade of my life restoring old buildings and Dry Stane Dykes in this area, I find it appalling that this can happen in our National Park where people come to look at such things. How was this allowed to happen? It should have been restored or at least consolidated so that further decay was halted. What next? Only in last months issue of Strathard News a reader in Australia whose ancestors lived there referred to it. Maybe you might say that it is just an old ruin, but these are our last links with local past. Should not the National Park authority and its elected members be safe-guarding our historic landmarks, instead of new buildings and shopping centres? Surely someone is accountable for this act of ignorance.

I look forward to your reply.

Rowan Seabrook
4 Ballie Nicol Jarvie Court

Response to John Clow's letter to the Editor - Issue 5. What Consultation???

Mr Clow criticises the method used for traffic calming without the knowledge that this measure was implemented only after painstaking evaluation of the options by experts in current best practice and road signage - see also the note in this issue of SN by John Digney, leader of the Roads and Access Action Group; for what it's worth recent measurements have confirmed that motorists are now driving more slowly on Lochard Road, ie though less than popular, the measures seem to have worked.

A little over a year ago, the Community Futures process started when every household/individual was asked what they liked/did not like/wanted to change about Strathard. In response, the Community Futures action groups are now getting results. Mr Clow asks why we should not have a pedestrian crossing by the playpark or more school signs? - if these measures are required by our community and the needs are arrived at democratically, then action groups can be formed to make things happen. There will be further rounds of the now proven "likes/dislikes/want changed" stimulus for action.

Mr Clow closes his letter by asking for Community Action Groups to publicise meeting dates. It has already been agreed that meetings will be announced in the SN and on the village notice board so that people wishing to take part may do so; we are pleased to see that our neighbours who have not hitherto been actively involved feel the same way. To rectify an apparent area of confusion, Community Futures is not a Government organisation; though encouraged and supported by The National Park this initiative is 100% our own, there are no committees in the usual sense, there is no public gallery to barrack from - if you are present, you state your interest and you are part of it. Finally, the Community Futures Steering Group on which I serve as chairman has had only one meeting since the action plan was launched - and that was specifically to discuss how Community Futures Groups - and in this our steering group in particular... can be as transparent as possible!

John Epps
Chairman, Community Futures

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the Strathard News this month and was left somewhat puzzled over a few of your articles, perhaps someone out there could answer these questions.

Re the traffic calming measures planned for Manse Road. While I appreciate the need for pedestrian safety, there is little enough room for a vehicle to pass an oncoming wood lorry with the width of the road as it is. The wood lorries must have access over Manse Road the timber they are carrying has been felled to make way for new forest park pathways and cycleways. Will some bright spark now suggest another new bridge for the lorries? To suggest traffic calming as in Lochard road, would only mean disaster for Manse Road!

Still on the subject of Manse Road "The Field of Dreams" I read with interest the suggestion to turn this field into a picnic area was somewhat surprising to me, the field itself is not only there for the horses grazing it also plays host to a great many species of birds e.g. Wild Ducks, Oyster Catchers and Herons to name but a few. Apart from the fact that the field floods several times a year, people presence would destroy the habitat for these birds. The puzzling part is this, who will be employed to fish the picnic tables from the river forth when it floods? Does Jimmy Ferguson fancy another sponsored canoe?

Douglas Hyslop's letter, I agree that we must have more local participation on decisions made in and around the Village, with more traffic calming on our roads we will have the problem of increased number of National Park Tourist's cars bringing the village to a Standstill!! What will happen on a busy bank holiday? Will the tourists be sitting in their cars unable to move because of congestion? Or will they be able to shop in our shops or have lunch at any of the eating establishments? Maybe they could have their picnic in their cars! There's a nice little corner of land across from the Baillie that would make a good picnic area if it had a tidy up and maybe a few picnic tables.

Yours etc.
Kate Ferauson.

Broadband Update

The Broadband pilot is up and running. Two satellites dishes have been installed – one at Inchrie Castle, to serve the village of Aberfoyle and the other at Glencleland, to serve Kinlochard. The satellite signal is then distributed to subscribers wirelessly.

Currently 20 businesses, most of whom work from home, have signed up for Broadband and 15 have been connected. It is planned to complete the connections by mid-June. In the main, subscribers are delighted with the service although there have been some frustrating teething problems. These are being resolved – after all it is a pilot and this method hasn't been tried before. There are two clear benefits – firstly the speed, up to 10 times faster than through a modem, and secondly the fact that it is always on for a fixed monthly fee means that businesses can respond very quickly to enquiries. A further benefit is that the telephone line is freed up.

A company, Aberfoyle Broadband Community (ABC) has been set up to run the Broadband pilot. The Chair is Peter Sunderland, Vice-Chair John Epps, Treasurer Norman Quirk and Directors Mary Phillips and Lesley Quirk.

An official launch will take place at 10 a.m. on Monday 23rd June, at Inchrie Castle, where anyone can come along and find out more. We also plan to use the launch to get some good publicity for the area which should benefit all of the businesses here.

It is still possible to sign up for this pilot. Installation costs £300, including VAT and the monthly fee is £30 plus VAT.

Anyone interested should contact Mary Phillips on ABC@forthhouse.com

Economic Development Action Group

Following advertisements in Strathard News, The Trossachs Discovery Centre is now offering locally made products. Not an earth-shattering change to the local economy perhaps, but it's a start and it is a part of the whole task to stop complaining and make the best of what we have! There is room for more, so anyone wishing to see the product of their talent on sale should please contact John Epps on 01877 382 276, or email crannaighouse@aol.com

Of lesser success was the appeal in the Strathard News for people with dormant business ideas to come forward; sadly it seems nobody has ideas they would like to offer young people at the threshold of a business life. Can this really be so? Don't be shy - if you have ideas which you have no plans to follow-up, do please bring them to the team. Contact John Epps on 01877 382 276, or email crannaighouse@aol.com

Large towns and cities have a Chamber of Commerce and these often have a directory of trades and skilled people with their contact details; it seems to me that in the present circumstance where local tradespeople are complaining to me that people wanting work done are bringing firms into Strathard "from outside" whilst locals complain they cannot find a tradesman to do the work they want done, there is clearly a need to take action; if you have a trade skill, you simply cannot assume that because you have been in business for ages, maybe even grew up here, that everyone knows of you and what you do. Until we have a trades directory published and in every home and business, would it help to close the gap if people wanting a project quoted could make their needs known by advertising in Strathard News? We owe it to ourselves to keep our hard-earned money circulating within Strathard. More about the trades and skills directory in due course.

Can you help.... and do you want to learn about Broadband?



Aberfoyle Broadband Community Ltd is the Company set up by local people to manage the Broadband pilot being run in Aberfoyle & Kinlochard.

We are looking for someone with knowledge of e-mail and internet connection management at a basic level to provide support to our subscribers. We need someone who understands how connections are set up and how they can be altered etc. It's also important that this person can deal with 20 plus subscribers asking for help and can also provide simple advice on how to solve any issues. Training will be provided and hours are flexible but we are looking for commitment to be at the end of a phone, picking up messages at regular intervals, to be able to help quickly if someone's system goes down. This would suit someone not yet involved in IT as a career - just someone with enthusiasm for IT and communications who wants to earn some extra money.

Interested? email Lesley Quirk - lesley@quirk.co.uk or Mary Phillips- mary@forthhouse.com - and tell us why you'd like to do this and what your level of knowledge is - remember we're not looking for a techie whiz, just someone who understands the basics and wants to be trained.

Lesley Quirk
Aberfoyle Broadband Community Ltd (ABC)
Glencleland House,
Lochard Road, Aberfoyle, Stirling, FK8 3TJ
Tel: 01877 387 210 Fax: 01877 387 310 Mobile: 07850 049 985

Communities Link Up in Strathard

An Irish delegation, 12 from County Mayo in the Republic and 6 from County Armagh in Ulster, are coming to the area for 3 days on 24th, 25th & 26th June. The delegation will meet representatives of the Traders Association and the Community Council to discuss moves to set up joint projects, which include a three-centre holiday package, tourism training and general business and community initiatives. The business meetings will be held in Gartmore House. While they are here, the group will be visiting the National Park Gateway Centre at Lomond Shores, Stirling Council for an official reception by the Provost, Cllr O'Brien, the SS Sir Walter Scott, the David Marshall Lodge and Ledard Farm for dinner and a ceilidh. This last event is open to locals and requests for tickets should be made to Fergus Wood on 01877 387219.

The three communities, Tochar Valley, The Birches and

Strathard are hoping to receive assistance in their endeavours from The Carnegie Trust and Leader+. Three meetings each year are planned, one in each of the communities. Any local organisations - youth group, sports club, society - who want to be involved should contact Aberfoyle Traders Association or the Community Council. The three communities were brought together by a common connection between Fergus Wood (Strathard), Jim Dickson (The Birches), whose son Kenny works as a shepherd for Fergus, and Terry Gallacher (Co Mayo) whose nephew is married to Katie Miller from Kinlochard.

This year's Mushroom Festival will have an Irish theme with musicians coming from Ireland to perform at the Festival.

Collie Rescue at Ledard Farm

In my kitchen at Ledard Farm, there is a humorous sign that says:

"Dogs are just children who eat off the floor!"

You could believe this as you survey the 18 dog bowls or the floor at 'tea-time'. Yes-18! I can hardly believe it myself-and they are all special dogs that have found their way to Ledard. At present all my dogs are Border Collies as there are many of this breed needing good homes-but my love affair is with dogs, followed very closely by horses, cats and goats.

It all started for me from childhood when I used to dream of having my own dog and horse. We lived in town so it was impossible for me to have any pets-my dream became a ritual of every weekend going to stay with my best friend Janet and her Mum and Dad-Aunt Mary and Uncle Bill. Aunt Mary and Uncle Bill were in fact probably two of the greatest vets ever from Glasgow being Sir William and Lady Weipers-the equine clinic at Glasgow Vet School being named after Sir Bill. I was completely unaware of their status and knew and loved them as two of the most wonderful people I have ever known and from them I have learned everything on animal husbandry.

So from the age of six dogs and horses became my life and I am very lucky that at Ledard I have the space and facility to care for so many dogs. I am also blessed with a husband who shares my love of animals-and he pays the bills!

Having had many dogs of different breeds I would say that the Border Collie comes out as my favourite breed. They are loyal, clever, obedient and loving, also very forgiving as some of mine have had, what would you say, a bad start.



As with all animals it is very important that the basics of manners and obedience start from the very beginning and any good breeder should start this as soon as possible. Animals need to know their place and none more than dogs.

At the Scottish Wool Centre I am now the handler of the dogs in the Scottish Sheepdog Show and I have been able to use all my dogs in the half hour presentation which includes agility. I have been delighted at the ease and fun I have had in training the dogs and one of my older dogs, Jan, at 7 years old disproves the theory that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks".

I am involved with community dog management classes and if anyone needs advice or help I am only too happy to be of use especially if it is to do with Border Collies. I can be contacted at the Scottish Wool Centre most days and my dogs can be seen there too-and heard!

*Francesca Wood
Ledard Farm
Kinlochard*

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The furore on the Teapot Cottage demolition caused me a lot of concern. I did not know the Cottage but I am concerned when something of historic interest is destroyed. This is one of those instances when it is easy to be wise after the event. The cottage had been a listed building until 1979 when Historic Scotland removed it from the listings. Who is responsible for listing buildings? Historic Scotland. Who keeps a record of listed buildings in our area? The National Park Authority as the Planning Authority. Who has access to the record? You have. Who can ask for a building to be listed? You can. But who decides if it is listed? Historic Scotland. I obviously cannot say that if the National Park had been in existence in 1979 then we would have campaigned for the retention of the listing but I can say that if sufficient local interest had been shown in the historic nature of the building there would have been a duty to investigate the position. I hope we can all learn from this. I would ask that you accept it would be impractical to expect that the Park Authority in its relatively short existence be aware of every possible item of historic interest. This is an area where paradoxically the Community Futures network could be of assistance. To some extent our futures are influenced by our past and where our communities are aware of our history benefits can ensue. Mistakes can be avoided and successes can be repeated or added to.

There is something very much in the present which will certainly affect our future and that is the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. The Access Act has now been passed but it will not come into effect until an acceptable Access Code has been agreed by the Scottish Executive. Scottish National Heritage has been charged with

consulting with the public, both individual and organised, and to present a draft code for agreement to the Scottish Executive. The National Park Authority has had a meeting with Scottish National Heritage and is in the process of preparing its response to the Draft Code. We do have a number of concerns. Legal liability is a potential problem. The Draft Code states that the same duty of care as exists at present will apply. Does that mean that a landowner will have to ensure that his land is risk free no matter how many people take advantage of access. Will wooden bridges capable of carrying an individual user have to be strengthened to cope with a group of bike or horse riders? Who will pay for remedial work etc?

How can you find out what is in the Draft Code and whether you want to make representations. The contact point is: Bridget Dales, SNH, Battleby, Redgorton, PERTH, PH1 3EW. Phone 01738444177 or email : soac-consultation @ snh.gov.uk. I hope as many of you as possible join in the consultation. The emphasis of the Code is Rights with Responsibilities. The first responsibility we all have is to find out what are our rights and what are our responsibilities. Please do get your copy. Time is short, as representations have to be made by the end of June.

What do you think of the new National Park Gateway signs? All the complaints I have had have been from locals. Visitors have been more complimentary.

by Owen McKee

I can be contacted as follows:

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The Ranger's Corner

This is the first in what is hoped will become a popular feature for Strathard News readers of all ages bringing you all the latest news of developments and upcoming events from the heart of the forest.

In 2003, through the dedicated and concentrated efforts of a great number of individuals within Forest Enterprise over a lengthy period of time, the local community and our summer visitors can look forward to some spectacular improvements to the forest park landscape, with particular regard to the Achray Forest drive due to be open in the second week of June.

This year also brings about the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Elizabeth Forest Park and we have some very special days planned at the David Marshall Lodge in the coming months. Watch this space!

Last, but not least, our live coverage of an osprey eyrie has caused so much interest we have decided to run a competition to name our feathered friends. There is a prize available for the winner which will be announced in the first week of August. This competition is open to under-16 years only. See you in the forest!

Cowal & Trossachs Forest District



Seonaid Marshall of "Menteith" Aberfoyle married Nigel Dean of London at Forest Hills Hotel Aberfoyle on 18th May. Seonaid and Nigel are with the musical *Grease* in London's West End. Seonaid is wardrobe mistress and Nigel is sound engineer. They will shortly be leaving for Tokyo to tour Japan and then on to Korea.



St. Mary's Episcopal Church



Spring has been a wonderful time for St Mary's Church and the daffodils, and now the bluebells and rhododendrons are making the garden look lovely.

With the bell tower renovations completed we are planning to have a structural survey done so that a list of priority jobs can be decided upon for the Church for the next ten years or so.

It is 110 years since the Church was built by the Slate Quarrymen and Mrs Margaret Johnson has studied the census records of 1880 and identified the families that were involved. We hope that the local Aberfoyle residents who have slate quarrymen as their ancestors will contact Margaret with photographs and family stories for a publication is being planned by the Historical Section under the leadership of local author and Historian, Peter Joynson.

As the National Park gets more established the members of St Mary's Church want to share the history of the church with visitors and let them see the church and the gardens. A memorial Garden is proposed for the south and east elevations and the Late George Hawes generously left the Church money to be spent on the garden that he looked after for so many years.

A big gale blew some branches off the oak tree and almost caused a lot of damage to the garage and the Fergusson Brothers came to the assistance of the church and as a result you can see the East elevation much better than before. Some observant readers may have noticed that the stone cross at the East Gable end has disappeared and can now be found at the gable end of the Fanshaw South Chapel where it can be better seen. The cross was carved by an unknown (as yet) quarryman from local stone and incorporated into the roof at the time of construction and is a fine piece of work.

Research into the Fanshaw family is underway, as they gifted the chapel and the stain glass windows that are now not able to be seen because of the organ. If anyone has any information on this family please contact Margaret Johnson.

An open day is planned for the future and members of the congregation are looking forward to showing the Church and its artefacts to local visitors and holidaymakers. More details later.

Bill Richardson
Fabric Team Leader
28 May 2003

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The Garden

by Wellie Boot



Spring. Was spring not given the greatest trumpeting welcome by these golden daffodils? Have any of you seen such a display? These gorgeous, golden harbingers of summer really excelled themselves this year.

If you want them to do as well next year, deadhead them (if possible) but do not remove the leaves. It does look rather untidy but just ignore them. Don't even knot them, as it is the effect of the sun on the leaves that puts the nourishment back into the bulb, making it fit and well to do its best next year. Deadheading, as we all know with any plant, relieves the plant of making the effort to producing seed.

The primula creates another splash of colour at this time of year denticulate (the drum stick primula). Mixed with white daffodils it makes an interesting display. These lovely little pom-pom flowers adore this area with its damp acid soil.

If you have any patience-and all gardeners have patience, these little plants clump up very quickly. When the plant becomes too large dig it up and with two hand forks or strong hands, tease the numerous, single plants apart and plant them out separately as soon as they have stopped flowering. Keep them well watered (not difficult this

year!) and you will have a wonderful show next year-for free.

After that wonderful golden show and glorious weather in March and April, things seem to have taken a downward turn. The azaleas and rhodies are making a brave show, but nothing like last year. They are, however, giving us some cheerful colour to brighten us up in this dreadful, incessant rain and cold. Snow on the Ben in May!!!

But we are gardeners, and cannot be downhearted in the Spring, the most magic season of the year. To see the trees clothed in their gossamer gown of lime green, and all the tiny shoots forcing their way up through the bare brown soil is an annual miracle.

Well that was last month and what with the early warmth and lots of rain, the growth rate of the herbaceous border has been phenomenal. Unfortunately the weeds have grown at the same rate (a very good year for creeping buttercups). It is important to clean your borders now. Weeds tend to strangle these precious plants and to seed themselves everywhere, ten times as many next year!! The maxim of "One year's seeding is seven year's weeding" rings in my ears.

This year, as usual, we had the annual visitation of hundreds of frogs to the

ponds. As usual the floating mats of spawn and, as usual, the visiting pair of Mallards who hovered up the spawn. So this year we decided to net one of the ponds. The result is two 'tadpoleless' ponds and one simply moving with tadpoles. I love my little froggy friends and meet them frequently when weeding. They are great allies as they eat the slugs.

Ponds are a joy to have and so simple to make but please, not where there are very young children. Just dig a hole the desired size and about two feet deep in the middle if you want water lilies. Have one side with a gentle slope to let the frogs out when they have developed. Cover the area with thick layers of newspaper or old carpet to prevent stones piercing your liner. Then spread the liner over the prepared area. Then, the exciting bit, fill with water. This forces the liner into all the contours of the hole. Collect stones and arrange them on top of the edges of the liner to hold it down and hide it, and voila, you have a pond. There is no need to introduce pond life as miraculously they find you!

Within three years my ponds were teeming with beetles, newts, frogs and many other moving things. Amazing. Isn't nature a wonderful thing?

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Traffic Calming on Lochard Road

The role of Strathard Community Futures in the traffic calming scheme needs to be explained, following the comments made in the May issue of Strathard News.

There was no consultation prior to 29th January as no design had been produced before that date. The need in principle for traffic calming along Lochard Road had long been established. Many residents and parents of schoolchildren had expressed concern about traffic speed, and the School Board had been pressing for it for years. No objections had been received by the Board to this campaign.

In summer 2002 Stirling Council received £1.578m additional funding from the Scottish Executive. £100,000 of this was awarded to Children' Services under the *Rural Safer Routes to School* initiative. When Community Futures first wrote to Stirling Council's Technical Services department in November 2002, we were told that Lochard Road had been monitored and assessed as fairly high priority, and that £20,000 had been allocated.

In the same letter we did indeed also mention the problem of excessive traffic speed near the play park, but Technical Services said that at that stage they had only been made aware of the problem along Lochard Road in the vicinity of the school.

A site meeting took place in January with a Traffic Management Officer. This was attended by representatives of Community Futures, the Community Council and the School Board together with the headteacher. We walked along the 30mph section of the road and explained the concerns, but we decided not to present any pre-conceived ideas on design as we had no specialist knowledge of what could be achieved for £20,000, nor of the various government regulations to which traffic management schemes must conform.

Once Technical Services had produced a design, they sent the plans to residents adjacent to the proposed works, to all the groups represented at the site meeting, to our local Councillor and Central Scotland Police. The scheme was on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting of Strathard Community Council, and Community Futures produced leaflets advising of this meeting and that the plans could be seen at Aberfoyle Post Office. These leaflets were distributed to all residents within the 30mph zone of Lochard Road and were given to all schoolchildren to take home.

All concerns raised have been relayed to Technical Services. Ros Dingwall (in particular) and I have spent a great deal of time discussing the points raised with the Traffic Management Team, either by telephone, e-mail or in person. As one of the main concerns was over traffic-flow, re-alignment of the narrowings was proposed, although we understand this proved possible only at the one nearest the village because of insufficient road width elsewhere. The point about cyclists is perfectly valid. While the majority of motorists are considerate towards cyclists and will give way if in doubt, a *Rural Safer Routes to School* scheme must acknowledge that there are exceptions and be effective in protecting children on bikes. One suggestion is to have priority through the narrowings from one direction. These and several other points have been raised with Technical Services following the May meeting of the Community Council, and we understand they are to monitor the scheme to assess its effectiveness.

John Digney,
Strathard Community Futures

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An Outbreak of *Running Fever* in Kinlochard!

There's been a rush of blood to the head and legs for some folk in Kinlochard!

Some local people have recently raised some hard cash for some charitable causes by getting out into the great outdoors and getting fit! Lynda Bancroft, Kathy McMillan, Fiona McLean and Gillian Lester all managed to complete the Glasgow 10K last month in 1 hour 1 minute. Not bad going for women who up until last September couldn't run more than a minute without stopping for breath. They are raising money to go towards some equipment for the Children's Ward at Stirling Royal Infirmary, Cancer UK, Breakthrough Breast Cancer and the SSPCA.

"We go out running 2 or 3 times a week, meeting up by Ian Morrison's Landrover in the village. When we've caught our breath after we've run up the hill, there's an opportunity for a blether. It has been said that we're heard before we're seen! There are five of us who now run regularly. If anyone wants to join us, that's great.....if they can catch us that is!" joked Lynda. The next fund raising run will be on 15 June, running for Cancer UK in the Race for Life in Stirling. Any contributions of sponsorship gratefully received.

Gillian's husband, James Kennedy, started exercising at the beginning of the year to improve his health. He successfully completed his first triathlon in Stirling at the beginning of June with two work colleagues, raising money for a charity that support nurses who get injured in their work. "It was hard going, but a great personal achievement" said James.



Above:
(Left to Right)
Gillian Lester,
Lynda Bancroft,
Fiona McLean and
Kathy McMillan.
Front: Lynda's
children Nathan &
Leah.

Left: James
Kennedy.

Milton the Otter

Hello Children,

What fun we have been having. Now the twins, Duke and Katrine, are growing quite big, they can come with the gang when we go on a stopover. Last weekend we were all invited to stay with Rory the stag, at the Comer estate, right at the top of Ben Lomond. It is a long way from Aberfoyle, so the gang split up and went different ways, arranging to meet up later. The otters swam, starting from the Holt on the Forth, up the Duchray Water and past the very old castle where many kings and queens have stayed, and on up Gleann Dubh. George the hare hopped along the forestry road, past the other side of Duchray Castle, the WaterBoard Bell House, under the aquaduct taking Loch Katrine water to Glasgow, and on to Stronmacnair. This is said to be the most haunted place in the whole of Scotland! George was glad to be passing by in broad daylight.

Our big bird friends Flame and Fury, the golden eagles, flew lazily over to join us. Rory was so pleased to see us all, and he had a game ready for us to play. Rory put us in three teams. I would be with the twins, Braeval would go with George and the eagles with Rory and we had to search for and bring back the most valuable thing we could find.

I took the twins back into the water, just where the two burns meet, to look for freshwater mussels and bring back a freshwater pearl. Rory dug into the ground with his new antlers and found a piece of white rock called quartz. Flame carried it back in his great talons. Quartz is rich in silver and gold. One ton of local white stone will contain 58 grams of silver and 15 grams of gold! My sister Braeval and George won the contest with what they brought back-iron. They found a small piece of iron left over from the time, long, long ago when iron smelting was carried out in all these glens. Aberfoyle received a royal charter establishing one of the most important iron markets in Europe, way back in the fourteenth century. That's what Grandpa Otter says. Iron can be used for many different things, but most off all it keeps away faeries, witches, warlocks and wizards!

Next day George took the iron home, well he had to pass Stronmacnair!

Bye for now,
Milton



Aberfoyle Village Enhancement Initiative - Update

I promised you an update on this in the June edition but in fact we are not much further forward just yet. Tenders have gone out for the work and we hope to appoint the contractor by the end of June. By then we should also know if the European funding has been granted. If we get this money and the scheme goes ahead, the plans will be available for public consultation so we will all have the opportunity to say what we think of them and change them if necessary. I'll give you more information next month and hopefully it will be good news.

Lesley Quirk
Steering Committee Member

There is a dedicated team of qualified Business Information Officers ready to provide you with a range of business information, much of which is free. They can access information on a whole variety of topics and the following are a few examples of the information which they can provide:-

- Suppliers/wholesalers/distributor contact details accessed from Kompass UK and Dun & Bradstreet Key Scottish Enterprises databases
- Financial Reports on limited companies from Dun & Bradstreet financial database
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- Commercial property searches for office, industrial, retail premises available throughout Scotland from the Scottish Property Network database and from our contacts at the property departments of the 3 local Councils in the Forth Valley area
- UK and EU funding initiatives, ranging from grants and loans to advisory schemes from Grantfinder database
- Access to a wealth of information on European business matters through the EuroInfoCentre which is a core service of Small Business Gateway

If you would like further information regarding the above or have any other queries regarding business information please ring the Low Call Number 0845 609 6611 or e-mail any of the following Business Information Officers:

Jean.Bell@scotent.co.uk

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Committee Comments

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Committee & Contacts

Jimmy Campbell Chair/Editor	01877 382 210 editor@strathardnews.co.uk
John Clow Vice Chair/Editor Local Organisations	01877 382 508 clubs@strathardnews.co.uk
Norman Quirk Treasurer	01877 387 210 treasurer@strathardnews.co.uk
Marion Back Publisher/Newsdesk	01301 702 972 newsdesk@strathardnews.co.uk
Ian Marshall Advertising	01877 382 211 advertising@strathardnews.co.uk
Stuart Davies Classified	01877 382 303 classified@strathardnews.co.uk
Dougie MacPherson Reporter	01877 382564 bridget.macpherson@tesco.net



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