

STRATHARD NEWS

ISSUE 73
July 2012

For the community - by the community
Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar & Inversnaid

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Photos courtesy of Annette Reed.

www.strathardnews.com

Public Transport

There have been revisions to arrangements for buses and demand responsive transport services following the closure of Aberfoyle Coaches. Information from Stirling Council can be accessed on its website, via the Community Council website or also on noticeboards. Details of school bus services and hopefully replacement runs for the AC01 route are still to be confirmed. Please advise us of any transport timetabling or other difficulties you may experience if the new arrangements give you any problem.

Changes to Speed Limits

Over the past year Stirling Council has been progressing a new speed limit policy in line with national guidelines. The changes proposed for our area are broadly supported by local aspirations both in the Strathard community action plan and in line with requests from the residents of Milton. The proposals are:

- A 40mph speed limit from the existing 30mph signs near Craighfoot Terrace to Cuilvona on Loch Ard.
- A 50mph speed limit from the existing 30mph signs near the Surgery to the roundabout at the A81.

Please advise us of any comments you may have on these proposals.

Roadworks

The summer schedule of roadworks in various locations outside Strathard may affect those commuting or travelling to Glasgow, Stirling or elsewhere. We email out details to those on our mailing list and put up maps whenever we receive this information, which is usually for the most local disruptions. You can see all other Stirling Council scheduled roadworks online via a link on our website.

Public Toilets in Aberfoyle

The toilets at the Visitor Information Centre in Aberfoyle have already been the subject of severe Stirling Council cutbacks, and now only open for the public at reasonable hours thanks to a local volunteer. We've recently been contacted by Stirling Council with a proposal to convert part of the ladies toilets into a shop/cafe, in order to lease it to an operator who would then run the toilets. If you have any comments on this proposal do please let us know as soon as possible so we can assess the strength of public opinion. Initial reactions from the community council, residents and local traders have not been in favour of this idea.

Community Information

- Our website is www.strathard.org.uk, and can be accessed in Aberfoyle Post Office.
- We send out e-mailings on matters of general community interest, such as road closures. You can sign up for these e-mailings by contacting us via the website.
- Information is also placed on our 4 community noticeboards.

The names of your Community Councillors are shown below – please do get in touch with them on any relevant matter if you would like our help.

Fiona



The weeks running up to the summer recess are always a very busy time in Westminster, and this year has been no different. In the last week alone I have spoken in debates on the House of Lords Reform Bill, Specialist Disability Employment and Child Support Agency, as well as raising an Adjournment Debate on Dangerous Driving. My Adjournment Debate was specifically related to the issue of road accidents involving foreign motorists, following the death of Andrew McLean, the grandson of one of my constituents, in 2010. Mr McLean was just 22 years old when he was killed in a car crash caused by a young French driver unintentionally driving on the wrong side of the road. I raised the issue in order to urge the government to gather better statistics on road accidents involving foreign drivers driving on the wrong side of the road, so that such incidents can be reduced.

I also recently spoke in the debate on the House of Lords Reform Bill. While I believe that reforming the House of Lords to create a more democratic and accountable Parliament can only be a good thing, I am concerned that the debate is primarily focused on the composition of the House of Lords and not its level of influence and power, an issue which has been largely neglected. Reforming the House of Lords could create a stronger and more transparent democratic society.

While it's been a particularly hectic time in Westminster, it has been an equally busy time in the constituency recently. As well as the regular casework, surgeries and campaigns we have also seen two major events take place; the Olympic torch passing through the Stirling area and the Simon Bolivar Orchestra performing a unique and spectacular concert with local children in Stirling.

It was great that the Olympic torch passed through the villages of Tyndrum and Crianlarich before travelling to Bridge of Allan, Dunblane and Stirling. The torch also made a short detour to Stirling Castle to take in spectacular panoramic views of the area. It was fantastic to see so many local people out on the streets on a beautiful sunny day to welcome the Olympic torch to the area. With London 2012 now just days away I would also like to congratulate local basketball player, Kieron Achara, on his selection to represent Great Britain at the Olympic Games. I am sure that everyone in Stirling will be wishing Kieron, along with the rest of Team GB, every success over the next few weeks.

Hopefully there's also good news coming locally on mobile phone coverage. I recently met with the Head of Government affairs from Vodafone who told me that Kinlochard was on the shortlist for Vodafone's Open Femto trials. This will mean a dramatic improvement to mobile phone coverage in the area. I understand that an assessment of the village is being carried out over the next few weeks and hopefully there will be a lot of local interest in taking part in the trials. Although only on the shortlist at the moment, I hope that the Kinlochard area is chosen for this exciting development.

As ever I can be contacted at the Parliamentary Advice Office, 22 Viewfield Street, Stirling, FK8 1UA. T: 01786 446515, F: 01786 446513 or by email at anne.mcguire.mp@parliament.uk or via my website www.annemcguiremp.org.uk or follow me on Twitter @AnneMcGuireMP.

Strathard Community Council meets at 7.30pm on the first Thursday of every month, alternating between Aberfoyle Memorial Hall, Kinlochard Village Hall and Inversnaid Hotel. The next meetings will be held in Inversnaid Hotel on 2nd August and Kinlochard on 6th September. Half an hour prior to our meetings a local Stirling Councillor (currently Martin Earl, Alycia Hayes or Fergus Wood) normally will hold a surgery for residents who wish to raise issues or concerns. If you are planning to come to one of these surgeries we suggest you check noticeboards or our website in advance, since there are sometimes dates when Councillors cannot attend.

Community Councillors by Ward

Aberfoyle

John Clow
Ros Dingwall
Jimmy Quinn
Geraint Short

Kinlochard

Maureen Campbell
Fiona McEwan
2 vacancies

Inversnaid

Andre Goulancourt
Ralph Wolfe
1 vacancy

Contact details:

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

Elected Councillors Ward 1 Trossachs & Teith



Councillor Martin Earl, Conservative.
Stirling Council, Old Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET,
tel - 01786 443497, mob - 07881 310 922,
e-mail earlm@stirling.gov.uk



Councillor Alycia Hayes, SNP
Stirling Council, Old Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET,
tel - 01786 443497, mob - 07881 310 924,
e-mail hayesa@stirling.gov.uk



Councillor Fergus Wood, SNP
Stirling Council, Old Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET,
tel - 01786 443497, mob - 07824 496 019,
email woodf@stirling.gov.uk

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Rain dampens Council's grass cutting

Consistent heavy rain coupled with the mild temperatures is causing challenging conditions for the Council's grass cutting service.

The Council's Land Services grass cutting teams are battling against the UK's worst summer rainfall since records began to keep the area's parks and public land ship shape; however, this is proving very challenging.

As teams try to minimise damage to the now saturated soft ground residents are being informed that the quality of cut may suffer across communities. Some grassy areas are sitting under puddles of surface water

and grass cuttings are clogging together in clumps rather than being dispersed evenly across the surface so this will look unsightly.

Stirling Council's Portfolio Holder responsible for Environment, Transport and Public Land Councillor Danny Gibson said: "We felt it important to make our residents aware of the difficulties the grass cutting service is experiencing under these very unusual weather conditions. But please be assured that the grass cutting teams are working hard and doing everything possible to deliver the service as best they can."



Hoping for some dry weather soon is Stirling Council Land Services Grass cutters (L to R) David MacPake, Supervisor David Cochrane, David Young and John Barr at Stirling Bridge.

Protection for private tenants' deposits welcomed

The launch of a new national scheme to protect private tenants' let deposits has been welcomed by Stirling Council's Housing and Regeneration Portfolio Holder Cllr Violet Weir.

The government-approved scheme means landlords will not hold deposits themselves, but must now hand them over to one of three independent companies which have been registered and approved through a procurement process. These companies will then be responsible for overseeing the return of the deposit and ruling on any disputes about deductions. The scheme is free for landlords and letting agents.

"I am pleased to see this system get underway, and I'm sure it will help provide reassurance for tenants in the private housing sector," said Cllr Weir. "In an area such as Stirling, with so many students living in privately rented flats, it will be particularly important.

"The system will also benefit landlords, since the new companies will be there to sort out any problems or disputes independently."

Landlords and letting agents have until next May to lodge all deposits, but can start doing so from now. After 2 October they will be required by law to hand over all new deposits within 30 working days of a tenancy beginning.

Police Business

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



Central Scotland Police
Together for safer communities

PC 487 Liam Ward can be contacted via Aberfoyle or Callander Police Offices. Tel. 01877 330222.
You can also follow Central Scotland Police on Twitter and Facebook. Emergency Calls only dial 999

PACT Priorities

1. Operation Ironworks – Tackling antisocial behaviour within the National Park
2. Speeding and Indiscriminate Parking
3. Targeting the dealers – working with the community to gather intelligence to keep drugs off the street.

What have we been doing for you?

1. You Said: Littering by those wild camping was polluting the areas near to the B829, particularly at Loch Ard and Loch Chon.

We Did: High visibility Ironworks patrols commenced at the beginning of March. Those found wild camping in the effected areas have been advised regarding their responsibilities. To date, there has been no requirement for formal action against any individual.

Result: The camping areas along the B829 remain litter free, and those visiting our community to enjoy its beauty have been left with a positive impression of the police after interaction with local officers.

2. You Said: The Strathard Community Council raised concerns regarding speeding through the village. Furthermore, concerns were raised regarding illegal parking on Main Street, Aberfoyle.

We Did: Hand held radar activity has been conducted at various places in the village, with appropriate action being taken against motorists when required. Foot patrol has been conducted in the village regarding the parking complaints, with no offences being detected during these patrols. An article detailing the parking restrictions on Main Street was published on the community webpage and in the Stirling Observer.

Result: Complaints of speeding in the village have reduced, and more motorists are aware of the parking restrictions on the Main Street.

3. You Said: There is believed to be a low level of drugs activity in the village.

We Did: Foot patrol has been conducted in the village in order to speak with members of the community in a bid to garner information relating to drugs activity. Visits have been made to licensed premises in the village.

Result: To date, there is no new intelligence relating to drugs activity in the village. Visits to licensed premises have revealed no evidence of drugs use within.

Getting Involved

Should you feel that there are community issues requiring police attention, please contact me directly. Alternatively, Strathard Community Council meets every month, and Gartmore and Port of Menteith community councils meet once every two months. Dates, times and venues are advertised locally. Feel free to contact me there.

PACT Priorities July/August

1. During the month of June, a number of metal thefts were reported to the police. These appear to have occurred overnight. We aim to reduce the number of thefts reported in the identified area.

2. Reports of anti-social behaviour and minor acts of vandalism have come to the attention of the police through the community. These behaviours appear to be linked to closing time at the pubs in Aberfoyle between 0100 and 0130 hours on Fridays and Saturdays. We aim to reduce the number of complaints of anti-social behaviour and vandalism at the weekends in Aberfoyle.



A81 Incident – Port of Menteith

About 1330 on Saturday 16 June 2012, a disturbance is alleged to have occurred between a male pedestrian and the driver of a blue car on the A81 just outside the speed restriction of Port of Menteith heading towards Thornhill.

Police are keen to speak to anyone in the area around this time who may have witnessed this incident. Anyone with any information should contact PC487 Ward or PC921 Sullivan on 01786456000.

Attempted housebreaking

Overnight between Thursday 31 May and Friday 1 June 2012, there was an attempted housebreaking at The Barn at Port of Menteith near Malling. Albeit access was not gained and nothing was stolen, this is the fourth such incident at this secluded property. It is suspected that the perpetrators may have been disturbed or deterred during the commission, leaving it incomplete.

It is requested that anyone with information relative to this crime contact the police. It may be someone can recall seeing something unusual at The Barn, such as an unknown vehicle or torchlight. Any information would be greatly received.

Dangerous incident in Riverside car park, Aberfoyle

On Thursday 28 June, an array of screws and nails were positioned under the rear wheels of a car parked in the Riverside car park in Aberfoyle in a deliberate attempt to cause damage to the tyres.

Whilst the intention may have been to cause damage to the tyres and inconvenience the owner of the car, this dangerous, mindless act could have had far more serious – potentially fatal – consequences. Had these items not been discovered by the driver, they may have become imbedded in the tyres, which could have resulted in a blow out and a serious road accident.

The incident has been reported to the police and is being investigated. Only one instance of this reckless action has been reported to the police. However, I would encourage all drivers to make a cursory check of their tyres in an effort to determine whether there is a pattern to this behaviour, or whether it is an isolated incident. Someone may have witnessed someone acting suspiciously around the wheels of a car last Thursday between 8.45am and 5.30pm in the car park. If anyone has any information in relation to this incident, please contact the police locally or by telephone on 01786456000.

Theft from Stronachlachar

Overnight between Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 June, the outside coffee tables and chairs were stolen from outside the Pier Tearoom at Stronachlachar. In total, seven tables and twenty-four chairs were taken. It is the latest in a short series of similar offences in the wider area. It may be that someone has seen something relating to this –perhaps an unfamiliar vehicle in or around the area. Anyone with any information should contact the police on 01786456000 or via Crimestoppers on 0800555111.

PACT – Weekend anti-social behaviour

Concerns have been raised by local residents in Aberfoyle regarding anti-social behaviour in the village, particularly on Main Street after pub closing time in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday. Three of the last four weeks have seen damage caused to the price sign at the petrol station and a sign stolen and damaged from a bed and breakfast.

Throughout July and August, tackling anti-social behaviour is a PACT priority with a view to reducing the number of reports of such behaviour and associated crime. It is intended to be achieved through use of a high visibility police presence at the identified times.

Anyone with any information relating to who is responsible for the damage to the signs detailed above should contact police.

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Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

David Marshall Lodge - Sale of Equipment

Due to the refurbishment of the David Marshall Lodge we have shop retail units and Commercial Kitchen equipment for sale. Further details are available from Mairi Buchanan on 01877 389245 or at Mairi.buchanan@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

All bids must be sent in a sealed envelope by 2pm on or before 17th August. All items purchased must be collected by 29th August 2012.

Countdown on to refurb that will bring DML into 21st century

Members of the public are invited to come along to David Marshal Lodge (DML) Visitor Centre to look over a display (6 -12 August) celebrating the Lodge's history and legacy – and see how a much-needed refurbishment will take the lodge into the 21st century.

Set in the heart of the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, DML is managed by Forestry Commission Scotland, which is also overseeing the re-development work which will take place over the winter. Although the Lodge will be closed to visitors, facilities including a cafe, toilets, wildlife viewing and FCS info will be housed in temporary accommodation.

The final day of the display will see members of staff on hand to chat over the plans, proposals and aims of the refit.

Susan Nash, who is managing the project for the Commission, said:

"It's a two-fold display, really. We'll have some old photos and historic information – and a film – that will celebrate DML's history and we'll also have a whole load of plans, drawings and artist's impressions on hand to illustrate how the overhaul will bring the Lodge bang up to date and fit for another very active 50 years.

"Come along and find out what's going to be happening over the winter closure and see

how, with a new lease of life, the Lodge will be an even better resource for the local community, visitors and tourists."

The programme of work aims to rejuvenate the building, making it more welcoming and inviting as well as more in tune with its surroundings.

It also aims to make the Lodge more in tune with its founding ethos, which aspired to provide day trippers with a sheltered picnic spot, "relaxation and a carefree atmosphere" and provide children with a place to roam that might inspire them to "respect and look after things of natural beauty" (2).

Susan added;

"The path improvements already completed – and the works that will be carried out over the winter – will make the Lodge accessible to even more people, and will help it to regain its place on the 'must see' tourism map.

"We're very excited about it. It's going to be a fantastic resource and one that will help to endear DML, Aberfoyle and the Forest Park to new generations."

You can also keep up to date with progress by following us on twitter @dmlaberfoyle and our web pages at www.forestry.gov.uk/thelodge

Trossachs Community Choir



Calling all those who love to sing!!

If you love singing, be it in public or in the shower, then the Trossachs Community Choir wants you!

Having spent 15 years directing youth and community choirs across the UK, choir director Katie Harris is launching our very own Trossachs Community Choir.

Katie, a qualified music teacher living in Aberfoyle, hopes to dispel the myth that singing is just for a select minority - 'my ethos for teaching music in any context is that music is for everyone, music is for enjoyment, music is for community and music is good for the soul!'. I am appealing to anyone aged 16 and over who loves to sing. You are welcome to join us whether you have lots of musical experience or none at all. You will not be auditioned and you do not need to be able to read music so come and join us!

Katie will be holding choirs at two venues. The first on **Monday nights at Gartmore House between 7.45 and 9.15** beginning on Monday 27th August and the second at **Kinlochard Village Hall on Thursday nights** at the same times beginning on 30th August.

If you under 16, there's also great news for you too.....Katie plans to start the Trossachs Youth Choir from the start of the October half term – watch this space for more details.

All the Choir sessions will be charged at £4 per session payable on a half-termly basis - this new local opportunity is one not to be missed!

If you are interested in Trossachs Community Choirs or in the up-coming Trossachs Youth Choir, please contact Katie by phone on 01877 389058 or by e-mail at pure_music@btinternet.com

Having studied at Birmingham Conservatoire, founder of Pure Music Vocal Tuition, Katie Harris, spent 6 years teaching Secondary music in a range of school settings.



During this time Katie developed her passion for leading and directing choirs and began to work with groups across the UK. As this work has developed, Katie has expanded the profile and range of people with whom she worked and has gone on to lead choirs who have performed in

community settings, choir competitions, on live TV & radio and as part of national and international tours.

One of Katie's early youth choirs based in the West Midlands – a Gospel Choir who went on to tour South Africa performing in settlements, open air concerts and official functions.

One of Katie's many community choirs – this 80-strong group based in Worcestershire, drew individuals from a huge range of backgrounds including people with absolutely no experience of singing! There really is no barrier for those wanting to give singing as part of a dynamic and vibrant choir a go!

Inversnaid - Motor Vehicle Incidents this month.



Photos courtesy Andre Goulancourt



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Patient Participation Group TV Bookings

We currently have an active group of approximately 7 patients.

The group is looking for new members, particularly those with young families or patients of working age.

The group aims include:

- Exchange of ideas to improve the patient experience
- Discussions regarding new patient services
- To act as a forum to feedback to the practice suggestions for improvement to services provided to us (patient services, the organization and to the building and premises.

Patient Reference Group

We are aiming to set up a new group with whom we can gather information and exchange ideas via e-mail. The group would not meet in person but could consist of patients making up a "virtual" group.

This group would be called upon to assist the Patient Participation Group when creating and conducting surveys or when the Practice requires patient input for new services and developments.

The Practice would set up and manage this e-mail group and contact patients from time to time, giving patients in the Reference Group an opportunity to have a say.

We are looking for patients in any age group, but particularly those with young children or teenagers, carers, patients with a disability, as well as those with long term conditions who may regularly use the services of the practice.

Application To Become A Member

I would like to help shape the future of patient services at Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres please include me in the following groups:-

- Patient Participation Group
- Patient Reference Group
- Both Groups

Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____

E-mail _____

Signature _____

By signing this form I give consent to be contacted by the surgery.

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Medication Amnesty

Thank you to all those who attended the AGM of the Friends of Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie medical centres.

Just a reminder that you can still bring to the surgery all your unwanted or out of date medication for safe disposal.

Date for your Diary

Are you over 65

Are you pregnant

A carer

Or have one of the following illnesses

Asthma

COPD

Heart disease

Kidney disease

Liver disease

Diabetes

Then you are entitled to a flu vaccine. Come along to one of the following clinics. No appointment required.

Thursday 4th October 1.30pm-3pm

or

Thursday 18th October 1.30pm-3pm

Medical Centre Opening Hours

Aberfoyle 01877 382421

Monday 8.15am-11.00am By Appointment
4.00pm-5.30pm By Appointment

Tuesday 8.20am-10.15am By Appointment
2.00pm-3.00pm By Appointment

Wed 8.20am-10.15am By Appointment
4.00pm-5.30pm By Appointment

Thurs 7.00am-8.00am By Appointment
(Alternate Thursdays)

8.15am or 9.30am By Appointment
(Alternate Thursdays)

Friday 8.20am-10.15am By Appointment
2.00pm-3.00pm By Appointment

Buchlyvie 01360 850237

Monday 7.00am-8.00am By Appointment
(Alternate Mondays)

8.15am-9.30am Open Surgery
Tuesday 10.30am-11.30am Open Surgery

4.00pm-5.30pm By Appointment

Wed 8.15am-9.30am Open Surgery

Thur 8.15am-9.30am Open Surgery
Friday 10.30am-11.30am Open Surgery
3.30pm-5.00pm By Appointment

Macmillan Cancer Support, Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Councils and NHS Forth Valley have been working in partnership since 2007 to help secure a staggering £13 million of unclaimed benefit for local people with cancer and other long-term conditions. In the last year alone £3.2 million has been realised.

Stirling Council's Advice Service is the hub for the Macmillan Long Term Conditions Project, with advisers based in each of the Forth Valley local authority areas. The Project provides a financial well-being service to patients across the area, and explores the best ways to meet the needs of people with cancer and other long term conditions.

"Navigating the benefits system can be particularly challenging for someone already dealing with the stress of living with a long term health condition," said Cllr Margaret Brisley, Stirling Council Portfolio Holder for Social Care, Health and Sport. "And with welfare reform underway, it's even more important that expert advice and information is available for people at a difficult time in their lives.

That's what the Macmillan Long Term Conditions Project has shown it can provide." "The Project provides an excellent service, which is integral to providing care for patients and families," added Sandra Campbell, Nurse Consultant for Cancer and Palliative Care, NHS Forth Valley.

"The amount of unclaimed benefit that the Project has helped secure for local people since it was launched is tremendous."

For more information or to contact the Macmillan Long Term Conditions Project please telephone 01786 442988. For general advice, assistance or information on money-related matters, please contact Customer First on 0845 277 7000.

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Simon says.....



A WASHOUT SUMMER COULD CAUSE VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY Doctors have been warned!!

Regular sunlight is needed for the production of the vital nutrient Vitamin D which keeps growing bones healthy and strong. The record rainfall throughout April, May & June has robbed us, and especially youngsters, of this essential vitamin.

At a recent British Medical Association's Annual Conference in Brighton it was reported that "Modern living, with an increasingly indoor lifestyle, extended cloud cover, air pollution and modern diets have reduced access to natural Vitamin D." Doctors fear there could be an explosion of illness among children, the most common illness caused by lack of Vitamin D being rickets, which leads to the softening and weakening of the bones.

People need just 20-30 minutes of sun three to four times a week to ensure they get enough Vitamin D, but obviously with our weather, especially of late, it can be impossible to get this. Children make 90% of their Vitamin D naturally from sunlight exposure on their skin. Without sunlight, the shortfall must be made up with supplements and a healthy diet.

Medics say Vitamin D deficiency is particularly noticeable among children up to three years old and whose bones are developing.

Vitamin D3 drops have been designed specifically for breastfed babies, infants and children.

FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO ESCAPE THE BRITISH SUMMER and perhaps fly away to some sun kissed destination, SIMON also has some **TOP TIPS** as your health store is full of natural products that can help you with any first aid emergency.

****TEA TREE** is a wonderful antiseptic and you can find it in a cream variety.

****VITAMIN B1** taken before you go away, and during your holiday, can help prevent you getting bitten as it is known to give off a scent that the insects don't like.

****ARNICA** for bumps or bruises, or when experiencing aching muscles after too much activity. Available in a cream or gel form, it is

very soothing.

GENERAL ADVICE for holidays away and especially foreign trips:-

Avoiding raw food and tap water are the basics that we can ensure help maintain good overall health during your holiday. Foreign food and drink can affect the sensitive balance of bacteria in the intestine giving rise to problems such as diarrhoea and vomiting.

Latest research shows that 1 in 5 holidaymakers fall ill when they travel abroad and the most common ailments are upset tummies, overindulgence and sunburn.

If you pack anything for your travel health, make it **PROBIOTICS** as these will help safeguard against an upset stomach and, if you succumb to trouble, it should cut the duration of symptoms. Foreign food and drink, and dirty drinking water, negatively affect the balance of bacteria in the gut.

In restaurants ask for fizzy water in preference to still water which can often be their own tap water rebottled by them for extra profit!!

PROBIOTICS have been shown to be effective in maintaining health whilst combating those symptoms we'd like to avoid whilst away on holiday. They help with diarrhoea, excess gas and bloating which are a result of incorrect balance of good and bad gut bacteria.

Talk to us at **NATURES CORNER** about the right probiotics to take when travelling abroad as there are plenty that do not need refrigeration and so are ideal to take away.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS in Scotland, the UK.....or wherever!!!

SIMON ROBINSON is the main qualified working proprietor at **NATURES CORNER** in Callander

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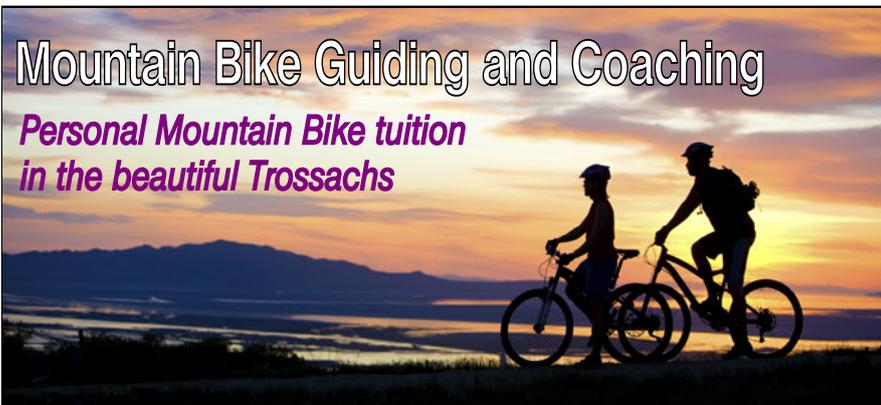
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Rob Roy Kinlochard Games

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Oh well! Turned out it was unlucky weather-wise for the St Swithin's day Rob Roy Kinlochard games and Gala day in 2012.

It really was a case of never mind the weather for the loyal and brave souls who came along to enjoy the day.

We were privileged to have "The Queen" and her corgis to open the games, albeit both she and the corgis got a bit drookit!

There was a great array of displays; Trossachs Search & Rescue dogs including their newly trained accelerant dog were very popular.

We nearly lost a falcon who had decided Kinlochard was altogether too wet and had to be coaxed back by his handler after he had clambered over several obstacles.

Open Highland Heavy competitions attracted entrants of all shapes and sizes and ages ranged from the very young to the very old – but all were cheered for their efforts which were most impressive.

Whilst some chose to get even wetter than they were by participating in Loch side watery pursuits, others preferred to decorate cakes or make jewellery.

There was also room for bit of a flutter with tombola, guess the logs, lucky numbers and of course the famous duck race – quite tricky for the wee duckies as the little burn was a raging torrent this year!

The parasol seats beside the bar were not popular, and no sooner had they been wiped down than they were soaked again. No matter, it made the event more convivial to the temperance society as the tea tent, which was totally under canvass, became the most popular spot of afternoon! The ice cream stall managed to sell a surprising number of ice creams as many insisted that, really, it was not that bad a day!

There was worry that pipes would become wet and tuneless and that the dancers may slip – but new hall to the rescue- and a brilliant display of dance & piping was held in a packed hall.

The races were probably the highlight for many with some very excited youngsters (and to be honest certainly not "that" young in the giant sack race). One of the title holders of the World Sack race championship 2011 was there to defend the title and I am delighted to report that she did so with a few substitutes in the team.

There were still some soaked souls about to witness the challenge Tug o' War which was won by The Fire Brigade in the best of 3 pulls. Probably what kept many going in the somewhat damp and dreich conditions was the excellent Burger stall, providing a steady stream of hot, tasty burger rolls throughout the day.

By the time the last performer had taken their van out of the field, we could definitely claim "Glastonbury or Isle of Wight " status for the mud in the gateway!

There is no doubt tho' that all who came had a good time and the weather could not dampen enthusiasm to have a great day out.

Thanks to all who made the day an enjoyable success and gave their time; Fire Brigade Crew for bringing the engine and letting the kids (wee and not so wee!) have an explore of the engine, National Park for revealing the secret wee beasties in the loch, Search & Rescue for their displays, WITT for running the ice cream stall, Andy Malcolm and The Black Bull in conjunction with Trossachs Cabs for their generous help with transport, all those who donated prizes or produce for the tea tent, Bill for taking photos and all volunteers who helped with any of setting up, running things on the day and taking down again, and lastly thanks to ER for bringing her corgis and opening the day in her Jubilee year.



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New series of books for Teens set in The Trossachs

If you go down to the woods today—don't be surprised to see someone peering at rocks and hollows, taking photos and muttering. J. Lilley, a local woman, has a series of young adult books set in the area, now published by Lycaon Press, a Canadian publishing house.

The books are about a sept of leopard shifters—and their enemies—who live and work in the Trossachs. Everywhere that's mentioned in the books is around here, just not where you expect it to be!

The first of the six book series, *Discovered* was published as an eBook in June, and the following five follow one a month. The paperback books are well under way. The first, *Beginnings*, will contain books 1-3, and the second, *Resolutions*, the final three books.

Jo chose the Trossachs as the setting for her books for several reasons. How handy is it to open your front door, walk a few hundred yards and be in the area you're writing about? Where else could you set a series of teen mysteries that would give you the wealth of atmosphere, history and scenery? There was no contest.

And she hoped readers would have fun wondering what or where The Armin Stone or Kusire are.

The history behind the books is little short of amazing. A friend of the author was bemoaning the fact that she couldn't find a shifter novel for her daughter's 14th birthday. In a moment of what she calls madness, Jo said she'd write one, never having written anything for teens (unless you counted a serial she'd started long-hand many

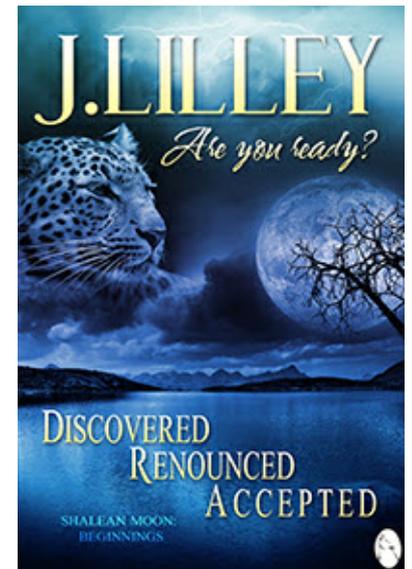
years before for her daughter and her friends). And she knew nothing of paranormal stories at all. However nothing ventured, she wrote a short 12k word tale called *The Shalean Moon*, about a young girl moving from England to Scotland and finding she had a family history she knew nothing about.

Jo was chatting to a publisher of fiction about this, and he asked to see the work. The upshot being, he told Jo he was opening a YA publishing house, and he wanted the story. He then added, "but it's got to be at least twice as long and I want a series." Whilst she picked herself up off the floor he said very casually. "Oh, and I need the first re written one by the end of the month?" Cue one very busy month, but indeed the manuscript was written and sent off to be edited, reedited, and polished. From that twelve thousand-word novella *The Shalean Moon Series* arose.

Jo is very excited, and proud of these books. Writing for teens, she says, is a challenge because of the extra responsibility of making sure you don't 'overstep the line' of acceptable content. It's also fun making sure the words and expressions are current idiom.

Something that was used even last year can be totally forgotten now, so she needs to make sure anything she uses will stand the test of time. She's lucky that she has teens both here, and in other parts of the country who are happy to help her.

There's a short prologue to the series, which lets readers know why things are as they are. Of course, Rach, the heroine of the first book doesn't know any of this. She just meets Brios and Leira (and Struan) and her life is turned upside down.



A Short Walk Back In Time

The Shalean Story

In the mists of time, when the land now known as Scotland was its own land, and clans loved and fought, depending on the season, the harvest, and their laws, the goddess Shalea took her place amongst them.

She was no ordinary ruler, but one with exceptional talents, to hold her own clan firmly together, and to foster undreamed of talents and gifts amongst the members of her clan.

She drew these newly gifted people together, and thus The Shalean Sept was formed.

For centuries they lived peacefully and prospered, until those who understood nothing of their ways threatened their peace and harmony.

Dion, a young boy of the countryside who knew nothing of the world took a vow to protect Shalea, to ensure the goddess and her ideals lived on. He was motivated by a sense of justice and a desire to seek peace and prosperity for his land. To do so he risked his life for hers, and thus Shalea was saved.

In appreciation, Shalea gifted him with powerful abilities, enabling him to sense other people's fears and emotions deep inside himself, and to speak to those chosen with no words passing his lips. She called these gifts sensing and projecting. She also gifted him with the ability to shift from human to leopard form and to pass these gifts to those he felt worthy.

In time Dion met and married another young follower of Shalea, and he passed his gifts to his family. In such manner was the Sept's success

ensured and its members lived in peace and harmony.

Until now.

Many hundreds of years passed.

They had been called together—all young, all knowing they were different—none knowing how.

"Why are we here?" Leira Parde spoke to no one in particular. "I want to be at home, under the duvet with chocolate and a good book. Not in this draughty old school, on a Saturday morning wondering if I've been caught with my phone in school or eating gum on the school bus or something, and this is the punishment."

Her brother Brios laughed. He'd had much the same reaction a year or so earlier.

"You'll find out soon enough. Here's dad, oops Patriarch now."

Marok Parde, dad or Patriarch depending who you were and where you were, entered the room, his wife Shala, the Matriarch, close behind.

The old one room school was tiny, with high windows that looked out into the clear sky. With them all inside, there was little space to look up at the vista, but knowing it was there was comforting to those waiting.

"Our Gods and Us." Marok said upon entering. The greeting came naturally to all those in the room, and they repeated it.

"Each of you know a little of our past; today it is time to learn of your future. To rejoice in your Shalean selves, to learn that soon, you will all progress to the next level of your lives. As you grow and become adult, you will become true Shaleans,

able to sense and project thoughts, to shift and become your other self, your leopard. You will learn more about your role in life, in the Sept, and how to work together in the Sept for the good of all."

The room filled with a silver haze.

"Listen with your hearts, and hear all I say: This is our protection, our Shimmer Zone. For as we shift and reform our bodies, we need to give thanks for these gifts.' The voice was in each and every one of them, soft and then loud commanding and reassuring.

The mists dissolved and in Marok's place stood a leopard.

"Watch and learn, and remember, you use your gifts wisely, for the good of Shalea." The leopard projected to them all, and left the room silently, his fur rippling, his proud (rosettes).markings bright and proud.

"Wow," Leira said eventually. "So that's the next step eh? When will it happen?"

"To each person, when the gods decree," Brios answered. "When you accept and agree to our creed."

Months passed, until And it happened as predicted.so it was. On the night of The Shalean Moon, they were each called and each accepted their fate. They shifted and ran with the Sept to celebrate their new Shalean selves.

One boy, not yet a man, but on the cusp, accepted his gifts with a smirk. To him they meant power. His power. To him, they were a means to an end. The end of Shalea as they all knew it.

So, that's the history. To find out the present and the future you'll need to read the series.

With all six books now written, Jo is starting a new series, also set in the area as a joint venture with Falkirk author Suzanne Law.

Called *Myth: The Daihredhe*, the series is darker than *The Shalean Moon*, but according to Jo, as much fun to write. And it has the added bonus of someone to bounce ideas off.

Jo is always interested to hear from her readers, and for any ideas for future books. You can contact her via her website www.jilleyauthor.com or by email on jilleyauthor@hotmail.co.uk

National Park News

By Owen McKee



The sighting of a wild beaver in the Leny has caused a stir and no doubt will result in some heated debate in coming months about its introduction. For my part I keep praying that someone would introduce a womble to help tackle the problem of litter. It may have been an inclement summer so far but that does not seem to have deterred the arrival of that most unwelcome visitor - *the litter lout*. Not unnaturally the community council has brought quite forcefully to my attention the latest spate. Litter continues to be a problem which we bring to the attention of Stirling Council who have the responsibility for its clear up and yet I do have a great deal of sympathy for the challenges facing them in the current economic climate. With limited resources where do you spend the money. As council tax payers we do have a voice. We can convey to our local councillors our list of priorities for spending our taxes. In the meantime where we see littering and vandalism happening we need to let our police know. Unfortunately we seldom see the actual commission of the act and consequently are not in a position to report the crime. And that too is also the problem for the police and the Rangers. Part and parcel of the Ironworks patrol is face to face engagements with those camping in the area and explaining to our visitors what is expected of them but as we all know no-one ever admits to being a litter lout. Is the "TAKE YOUR LITTER HOME" policy part of the problem or would littering of the type we experience in this area still happen if bins were supplied and regularly uplifted?

And that is then where the resource priority raises its ugly head. Is a Demand Response transport system for example more important than regular litter clearance. If you have access to your own transport the tendency would be to lean towards the litter clearance. As politicians will often say when debating budgets with their opponents, if you choose to spend the money on x what would you cut. We will continue to lobby the council to place a higher priority on litter collection but the case will be helped considerably if our local councillors receive a clear call that that is a priority for the residents of the Park. I may add that I recently visited a National Park south of the border and yes they too are struggling with the self same problem and have not yet found a solution even though they have been in existence for decades. As part of celebrating the tenth birthday of our Park we have introduced "A SHOT IN THE PARK" to encourage people to photograph some of the good things in the Park. And please no photos of litter or vandalism. It is meant to highlight some of the special features of the Park. Details of competition can be viewed on the Website at www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

I'm happy to say that the new permanent entrance signs for the Park are now starting to appear and shortly the old and faded temporary signs will be taken away.

As always I can be contacted as follows:
Post : Taigh Na Bhuth,
Lochearnhead.
Phone: 01567 830214
owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk

Outdoor recreation opportunities explored by National Park

A new Outdoor Recreation Plan has been drafted by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park to identify potential recreational opportunities that could improve the visitor experience and identify any gaps in the market. Some of the proposed actions include:

- Developing and promoting the Park's long distance walking routes, mountain biking network and park wide core paths
- Repairing the Park's eroded mountain paths
- Better path links to the Park from Glasgow, Stirling and Dunoon
- A Park wide network of semi-formal campsites
- Promoting activity trails and itineraries for kayaking & horse back
- Promoting a network of berthing opportunities for motor boats on Loch Lomond
- Creating a community water sports hub in Balloch, a building that would provide facilities and opportunities to enjoy swimming, waterskiing and rowing.

A public consultation will run from August 1 2012 for 3 months. The National Park will hold the following drop in days for the public to discuss proposals with the project team.

National Park HQ, Balloch, 21 Aug 6pm-8pm
National Park HQ, Balloch, 29 Aug 11am-2pm
National Park Offices, Callander, 11 Sept 6pm-8pm
National Park Offices, Callander, 18 Sept 11am-2pm

For more information or to comment on the proposals visit www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED: FORTH VALLEY ADVOCACY

BACKGROUND

Forth Valley Advocacy (FVA) delivers a free independent advocacy service to vulnerable people with mental ill health, a learning disability, dementia and those with an acquired brain injury. The organisation has twenty years' experience in providing advocacy services to people across Forth Valley. Our work gives priority to clients requiring advocacy support on issues arising from the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. FVA is contracted by Forth Valley NHS as well as Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Councils.

VOLUNTEER ROLE

Our volunteer advocates play a vital role in delivering additional services to our clients from those undertaken by our experienced staff. Volunteer advocates help clients contribute their views and preferences in decision making that directly affects their lives. Volunteers offer support to clients to attend meetings in relation to money, housing, health and social issues. They will signpost clients to appropriate services and support them to attend agencies at first visit. Moreover, volunteers help to run a vital Advocacy Information Service that can be accessed by colleagues and clients, raise awareness of Advocacy throughout the area and run rural and office-based drop-in services. Full training will be provided and travel expenses reimbursed. Volunteers will be subject to PVG Disclosure.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to find out more about volunteering with our service, please contact Margo Campbell (Volunteer Co-ordinator) or Fiona Moore (Administrator). Forth Valley Advocacy, 1 The Bungalows, LARBERT FK5 4SZ
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Little Green Fingers



No-one is too young to be a gardener, as we found out when a group from Gartmore Mums and Toddlers came to visit Green Routes, in the Walled Garden of Gartmore House.

First of all the hens and chickens were fed, and four fresh eggs discovered. Then the young gardeners chose annual flowers to fill planters, and finally, the vegetables were given a thorough watering.

On the last Sunday of each month, volunteers are welcomed to the Garden, and Viv Miller organises activities for children. Last month they filled salad pots with varieties of lettuce, dug in the potato bed and had fun making hand prints in paint.

Green Routes excel at Scotland's Gardens

The students of Green Routes, the social enterprise for young adults with learning disabilities, based in the Walled Garden of Gartmore House, have entered the pallet garden competition at Scotland's gardens for the past three years. This year, however, we excelled ourselves!

Three pallet gardens were entered and each was awarded a gold certificate. One student is very interested in our bees, and created a garden based on hexagons, which he filled with plants which attract bees with pollen and nectar. A small bee-hive and a jar of honey were set amongst the plants and his backboard showed photographs of spring flowers, information about bees and helping to attend to our bee-hives.

The pupils of St Modan's High School chose the Royal Jubilee as their theme and set a wooden boat on a River Thames of blue flowers, banked on either side by formal gardens. A model of the Queen with a hand-wave which was solar-powered, drew lots of attention.

The pupils of Wallace High School created 'A Day at Green Routes' with a wheelbarrow, a pair of wellies and bird-boxes, filled with flowers. Their backdrop told of the work of the school within the autistic unit.

One of our supported volunteers loves working with wood, and watching trains. He combined the two to make and fill a train with carriages, one with small trees representing the wood of the future, the next with flame and black-coloured flowers as the coal from trees of the past, a dining car full of vegetables and one of fruit. For this he won first in the container section. And a student made a wooden planter and used his skills to fill it with plants grown in the Garden, earning a well-deserved third award.



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School News



Aberfoyle Primary and Nursery

The last few weeks at school were very busy for everyone and we would like to thank all parents for their support, not only at the end of term but during the last academic year. By the time this goes to print we will be half way through the Summer break which we hope you are all enjoying to the full, whatever the weather might be!

Olympic Torch Relay

Aberfoyle had its own Olympic Torch (all be it an inflatable one) which was carried around the village by pupils from school and nursery. The children elected a boy and a girl from each year group to run a stage of the relay and each child had chosen an adult to run with them. Well done to the mums, dads and grandparents who ran in the relay and to Mr Fielden who ran the whole route, struggling unsuccessfully towards the end to keep up with Claire Jennings and Thomas Wright!! Many thanks to everyone who turned out to cheer the children on and a big thank you to the staff of Aberfoyle Co-op who raised the money to provide all of the children with bottles of water and fresh fruit on the day.

Celebration of success

As usual this took place in the Memorial Hall and was very well attended. Every pupil was presented with a certificate acknowledging their achievements during the year.

This year we have a new trophy which was gifted to the school in memory of Ann Epps, who lived in Aberfoyle and who sadly died last year. It is her family's wish that this award be presented annually to pupils who show exceptional community spirit. Any of you who knew Ann, will no doubt agree that she herself showed exceptional community spirit in so many ways.

Prize list-

School Dux-Sophie Anderson
Sports Champion- Claire Jennings
House Cup-Neptune
House Sports Cup-Saturn
S.L.A.Award-Katie Bell
Special recognition award- Blair McPheat

Ann Epps Memorial Trophy

P1-Rebecca Barnes
P2-Catriona Manders
P3-Fiona Klaes
P4-Beth Dunlop
P5-Kim Stevenson
P6-Natalie Klaes
P7-Sean Steele

Sports Day

This year Sports Day had a topical theme with a Mini Olympics in the morning and the usual races in the afternoon. The midgies were out in force in the morning but fortunately a bit of a breeze kept them away in the afternoon. Everyone enjoyed themselves and the children were very grateful for the ice lollies which were provided by the Parent Council at half time.

P7 Memories

On the last day of the term parents and grandparents were invited in to the school for a concert and to hear Primary 7's memories. The whole school sang beautifully and the violin group treated us to some lovely tunes, well done everyone.

We also saw a slide show of events, which have taken place in school during the last year. As always it was very entertaining and professionally put together, thanks to Mr Barwick .

The highlight of this event was when each member of the P7 class shared their memories, of their time at Aberfoyle Primary, with us and their hopes and aspirations for the future. There were lots of laughs and smiles and maybe even a few tears.

These pupils have been a credit to Aberfoyle Primary, we have been fortunate to have them in our school and I am sure that they will all go on to achieve greater things at McLaren High School.

GOODBYE and GOOD LUCK P7. 😊

McLaren High

TESCO Vouchers

Thank you to everyone who collected vouchers for the school. The total collected in 2012 was a fantastic 6,860. As the scheme is changing next year we had a grand total, including banked vouchers from last year, of 10,890 to exchange!!

We have ordered the following equipment for the school:

For Learning Support - Jump Baton, Basketball, Memory Stick, Digi Skipping Ropes, Collection of Fiction Novels, Wheely Bag, Hockey Sticks and Gardening Gloves
For Whole School - 5 Memory Sticks
For Science and Technology - Handheld Digital Microscope

This really is quite an achievement - thanks to all parents, pupils and staff who handed vouchers in.

The Apprentice—McLaren Style!

In the last few weeks before summer holidays a group of 33 S1 pupils set-up a business enterprise making Shamballa bracelets to order. The apprentice style competition generated a lot of interest and almost 200 orders for bracelets. We learned quickly how to make the bracelets, giving up our lunchtimes to work together and meet deadlines. Everyone has had so much fun making the bracelets, but not so much fun untying knots! Prize money of £25 for the most orders generated was won jointly by Jenny Holl and Nicola Craig. The competition between both teams was close with the winning team collecting 101 orders. All pupils will receive either a £15 or £10 voucher each for their brilliant efforts and commitment and almost £1000 will go towards school funds and a charity of the winning team's choice. Congratulations to a great team and a big thank you to Mrs Hamilton for all her help and patience!

Kirsty Allan and Skye Bending S1



Silver Canoe Training

On Thursday 14 June eight S5 pupils (Liam Burnett, Duncan Lloyd, Nicola Allan, Iona Campbell, Finn Rhys, Daniel Speirs, Fiona Fingland and Morag Hutton) went up to the Firbush Activity Centre just outside Killin to start their training for Silver DofE. We started by learning about the basics of the canoes and the different strokes which could be used such as the J-stroke. We were also taught about the wind and how it changes the difficulty to move on the water and later on we found out! We were then put on the water where we did drills, turning the canoe, making it go straight and more. The evening was a fun experience and we are all looking forward to completing our Silver DofE.
Liam Burnett

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Sponsored Walk

On Wednesday 23 May, in beautiful sunshine, S1 – S3 pupils were involved in our annual Sponsored Walk. The route took pupils across from the school into Coihallan Wood. The footpath led the pupils through the forested area before joining Invertrossachs Road. The course was well stewarded by members of staff, with help from Steven Scott, Community Police Officer for Callander, and Liam Ward, Community Police Officer for Aberfoyle. The purpose of the walk was to raise funds towards the Multi Use Sports Pitch and to support the School's additional pupil activities. Many thanks to all the parents, family and neighbours who sponsored participants.



Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The McLaren D of E Group have had a busy Expedition season with groups operating this year at all three levels of the Award - Bronze, Silver and Gold!

Around 40 young people have been on their Bronze Practice Expedition (2 day walking, 1 night camping) and by next weekend we hope that about half of them will have completed their Bronze Qualifying Expedition leaving only their expedition report or presentation to complete their expedition section.

At Silver level we have two canoe groups and a walking group who will be doing their Practice and Qualifying Expeditions after the summer holidays. The canoe groups have already started their training last week with an evening on Loch Tay. Our first ever Gold Expedition Group returned from the Ardeche in France last week after successfully completing their Gold Expedition. The Group undertook some fairly gruelling training before they left for France including hailstones and snow on their Practice Expedition on the River Spey in the Easter holidays and numerous extra training sessions involving rapids and eddies. I would like to thank Les Berron and Catriona Kindig , two of our adult leader volunteers, who put considerable time and effort into making this Group's expeditions so successful. Also to mention Iain Mackinnon from Active Stirling who supervised the Group on their trip to the Ardeche (see Kirsty's report below). There will be an opportunity after the summer to see the Gold Group expedition presentation (more details to follow...)

Following our fundraising Ceilidh in October last year and a generous donation from the Airtricity Fund, we were able to increase our stock of camping equipment and also help subsidise a Remote Emergency First Aid Course. 13 participants completed this very worthwhile first aid course for the skill section of their award at either Bronze or Silver level and you can see some of them here in the photo after their certificate presentation by their instructor Paddy from Venture Medics.



And finally, if you missed out on the chance of winning your own gold medal this year and Olympic fever grabs and inspires you, why not start training for the 2016 games in Rio de Janeiro:

- If you fancy being the next Mo Farrah, you can put in some long distance running training around the Mell loop at Glen Finglas. The 16 mile track will build your fitness and stamina up the hills!
- If you would prefer to be the next Chris Hoy, then you can't beat cycling around the shores of Loch Katrine.
- How about the next Zara Philips? There are plenty of horse friendly tracks all over the Trossachs.
- Not tough enough for you, then there is always the triathlon - the plentiful lochs, tracks and roads, especially the Duke's Pass, is a perfect playground for you.
- Let's not forget canoeing, rowing or synchronised swimming, but if you opt for the latter option please let me know as I personally would love to watch a bit of synchronised swimming at Loch Katrine!

The Great Trossachs Forest combines three Scottish Forest Alliance sites at Inversnaid (RSPB), Glen Finglas (WTS) and Loch Katrine (FCS). It is one of the most significant native woodland regeneration projects to take place in the UK in a generation. The Great Trossachs Forest aims to be a showcase for wildlife and habitat enhancement as well as promote the rich heritage of the area. It will provide visitors and local people with leisure and recreational opportunities and will bring landscape, social and economic benefits to local communities.

If you have any questions or comments I can be contacted by email: suemorris@scottishforestalliance.org.uk or at the Woodland Trust Office (01877 376340). Sue Morris
Development Officer
The Great Trossachs Forest



Welcome to the news from **Glendrick Roost**

We are as usual very busy with our animals and the necessary fundraising to keep them all happy and healthy. Several new animals have taken up residence with us namely a lovely jack donkey we have named Crumpet. He has now been gelded and joined Pumpkin Pie, Dumping and Donut for the summer on new grazing on the Balfroon road that has kindly been offered to us. Twin donkey foals were dumped in Carlisle and they too came to stay with us. We have named them Roobarb and Custard. They are adorable and though had an appalling start in life in Ireland are very friendly and loving. This gentleness of donkeys and acceptance of cruelty always amazes me. We now have four donkeys that have been badly treated and all are gentle and affectionate.

A new hen arrived recently, she is a Legbar and lays beautiful blue eggs. She has a completely different cluck from our other hens!! I always thought they all sounded the same.

A gerbil, rabbit and a couple of new dogs have also been added to the numbers. Tyke is a Yorkshire Terrier who arrived at the beginning of the year after being run over. He was picked up by the police in Falkirk with a broken pelvis. After many hours of hard work he is now walking on all four legs though his back legs are weak and will probably always be so. He weighed less than 2kg when he arrived; he now weighs just under 5kg. Flag our lovely Romanian street dog arrived in February [please read our article on page 20 to learn more about her] Once more Dobbies are our main fundraiser, several stores offering us

weekends throughout the year. We have been selected as Stirling Dobbies Charity of the Year meaning any money that they raise throughout 2012 will be donated to us. Our thanks go to them for this generous act. We are also attending many local and not so local fetes, fairs, shows and highland games. Please come and support us at one or more of these events: Doune and Dunblane show; Callander Highland Games; Blairgowrie highland games; Dobbies Stirling, Perth, Dundee, Ayr, Braehead and Livingston. A diary of events can be found on our website www.glendrickroost.org.uk Another major fundraiser this year is a sponsored walk covering the complete West Highland Way done in several sections. This has been done many times by many people and has I am sure raised lots of money for many good causes. Ours is Special why? because this time it will be completed by myself accompanying our amazing Labrador Frodo Baggins and on some easier sections by our brave Romanian street dog Flag. Please read the article on page 20 to find out why these dogs are so special. We hope to also have company on our walk by volunteers willing to support the dogs in their mammoth task. If you would like to join us please contact me Mione on info@glendrickroost.org.uk or ring 07748 351287. We would love to have you along.



A Positive Difference to the Lives of Older People



WRVS are delighted to have secured additional funding to help even more older people living within the Stirling Council area, to remain active and independent, staying in their own homes for as long as possible and reducing social isolation.

The new funding has secured employment for three new full time members of staff who will coordinate and manage the services from their WRVS office base in Stirling. WRVS will be launching a new "Home From Hospital Service" aimed at offering practical assistance, to older people aged 75+ specifically and initially, with little or no support at home. Our Home from Hospital service is designed to assist older people immediately following the discharge period for up to 4-6 weeks, with practical things like shopping, transport to follow up hospital or medical appointments or just to provide some much needed support and company during the recuperation period. It is anticipated at the end of the 6 week period, clients will be able to access the community transport & good neighbours' service should they require access to transport. We also currently operate a meals on wheels service three days per week. In order to deliver our services efficiently and effectively, WRVS will be embarking on an immediate volunteer recruitment campaign. We would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in volunteering for these very rewarding and worthwhile roles, living in the ABERFOYLE area. Please contact us to find out how you can help older people in your local area. Volunteers of all ages are welcome!

For further information please contact:

Jennifer Kaney, Local Service Coordinator,
Community Support Services T. 01786 450750
Jennifer.kaney@wrvs.org.uk
Katie McGeachie, Local Service Coordinator, Home From Hospital T. 01786 450762
Katie.mcgeachie@wrvs.org.uk

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QUILT SHOW SUCCESS



The second Thistle Threads Charity Quilt Show on 7th July, in Callander Kirk Hall, raised £2,250 for Strathcarron Hospice during a busy day. The Thistle Threaders who have been working on their quilts for this show for the last two years enjoyed sharing them with all the visitors who braved the weather to come from near and far to see them. The variety of work was fantastic and included quilts, wall hangings, cushions and bags. There was also a fabulous selection of patchwork and quilted gifts for sale from double bed quilts to cot quilts, cushions, bags, household items, soft toys and bean bags-something for everyone. The home baking was delicious and plentiful and enjoyed by all with sales from the baking table adding to the fantastic total raised. Clare, who runs the Thistle Threads classes said "It was wonderful to see all the beautiful quilts made by the students, from beginners to advanced,

displayed together producing a really 'wow' factor for our many visitors. Each quilt was different and our visitors were spoilt for choice choosing their favourite and the lovely thing was, each quilt was someone's favourite! The whole show was the culmination of a lot of hard work-and a great deal of fun. It was inspiring for many who now look forward to joining us in classes when we restart in September. We have raised a fantastic total for Strathcarron Hospice and I would like to say a very big 'thank you' to all those many people who supported us. We have a few quilts and patchwork gifts still available for sale in aid of the Hospice and they will be on sale at the Craft Fair at Ward Toll Nursery on Saturday 28th July so, an ideal opportunity to buy that early Christmas present!!"

The new term of classes starts the first week in September and continues to December and anyone interested in joining the patchwork and quilting classes can contact Clare on 01877 382924.

Trossachs Area Community Transport



Most local people will be aware by now that, after a period of uncertainty, our tenants Aberfoyle Coaches went into liquidation at the end of June, ceasing the provision of bus and garage workshop services. Trossachs Area Services, TACT's trading subsidiary, however continues to operate as normal with its shop and forecourt fuel supplies. The liquidators took the decision not to try to sell the business as a going concern, but to close the leased premises and secure Aberfoyle Coaches' assets. The current position is that:

- All the buses have been removed from the site and Stirling Council are working on putting alternative transport contracts in place.
- The workshop premises currently are closed but equipment remains in place.

The scope of TACT's funding mainly covers the fuel and shop businesses, so it will need to seek tenants for the vacated premises to generate the income needed to further develop the site. We are hoping that the premises can be used by several companies or organisations in future, and are looking to ensure that maximum community benefit is gained, using enterprises which would complement and run successfully alongside the local community's fuel supply. Several expressions of interest about using the workshop, bus garage or parking areas to the rear of the site have already been received.

This is an important decision for our community venture, so TACT will be involving several independent people

with relevant business experience to represent the local community and help objectively examine and evaluate all the options available. This will ensure that the right decision is taken for the future to protect the investments made by funders and also the many local stakeholders who helped achieve the buyout.

The ongoing uncertainty will continue to have an impact on the speed at which TACT can develop the site, with the ability to invest in improvements being affected. Our main aim however is still to ensure continuation of the local fuel supply followed by gradual improvement to the site and services provided, which is the reason we achieved our funding. We have to be careful to avoid taking any unnecessary risk which could affect the community business.

The next development will be introduction of air, washing and vacuum services in part of the vacated area, and these should be in place by the end of July. Cosmetic forecourt upgrading has been deferred slightly since the program of work to upgrade the fuel supply system now requires underground work to be carried out on and around the forecourt.

Fuel continues to be sold at realistic prices for the local area, and we charge a fair price based on what we pay for each weekly fuel delivery. After a gradual drop from the high prices earlier in the year we experienced a recent sharp increase which was disappointing but we of course have no control over the global oil market! Our thanks as always to the many local customers who continue to support us and help to keep our local fuel supply.

Opening hours are currently:

Weekdays: 7am to 7pm
Saturday: 8am to 7pm
Sunday: 8.30 to 7pm



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Thank you to everyone who has expressed their best wishes and all of our patients for their support.

Ranger's Ramblings

A View from the Lodge!



Contributions welcome. Contact David Wilkie on 01877 382258 or email reporter@strathardnews.com

Double Take

Some of our habitual visitors could be forgiven for thinking there has been a pair of twins, or even triplets, moving around the Lodge in the last year or so. This is down to the very welcome introduction to the fold in the shape of Angela Ballard, and the overall contribution she has offered during this period.

Together with husband, Lee, they relocated to the area from Southend in 2010, and both have proceeded to integrate into the community and commit themselves to local projects with an admirable sense of gusto, proving to be very popular figures in the process.

If not in the colours of the RSPB uniform, Angela can also have been spotted to be lending a hand toward the craft activity tables for the children at our Halloween and Easter events, all on a voluntary basis. Of late, she is to be seen earning a coin or two behind the counter at the café @ the Lodge. All of which suggests a serious work ethic. There is something else though. Something bordering on unique.

As it transpires, Angela has a very special gift in cake decorating, recent examples of which have caused great excitement within the confines, and I simply cannot speak highly enough of the creative range of her talents. Such is the growing reputation; she is considering evolving this natural ability on a business level. I feel little shame in 'advertising' her product through this column and suggesting to the local populace that they would do well to get in touch, if there is a special occasion in mind. Believe me, you will not be disappointed.

Contact details:

Telephone. 01877 382 703.

Mobile. 07811939456.

E-mail. Angela64@btinternet.com



The best laid plans

Despite Robert's standard enthusiastic application toward the National Insect Week events held at the Lodge recently, Mother Nature once again dealt us a low card in the shape of inclement weather conditions.

Considering the wide range of pleasures on offer, which included moth-trapping, pond-dipping, guided wood ant walks and bug hunts were designed as outdoor activities, it was a huge frustration to find ourselves unable to promote the occasion to its full extent. As is often the case, though, when the heavens open, refuge is sought within the bounds of the building. This in turn allowed 'The Butterfly Conservation Group' volunteers, who had set up a stall in the foyer, to enjoy a great deal of attention. Thanks are due to Lorna, Andrew and Kim for their sterling contribution on the craft tables.



Hood ave thought it!

More than a few heads were turned on Saturday the 2nd of June, as 'Robin of Loxley', the heroic outlaw from 15th Century English folklore, appeared on the scene as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations at The Lodge.

Essentially, this was a re-enactment of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, played out on the trail to the waterfall by the inspirational Walking Theatre Company. Some of you may recall their awesome 'pied-piper' performance last Halloween. From the outset, they had the assembled audience in the palm of their hands with their innovative take on the age-old tale, and the pure joy to be seen on the faces of the children in particular, upon completion of the adventure, was sincerely heart-warming.

I feel privileged to have witnessed many happenings at the Lodge over a period of time which transcend the norm, and this event was a clear case in point.

Special thanks are due to our Argyll cousin, recreation ranger Steven Gillen, for his admirable efforts in organising this unique day.



The clock is ticking

The massive second phase of the redevelopment of The David Marshall Lodge is fast approaching, and this writer is anxious to reiterate to our patrons that the Visitor Centre will be closing down for a lengthy period from late August until at least the Easter period of 2013.

Despite the fact the main building will be inaccessible during this time, it is essential to note that makeshift facilities, in the shape of Portacabins, will be constructed in the area formally designated for coaches.

This 'Mini-Lodge', as Robert has decided to christen it, has been emboldened into the plans, at no little expense, in order to create a sense of continuity.

In essence, The Commission remain committed to generate a level of services that our visitors will currently be familiar with, albeit on a downsized scale. The opportunity to enjoy a coffee and scone and some genial chat at an

information desk, together with our wildlife-viewing monitors, will still exist. Toilet facilities will be on hand, and access to the trails and paths will be unaffected.

One very important factor to consider, however, is that our fabled Halloween event will not be taking place this year. There is no denying this period of change will disillusion many of our regulars, but it is a collective hope that a degree of patience is observed as we strive to enhance the profile of this time-honoured facility, for the future benefit.

For ongoing information relating to the redevelopment, please refer to our website, www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland (clicking on upgrade) or alternatively, contact the District Office on 01877 382 383, or the Lodge on 01877 382 258. I should also mention the opportunity exists to grab a bargain or two during the sale in the shop, from now until the end of August.



A thoroughly charming image of David Brough and his wife Sue. The level of David's contribution to the Lodge over thirteen years as our (unpaid) resident woodcarver, and subsequent six years of (free) performances as part of the Heelster Gowdie folk band, can quite simply be considered to be unparalleled.



Local heroes Steve Nunn and John McKinlay, in a similar, yet thankfully not so intimate a pose. John has developed his photographic skills on an award-winning global scale since the early nineties, when he had a workshop in the very room this picture was taken, whilst Steve, although now retired, remains a hugely respected figure within National Park 'corridors'.



Local sculptor, Rob Mullholland, on a recent visit, was genuinely surprised to find himself part of a visual presentation on The Great Trossachs Forest project, currently being screened in the foyer. His truly mesmerising 'mirror people', as they have become known, are now a permanent feature on the waterfall trail.

Aberfoyle girl Mairi MacDonald and Neil Buchanan, from Milngavie, exchanged vows on the 11th of May in the stunning setting of Dunblane Cathedral. Visitors will see a lot more of Mairi at the David Marshall Lodge in the coming months, due to her promoted position as Project Support Officer.



DML Notice Board

As we begin to wind down the season, the Wildlife angle continues to be a major focus of attention.

FIRST FLIGHT, FIRST SPLASH

SAT, 4th AUGUST. 4.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.
The traditional clamour for the limited spaces on this once-upon-a-year happening through a mini-bus tour to an osprey nesting site is intense, so early booking is strongly advised. Refreshments will be available on return to the David Marshall Lodge.
Cost: £ 10.00 per adult, £ 5.00 Concession.

LET'S GO BATTY

SAT 25th and SUN 26th AUGUST.
Now officially confirmed as European Bat Weekend, the Lodge will be promoting the theme through guided walks, talks and demonstrations for all the family to enjoy. Booking may be required for some activities, through which a small charge might also apply.

Hotline for further information: 01877 382 258.



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Rangers Corner

As usual it is proving to be an emotional test
Following all the drama on our Osprey nest
As images beamed back to the Lodge on 'live TV'
Reveal Nature in the raw for all to see
The parent birds arriving was the first tale to be told
Offering anticipation of episodes yet to unfold
The eggs were then laid, followed by a period of calm
Subsequently, the hatching delivered the ultimate charm.
The creation of life, in all its glory
But for our beloved Osprey chicks, just the beginning of their story
In time, they will also learn to 'sing'
And soar to the high heavens on the wing
Conducting them to the migratory lands which lie ahead
All the while honing skills born and bred
For many of us this 'parting' is sobering indeed
As ever though, we wish them God speed.
Until the next time.

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Pet Profile



Walking Games

By Marion Back

It starts by opening the car boot
Like bullets from a gun, oot they shoot
A race to the burn as it flows to the sea
for game on. It's all a mystery to me.

What a racket, all that squeaking and barking
at the water. Running and larking
about in the shallows looking for something
- they don't know what - I'm chuckling
to myself somewhat.

A stone, a stick, a blade of grass
Whatever it takes to break the impasse
As dog and dog are never willing to cease
this game - thrilling swimming!

Back on dry land the sniffing begins
They work as a team like inseparable twins
Nothing is missed as sprays reach the target
Each taking his turn to be the piss artist

Up on the hill the woods are the setting
for a game that beggars belief.
One dog directing, the other abetting, both strictly follow the brief
Barking his orders the director is strict,
the runner is rounding the circuit
Watching for a sign that *now* is the time
for stopping and stalking and locking of eyes.
A game of doggy statues, otherwise.

Game over, we move on in leaps and homeward bound
Walking by the trees, a sound; not coming from the ground.
And one more game to play before we call it a day
As eyes are looking skyward.

Is it a bird, a squirrel or nothing at all. It really doesn't matter.
A game's a game and must be played; no question of a capture
Around the trunk with obligatory barking, two dogs in a state of rapture
To break the spell is no mean feat, even for the master.
Promise of a biscuit or even better, dinner
...seems to be the trigger
.....to produce a glimmer,
.....a real winner!

Fate accepted, gaming over, a sedentary pace is set
back to the car, then home, the promised dinner to get
Dreams of swimming fill the night as happy doggies sleep
Tomorrow is another day, and yes, you guessed,
the fun and games repeat!

Do you have you a pet with funny habits, or just something that makes you enjoy them? Please let us know and send your contribution in to us at editor@strathardnews.com or leave in Aberfoyle Post Office.



Consult Constance

Constance is our new agony aunt. She is ready to take your questions on affairs of the heart, etiquette and life in general. Her advice comes with a health warning! Be warned!! You can send your questions to her via editor@strathardnews.com Anonymity assured.

Dear Constance,

Q: I am very fond of hats and have a huge collection of all types. I'd like to wear more than one at one time, but regret the fact that I only have one head. Recently I've got right into Stetsons, but think I look a bit silly when I wear them, especially as I am short -4ft 11ins. My friend (who thinks she is it and a bit) says I **do** look silly because I am not wearing the Stetson at a jaunty angle. What is a 'jaunty angle' when it's at home?

A: Collecting can be fun, can't it! Don't let it take over your life. Now, for that 'jaunty' twist, look in the mirror and adjust the Stetson so it's sitting a little bit either to the left or the right, but without obscuring your face. That is a jaunty angle. If your friend is suggesting the Stetson should cover your face, she may be trying to tell you something else. In that case, ditch the friend!
P.S. Perhaps you should wear killer heels to complete the effect. Just a thought.

Q: My life is being ruined by a problem, which to my mind, has a very simple solution. You see, my next door neighbour and I share the same very common surname 'Jones'. This has proved most inconvenient and very confusing. I suggested to my neighbour, perfectly reasonably, that the problem could be solved if he would change his surname to something more unusual, like McIlreavy or McGrotty. I could not believe it when he point blank refused. What can I do with my totally awkward neighbour?

A: I know all too well the issues which can be caused by intransigent neighbours, which is why I avoid having any! Presumably that is not an option for you. Perhaps this simple suggestion will work wonders. For a period of time, use your neighbour's first name as yours and get all your mail addressed in that way. Soon, you will start to receive his mail, and you can start to make his life very difficult indeed. This should have the desired effect and voila! he will move house. Hopefully any new neighbour will have a different surname, and you won't be caused too many problems if your neighbour receives your mail in error.

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Trossachs Search and Rescue



Committee Posts

The committee and individual responsibilities are:

Chairman – Joanne Reid

Secretary – Stuart Ballantyne

Treasurer – Gayle Patrick

Heartstart Co-ordinator – Elaine Bruce

Equipment Officer – Iain Ballantyne

First Responder Co-ordinator – Gayle Patrick (temp) until Steve Band completes his Ambulance Technician's course when he'll resume said duties.

Callout Organiser – Stuart Ballantyne

Collecting Can Organiser – Iain Ballantyne

Without Portfolio – Gordon Gregory

New members

We're fortunate to have taken on new members who are:

Fiona McIntosh (Kinlochard)

Laura Nicolson (Aberfoyle)

Jackie Bell (Aberfoyle)

Sion Barrington (Drymen)

Amy Shaw (Alloa)

Each one has become a First Responder and so this has boosted our local service.

Fire & Rescue Service

Our own Jonathan Honeyman has resigned as Watch Manager at Aberfoyle Fire Station upon successful appointment as a wholetime firefighter. His successor is yet to be appointed.

Jonathan is presently at the Scottish Fire Service Training School at Gullane undertaking his initial training but can be seen every Saturday at the Aberfoyle Butcher keeping his hand in at his old trade.

Visit by Search Dogs Anglia

Last weekend saw a visit to us by the above organisation. On Saturday morning they undertook a Heartstart class delivered by our team and after lunch (Jonathan's finest sausage, blackpudding and haggis) went to Alloa Fire Station to learn about Urban SAR work and each had the chance to use their dog to work in the confined space building.

Another dog passed on

Grace's German Shepherd Rhu, who attended some water rescue training sessions to show Aiyla what to do when she was young and in training sadly died last month.

Thank you messages

We have received three messages thanking team members for their help recently.

Suzanne McGowan wrote: "I just wanted to thank two of your girls (Fiona and Amy) who were caring and thoughtful after my fall in Callander on Saturday 19th May. They were just fantastic and drove myself and my partner to our campsite and even offered to drive me to Stirling Hospital where I needed stitches. Please pass on my thanks to them as they could not have been more helpful."

Sarah Hatton from Women in the Trossachs wrote: "To Stuart, Iain,

Joanne and Gayle. Thank you for a memorable evening hiding from your search and rescue dogs. It was very interesting learning about what the dogs and handlers do. Great burgers too!"

Brian Gregory from Search Dogs Anglia wrote: "Thank you all so much for all that you did for the group on our recent visit. They are so happy and still can't get over how nice everyone was. See you soon."

Balfron Ambulance Station

The Scottish Ambulance Service have given us use of the training room at Balfron Ambulance Station for administration and training purposes. It's a better environment for indoor first-aid training over the fire station given that it's carpeted and more modern.

The Heartstart manikins and equipment for courses is now stored in the large walk-in cupboard there. The main stock of first-aid supplies is also there.

Aberfoyle Fire Station

Refurbishment of the station is still not complete although the main building alterations have been finished. We understand that the floor in the training room is to be replaced, the kitchen replaced and various lockers and cupboards built.

The police are still intending to move in although there is still no date.

School Visits and Demos

Grace and John have been training with the RNLI at Portpatrick and Stanraer, with Aiyla and Finn being deployed by their boats. In return they'll attend their open days and conduct demos with Aiyla rescuing people from the relevant harbours.

Grace and John have embarked upon a series of Water Safety lectures to schoolchildren – very important in the lead up to the summer holidays well, if we get the sun, that is.

Stuart attended one of their lectures at Moffat Academy where the whole primary school were treated to a very entertaining and informative lecture by John, visit by his lovely assistant Grace with Aiyla and Finn – loved by the kids of course, then time for them to learn how to recognise warning flags at beaches, how to throw a safety line and lifebelt and then a screening of team dog Taz in the Strathclyde Fire water safety DVD.

Some local businesses to them have donated stickers with a picture and water safety message thereon for each schoolchild, donated water rescue throw lines and other goodies. A dog club purchased a drysuit and water safety equipment for John and are raising funds to purchase same for Grace.

John and Grace have put considerable effort into planning and delivering these safety lectures. A fine example of team members promoting safety in the outdoors.

Another School Visit

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue invited us to take part in an outdoor safety session at Drumchapel High School recently. Unfortunately, Aiyla and Finn were unavailable as their chauffeurs were working.

Mitch and Stuart attended and assisted with the session on planning countryside walks, how to search for a missing companion and of course a demo of how good our search dogs are at finding people.

West Highland Way Race

The UK's most demanding annual long distance race, from Milngavie to Fort William over a distance of 97 miles takes place next weekend and yet again we will be providing safety cover for the first half of it – to Bridge of Orchy.

With an considerable increase to 189 runners this year (normally up to 130) and poor weather conditions forecast we could be busy.

Team members give up considerable time and put a great deal of effort into covering this race every year – also involving logistical problems of stocking up on first aid supplies, water for runners and our own personnel, checking kit, vehicles and trailers, the boat is prepared and launched and ensuring we're ready for anything thrown at us.

The event itself is an event worth witnessing and we have always enjoyed our participation.

In its early days the race organisers had no money but put their heart and soul into it – just like us. Now, like us, they have managed to get sponsorship deals and their sizeable donation in the past two years recognises the many years we supported them for payment each of a WHW Race T shirt.

This year they have voluntarily decided to substantially increase their donation to us.

What's touching though is that we are very much seen as part of the WHW Race 'family'.

Thank you everyone who has volunteered to help out this year.

First Responder

Gayle has been co-ordinating these duties during Steve Band's absence owing to his Ambulance Technician's course.

In April our First Responders carried out 157.5 hrs of duty and responded to three requests from the Scottish Ambulance Service.

May's figures have still to be finalised but at least 150hrs were covered, with 2 incidents attended.

As at 16 June we have covered around 100hrs and have attended 2 incidents.

We have 'missed out' on participating in several incidents in Aberfoyle and Kinlochard these past few weeks though – there were 8 calls to Inversnaid in a two-week period, to which we were only on duty for one. Three incidents in Aberfoyle involved helicopter evacuations and so if personnel could cover for more hours we would be able to help more casualties.

Heartstart

Elaine Bruce reports that since re-affiliation in October 2011 we have carried out 6 Heartstart classes and trained 55 people bringing our total between Heart Rescue (CHSS) and Heartstart to 1055 people trained by us. Two of these classes have been for team members, one for prospective team members, two for Walking Group Leaders of Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and one for Search Dogs Anglia personnel. Heartstart equipment will now be kept in the storage room at Balfron Ambulance Station as it is dry, warm and enables team members to access same. Future courses include one for staff at the Lake of Menteith Hotel.

Scottish X Country Series

The Scottish Cross Country Association asked us to cover four of their mountain bike races and in return make an agreed level of donation to us of at least £1200. We have now covered two of these races. The first one at Gleniffer Braes, Paisley saw us deal with 6 casualties and disentangling a pile up in the kids' race whilst we dealt with 9 casualties at the Aberfoyle race. The next race is on 1 July at Forfar and then on 5 August at Perth. Volunteers needed please for each, especially the next one.

Some members have been assisting for several months: Iain Underhill has been representing the team at regular meetings of Central Scotland Emergency Co-ordinating Group's Voluntary Sector Group.

Steven Ballantyne, Grace Campbell, Greg Marshall and John Pllu have been looking at fundraising matters.

We will be re-introducing the Area Reps. Their function is to liaise with people in their area for events and training and pass details on to the relevant person organising same.

You'll notice that some people are carrying out more than one role.

In a team of 30 members it would be great if other members could share some of the burden. It seems as if charity legislation and requirements placed on us changes by the month so please, if you have spare time over and above volunteering for team duties, please consider approaching us to assist – we need someone to attend meeting of Strathclyde Emergency Co-ordinating Group's voluntary sector meetings quarterly in Hillington; someone with IT (and good spelling) skills as well as an understanding of media/ promotion and the issues around what can be presented in public and what cannot (specifically around casualty information) to take over updating the team's website – which requires liaising with our current Webmaster Colin Stewart from Kinlochard.

Our West Highland Way Adventure

"My name is Frodo Baggins. I was born on May 5th 2006. I had seven brothers and sisters and had a lovely time romping and playing with them until one by one they went to new homes. Nobody wanted me and I was left with my mum and dad. One day somebody came to take me to my new home at long last. I was 11 weeks old. Why was I left on my own? I was born with a retinal malfunction of both eyes. I am totally blind. Not only am I unable to see objects like you I am also unable to distinguish between light and dark. My world was and is totally dark. I now live with 6 other dogs and 8 cats. One of the dogs is Flag, a Romanian street dog. She lived on the streets of Romania for a year before being captured and taken to a kennels where she lived amongst lots of other street dogs waiting for someone to take her home. Ages passed and eventually after three long years she came to live with us. Whilst on the streets she was damaged in some way and her back leg became unusable and is now carried all the time; also due to poor nutrition she suffered from rickets leaving her two front legs deformed. On top of these disabilities [that don't appear to hinder her very much] she had one more problem. She was born with no eyes."

To show a disbelieving world that these are not horrendous problems Frodo will complete the West Highland Way accompanied on occasion by Flag. Except in unsafe situations both dogs will be off lead and have the confidence to proceed with little help from me. We hope to complete the challenge over the summer and autumn of 2012 hopefully doing a section every one or two weeks, I still have all the other animals at the rescue centre to look after!!

The way is divided up into 14 sections with a road at each end of each section allowing the walk to be done in small chunks. We have already begun our mammoth task having done the first five sections :- Milngavie to Carbeth [both dogs did this bit], Carbeth to Drymen [Frodo], Drymen to Balmaha [Frodo], Balmaha to Rowardennan [Frodo], and Rowardennan to Inversnaid [both dogs]

We hope to interest not only individuals but also large and small businesses to sponsor the dogs on this incredible feat. All money raised on the walk will go on the animals in our care.

If you are amazed and want to be behind the dogs whilst they carry out this challenge PLEASE sponsor them by going to our website www.glendrickroost.org.uk [where their progress will be documented] and clicking on the link sponsor@glendrickroost.org.uk, by using 'just text giving' – text GRAW38 [£1, £2, £5, £10] to 70070, or contact me Mione on 07748 351287. Thank you



Frodo Baggins



Flag

West Highland Way - Access in Garadhbar

Work to clear up storm damage in Garadhbar Forest has required some closures and diversions to be put in place. Clearance work will take up to a year to complete.

Forestry Commission Scotland is urging local people and visitors to respect any signage they encounter during their visit, which as well as advising of diversions, aims to keep people safe and warn them of a significant public safety risk. Liz Shortall, for the Commission's team in Cowal & Trossachs, said:

"The storms earlier in the year have left us with thousands of cubic meters of timber that needs to be cleared - and we are only part way through the process.

"We've managed to clear some of the fallen trees along a diversion route that takes West Highland Way walkers south of the forest and around the danger area within the forest. Over the next few weeks we'll clear the fallen trees from woodland south of the official route before tackling the storm damage north of the route.

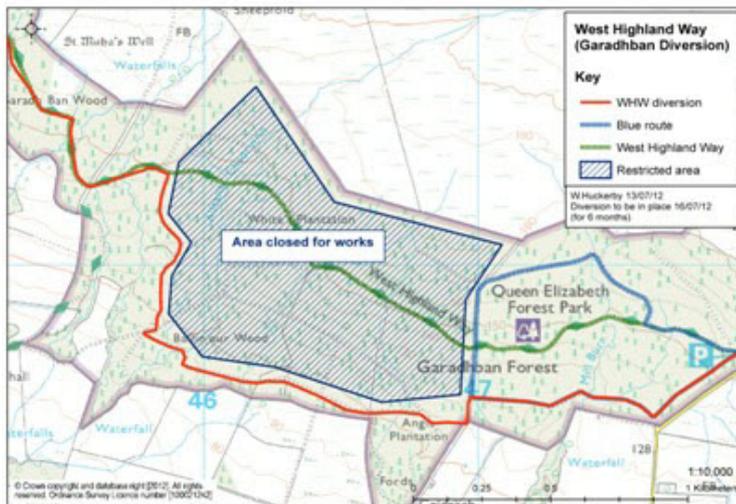
"It's going to be a long haul - we expect to have the clear up completed by Spring 2013 - but in the meantime we'll do our utmost to keep access open."

Local users and horse-riders can use the blue route through the forest or, as an alternative, horse riders can also use high Corrie from Old Drymen Road until thinning operations take place in Autumn 2012

Liz warned that visitors should follow the safety signage because ignoring it could potentially be life threatening:

"There will be heavy machinery in use on the site and machine operators may not always be able to see or hear people approaching or passing a site. They have even less chance of seeing dogs that are running free.

"Track and road conditions may be hazardous - and some of the storm damaged trees could be unstable, and come down at any minute, and you'd be surprised at how little time there is to get out of the way of tree that is coming down."



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Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Parish Church



From the Manse.....

When I went to my first charge, there were quite a few people in the congregation who voted against my going there. That is what I – like any other female minister – would have expected. After a while some of them admitted to me that they had voted against me because they had not thought that ministry was ‘a job for a lassie’. (Sometimes I think it is not a job for *any* sane human being.) Today I have been reading a diatribe against female ministers and it has really cheered up my morning:

‘Satan offered the forbidden fruit to the first woman Eve. Satan is tempting today’s Christian woman with a similar siren song’. (That is the trouble with us women. We are SUCH sirens.)

‘Preaching can make women adopt masculine attributes and mannerisms in the pulpit. A gentle and gracious femininity rarely succeeds in such situations.’ (Oh dear. Must stop watching the Six Nations.)

I make light of what is still a very difficult and upsetting matter for some people, but since this is August, the silly season, I thought I would share the following with you, reportedly written by a male bible scholar. It was handed to me by a female minister passed over by a congregation who opted for a less able male minister. He also had a ‘nice wife’ who would do the flowers, make the tea, run the crèche and the Sunday School and other such womanly things.

Reasons Not to Ordain Men:

1. A man’s place is in the army.
2. For men who have children, their duties might distract them from the responsibilities of being a parent.
3. Their physical build indicates that men are more suited to tasks such as chopping down trees and wrestling mountain lions. It would be unnatural for them to do other forms of work.
4. Man was created before woman. It is therefore obvious that man was a prototype. Thus, men represent an experiment rather than the crowning achievement of creation.
5. Men are too emotional to be ministers or pastors. This is easily demonstrated by their conduct at football games when their team wins – or loses, for that matter.
6. Some men are handsome; they will distract women worshippers.
7. To be an ordained pastor is to nurture the congregation, and this is not a traditional male role.
8. Men are overly prone to violence. No true manly man wants to settle disputes by any means other than by fighting about them. Thus, they would be poor role models, as well as being dangerously unstable in positions of leadership.
9. Men can still be involved in church activities, even without being ordained. They can sweep paths, repair the church roof and maybe even lead the singing on Father’s Day. By confining themselves to such traditional male roles they can still be vitally important in the life of the Church.
10. The person who betrayed Jesus was a man. Thus his lack of faith and ensuing punishment stands as a symbol of the subordinated position that all men should take.

We human beings, there’s nae like us.

Linda

The Garden in late summer

As I write the rain is lashing down as it seems to have done for most of the "summer" so far. But they say that better times are ahead and maybe we can enjoy the garden for a while without having to put wellies on.

To prolong **hanging baskets and summer bedding** keep dead-heading and feeding at least every two weeks with a high potash fertilizer such as tomato feed. Also feed shrubs or trees in containers with the same fertilizer as it helps to toughen up the young wood ahead of the winter. But stop feeding before the middle of August; any later will promote soft new growth which will be very susceptible to the cold of winter.

In the **vegetable garden** you should be busy harvesting the fruits of your labours but still planning ahead at the same time; if you haven't picked your blackcurrants yet, save yourself some backache by cutting off at least some of the fruiting branches right back to ground level. You can then pick the currants off from the comfort of your chair and you'll have opened up the structure of the bush at the same time; good air flow helps prevent mildew.

Prune back summer fruiting raspberries after you've picked all the fruit. (Autumn fruiting varieties should be left until the spring before pruning)

Use young leaves of beetroot as a salad crop.

In the **greenhouse** you can be sowing perpetual spinach, rocket, winter-hardy lettuce, winter radish, red mustard and mizuna. Also prepare to take tender perennials in for the winter or take cuttings from them.

In **The ornamental garden** if you want to get rid of some of the really difficult perennial weeds such as ground elder and couch grass, spraying them with a systemic weedkiller such as Roundup is likely to be most effective around now as the weeds start drawing sap down into their roots taking the weedkiller with it.

Prune rambling roses as soon as they have finished flowering, taking the flowering shoots back to one or two buds from the main stem. Continue to dead head all other roses

Disease on **roses**; of all the common garden plants roses are more prone to disease than almost any shrub and the two main problems are black spot and rust, both of which can be spread by rain drops. To minimise the problem pick off the most badly affected leaves and put them in the bin or burn them (DON'T put them on the compost heap) and/or cut back badly affected stems. Then spray with a rose fungicide. If you notice a particular variety being very badly infected it might be worth removing it completely.

Trim hedges to maintain their shape.

Plant spring flowering bulbs for a great display early next year

The lawn will have been almost forgotten about recently, at least if it drains as poorly as mine, but if it has at last dried out it's time to give it some attention. If moss is a problem use a moss killer as soon as you can. When the moss has died in a week or two, give the lawn a good raking over, or for larger areas use a scarifier, to remove the dead moss and the thatch that's built up over the year; scarifying in two directions gives the best result. Then give it an Autumn Weed & Feed, formulated to toughen it up, not produce lush top growth

Orchids. Keep an eye out for the approach of frost and bring in any Cymbidiums that have been outside for their summer holidays.

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St Mary's Episcopal Church

Richard Grosse, Rector of St Mary's



George McAlpine gave listeners to the BBC Home Service a wonderful description of his life as a gamekeeper in the area.

A Mr James then came to the microphone to speak about the Forestry Commission. He explained that the Commission was set up in 1919 to expand Britain's forests and woodland after depletion during the First World War. To do this the commission bought large amounts of former agricultural land. This type of land was readily available in the 1920s as large family estates struggled with increased death duties coupled with spiraling inflation. The Forestry first arrived in Aberfoyle in 1929 bringing with it the prospect of much needed employment as the nation struggled in the midst of the Great Depression. The first block of land purchased was to the south side of Loch Ard. Subsequent acquisitions extended the forest up the Trossachs Valley and south to the watershed of the Drymen Valley and the River Kelty. The forest by 1939 covered a gross area of some 26 square miles with afforestation then progressing at a rate of some 550 acres per annum. The staff at that time consisted of 2 foresters, two foremen, four gangers and 69 other workers including two trappers.

Saving the planet was not unknown even in 1939. Thus Mr. James assured listeners that the Commission was paying constant heed to the need for a balance of tree. 'Areas of broad leaved and ornamental tree on lower slopes are being preserved and natural birch planted in areas where the quality of soil allowed. Natural beauty spots and view-points such as the Essan Gruamach Bridge on the Duke's Road with its wonderful view down to Loch Drunkie are being left in their natural state'.

Unlike 2012, the spring and summer of 1939 must have been devoid of rain as Mr. James was concerned about the drying east winds that had been blowing. He described an elaborate plan based on two look-out stations on prominent hills to protect against forest fires.

It would be interesting to know by comparison the acreage managed by the Commission today in the area and the numbers employed.

Next month, Peter McGregor extols the virtues of Loch Ard.

St Mary's is open each Tuesday afternoon during the season between 14.00 to 16.30. The Sunday Service is held throughout the year at 11.15 and all are welcome



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Tales frae the *Squirrel Nut Family* Summer Holidays with Rowan Nut



“ROWAN WHERE’S MA YELLOW DUNGAREES?!” Ma brother Acorn yells, even though I’m only about three feet away frae ‘im.

I sit on ma wee red rucksack wi’ all ma might and attempt tae zip it up, and pant back at Acorn, “A dinnae ken Acorn, but wid ye stop wi yer huffin’ and sit on ma rucksack wi’ me?”

With yet another huff Acorn comes o’er (accidentally sitting on oor sister Connie’s bag o’ chocolate dipped nuts, an’ a sickenin’ crunch fills the room – the sound o’ breakin’ nuts. Connie glowers.) and plonks his furry red haired bahookie on ma rucksack. If ye hadnae already guessed, we’re a family o’ red squirrels.

I finally manage tae zip up my rucksack, and wi’ a puff an’ a pant, I haul it intae the livin’ room, where Ma’s stuffin’ as much food as she can intae the whicker picnic basket: strawberry jam sandwiches, summer berries juice, and rowan berry pie. Mmm...

Pa’s lookin’ in the mirror, decidin’ which o’ his caps tae

wear: red toned tartan, green toned tartan, yellow toned tartan, blue toned tartan... the list goes on!

“Pa, when’s Walter comin’?” I ask. Walter’s the big snowy owl who’s gi-in’ us a lift tae Archenoich Loch – the loch where oor holiday hoose is. We’re stayin’ there fur a week, in a ‘luxurious old fashioned but fully functioning wood cottage’, which is in a very tall fir tree, an’ we’ve got the rooms richt at the top! So there’s gonna be an awfy bonny view over the loch an’ a’ the mountains.

“In twa minutes, so ye’d better hurry yer brothers and yer sister up!” Pa says, finally decidin’ on his usual red and green tartan cap. I scurry back through tae oor bedroom we a’ share, and say, “Pa says hurry up or he’ll roast yer tails frae breakfast!” I watch approvingly as they all stuff the last things in their rucksacks – that line always hurries ‘em up!

We hear the soft twit-two-in’ of Walter outside, an’ there’s a frantic scurry: “Have ye’s all got yer coats?” “Ma, are ma wellies packed?” “Acorn stop lickin’ the nut chair! Ye’ll be back in a week ye silly dumplin’!”

But eventually we’re all sittin’ on Walter’s soft fluffy back, and he’s flappin his great big wings, an we’re liftin’ off. I turn an’ wave goodbye tae oor wee hoose in The Great Oak Tree in Ochenshoogle Forest. It goes oot o’ sight, and we’re gatherin’ height and speed. I look down o’er the luscious green wood, watchin’ as the dappled green leaves turn into tiny little specks, how the trees turn into nothin’ more than midge sized splodges. The sky is bright and blue, and the sun is shinin’ brightly. I can see Ben Lomond, big and purple and jagged. Ma Uncle Boab lives up there, wi’ ma Aunt Eilidh an’ oor cousins Annie an’ Joe. We visited them once, but it’s an awfy long, steep haul up there.

We fly fur aboot an hour, then Walter starts gettin’ lower, an soon he’s landed on a big beech tree wi’ a flustered landin’. We all clamber off, an’ Pa says, “Ta very much Walter, ye’re a jolly good chap. Here,” Pa delves intae his pockets, and produces a sprig o’ chestnuts, which Walter gratefully accepts.

Then Walter turns and with a great flap o’ his snowy white wings, he’s off flyin’ again. “Richt,” says Pa. “Lunch!”

So we settle doon on the branch and dig intae oor picnic. Once we’re finished, we set off, Pa wi’ his map oot, and try tae find oor cottage. We leap frae tree tae tree, weighed doon by oor packs. Pa has to ask a red squirrel the way, but we eventually find Archenoich loch (a beautifully glassy pale blue expanse o’ water) an’ oor tree. We’re awfy exhausted by the time we’ve hauled ourselves a the way up tae the top. But the rooms are BONNY.

There’s a wee pale yellow door, which says ‘Bonny View Apartment’. There’s a big round livin’ room painted pale blue wi’ big windae’s which gie’ bonny views o’er the wood an’ the loch. There are three bedrooms tae, so me an’ Connie can hae a room all tae ourselves!

The week is perfect. There’s a fallen tree which bends across the loch, which is perfect fur a divin’ board, an’ we went swimmin’ every day in the cold clear water. The midges were a wee bitty bad in the evenin’, but then we just did a Scottish Anti-Midge Highland Fling, and that kept ‘em at bay! Oor neighbour, the Twiggies, shared their haggis wi’ us every nicht, and we had a barbeque, an’ it was THE BEST SUMMER HOLIDAY EVER!

Me and ma brothers and Connie went tree climbing every day, and made friends wi’ lots o’ the other squirrel bairns. Then it was rainy on Thursday, so we made a big fat goeey chocolate cake! A couple o’ the other residents o the fir tree came an had a slice too and soon there was a wee Chocolate Cake Party goin’ on!

It was a bit sad when it came tae the last day, and we saw Walter’s big white wings flying down to us. So sitting on Walter’s back, I sat and waved goodbye to Archenoich. But just as I was about to shed a tear over the perfectly reflecting lake, Pa turns and says, “By jove I think we’ll be comin’ back ‘ere again!” And suddenly I was laughing with joy! Oh what a perfect summer holiday!

How to make an elasticated skirt

It’s summer time now (though you’d hardly know it with this cold rainy weather!), and it’s time to get a summer skirt! But you don’t have to break the bank to get one: make one yourself with these simple and easy steps:

You will need

- 1 metre of your chosen fabric
- Elastic which fits snugly around your waist
- Needle and thread!
- A stool...

1. Measure the elastic by fitting it around your waist and cutting it when it fits snugly, but not too tight. Sew the ends together to that you a ring of elastic.
2. Now this is when the stool comes in handy! You need to stretch out the elastic so that the fabric becomes ruched (gathered in) at the top, so simply turn the stool upside down and stretch the elastic over the legs.
3. Now, start pinning the edge of the 1 metre of fabric along the elastic. Then sew, and when you get to the end, sew the two edges of the skirt together.
4. Now take it off the stool, and ta da! Just hem the skirt to the desired length, and you have your very own home made summer skirt! You can jazz up your skirt by adding pockets (easily made by simply sewing squares on: they don’t have to be the same fabric!), or edging it with lace or ribbon. Make it your own!



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CULINARY CAPERS

Researched and compiled by Margaret Leppard-Owens



Memories of Italian holidays!

Jimmy Quinn is a well known face in Aberfoyle. Helen, his wife, was born in Aberfoyle and it was here that they met and where they have made their home. Jimmy travelled throughout Europe during his career as a chef. Since retirement he has done a lot of voluntary work in the community. He is a voice for Stirling Council tenants and a committee member of Stirling Carers. Jimmy says, 'In committees I'm good at stirring with a wooden spoon but we expect tenants and carers to phone the Council or the Centre first if there's a problem.'

On retirement, Jimmy and Helen visited places in Europe where he had worked. He recalls, 'Along the Mediterranean coast, many pasta dishes feature tuna in the sauce. Italian canned tuna is justly famous for its flavour and quality. You can prepare this spaghetti dish in the time it takes to sip an aperitif – then imagine you are sitting in the sun in Sorrento!' This is the recipe Jimmy and Helen have selected to share with Strathard News readers. It reminds them of their special time together.



SPAGHETTI ALLA BOSCAIOLA

(Spaghetti with tuna and mushrooms)

INGREDIENTS:

Serves 6

500g spaghetti
125g best quality tuna packed in oil
120ml oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
225g mushrooms finely sliced (including stalks)
Salt to taste
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
Finely chopped parsley or shredded fresh basil to garnish

METHOD:

1. Cook the spaghetti in plenty of boiling water until tender but still firm. Drain well.
2. Meanwhile, turn the tuna and the oil in which it is packed into a small bowl. Separate the tuna flakes with a fork.
3. Heat the oil in a heavy frying pan and cook the crushed garlic and sliced mushrooms until they are tender but still firm.
4. Add the tuna flakes and packing oil to the mushroom and garlic mixture. Stir gently until the sauce is blended and piping hot. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Arrange the freshly cooked hot spaghetti on a serving platter, spoon the tuna and mushrooms with the sauce over the spaghetti and sprinkle with chopped parsley or shredded basil.



A note from Margaret...

Don't know what to do with children on a wet day during the holidays? Get them to choose a recipe from a book or the web, write a bit about themselves and send it to me with a photo for the next Strathard News! mjleppard@btinternet.com.



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Rolo Tomassi Movie Critic

Whisky Galore! (1949)

It would certainly be a strange thing for me to learn that anyone born, bred or associated in any way whatsoever with Scotland has not sampled our national drink at some point in their lives at least once.

The 'amber nectar' is not the only thing we have become famous for, however.

As a nation, we have few equals, in relation to size and population, when considering the extreme range of innovations and inventions, which have impacted society on a global scale.

Communication would be a good place to start.

Television (John Logie Baird).

The telephone. (Alexander Graham Bell)

The teleprinter. (Frederick G Creed)

Radar. (Robert Watson-Watt)

Radio. (James Clerk Maxwell)

We could almost call a halt there, as there is certainly not enough space in this review to reveal the full scope of ingenuity which has embodied our profile throughout history.

It is worth mentioning a few landmarks, though.

In medicine - penicillin, surgical anaesthesia, the hypodermic syringe, insulin, and cures for typhoid fever and tuberculosis are of particular note.

Some incidentals might include the bicycle, the pneumatic tyre, the postage stamp, fingerprinting, the refrigerator, the flush toilet, the lawnmower, and tarmac roads.

No matter if it is in the fields of civil engineering, science, aviation, power (James Watt's steam engine), agriculture, heavy industry, military involvement or shipbuilding, Scotland can forever remain proud of its contribution in the scheme of things.

Most of this is lost, of course, within the international community, as even in modern day times we continue to be perceived as kilted denizens, wandering the hills amongst the heather and tending to the sheep, with the skirl of the pipes playing in the background.

I am not one to depolarise this notion. In fact, I positively concur with this romantic image, promoted as it is with such athletic enthusiasm.

There is simply no escaping the beauty of Scotland, by way of its culture, history, and stunning landscapes, but there are two other features which stretch the definition of its unique appeal. One is the Tartan. The other is Whisky.

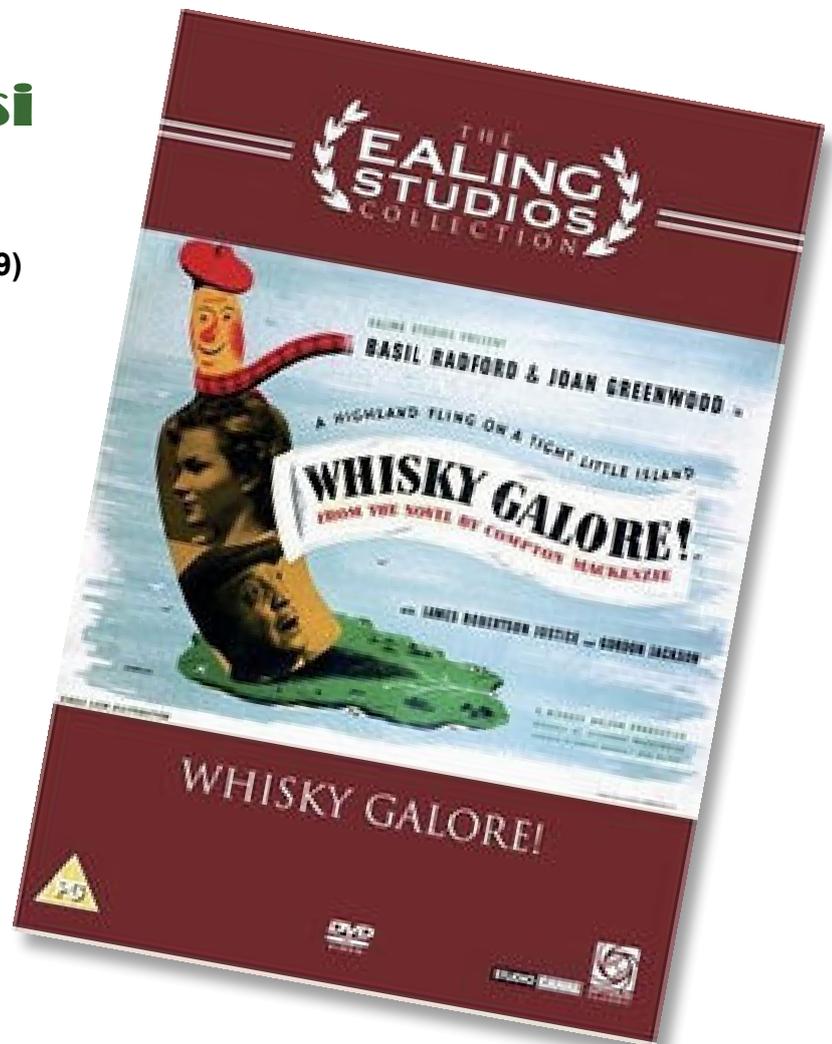
In 1949, a novel by Compton MacKenzie entitled 'Whisky Galore' was transposed into an Ealing comedy production under the stewardship of one Alexander Mackendrick, which would promote the concept to audiences for generations to come.

This was MacKendrick's directorial debut and, sadly, due to the overwhelming critical acclaim for the film, it would prove to have an adverse impact on his subsequent projects.

Still, this utterly captivating tale, based on the real life shipwreck of the S.S. Politician off the coast of Eriskay in 1941, can clearly be perceived to be a wonderful legacy to leave behind.

The overlying plot is the stuff of dreams, and despite the introduction of well known figures such as Basil Radford and Joan Greenwood, it is the lesser known players which eventually steal the show.

The film was shot on the fictional island of Todday (Barra, in reality) in the Outer Hebrides, an area generally undisturbed by the goings on in the 'outside world'. That is, until war was declared, whereby rationing was introduced. Upon learning that whisky was 'on the list', a period of mourning descended upon the community.



This was a Rank Organisation production, which means we were treated to a very large individual banging a gong, prior to the frenetic music, which accompanies the opening credits.

For me, the eclectic echo sound heard from the strike always suggests to the viewer that they are about to witness something special. Mackendrick was not about to disappoint.

Through clever juxtaposition, he introduced the many characters, including all their idiosyncrasies, within a very short period, setting up a wonderful scenario.

As the story unfolds, things take an unexpected turn when a freighter runs aground offshore in heavy fog, and begins to sink. The locals are beside themselves, as they realise the cargo on board consists of 50,000 cases of whisky.

The ensuing dramas were to include a great deal of emotional transgression between the islanders and the officials, whereby the pompous Home Guard commander, Captain Paul Waggett (Basil Radford) tries to impose his authority on any attempted looting of the cargo.

Lo and behold, his efforts fail spectacularly, as the locals not only manage to 'liberate' the shipment; they also proceed to find numerous ingenious ways of secreting its bounty from the suitably inept soldiers. Eventually, of course, they win the day, and the story was never going to have anything other than a happy ending.

As already stated, the performances of the incidental characters were to prove pivotal. A special mention in this respect should go to Jean Cadell, as the domineering mother of the submissive schoolteacher, played by Gordon Jackson. Similarly, any sight on the screen of the wizened features of the legendary Duncan MacRae brings pure joy to my heart.

There are very few films, in my opinion, which are deserving of the label 'classic'.

Sadly, many of the modern day productions are becoming increasingly dependent on computer generated technology insisting on offering a high velocity experience, 'Whisky Galore' manages to achieve its status through the simple ability to make you smile from start to finish.

The Scribe's Apprentice!?

Hi there. How's things? Good, Good! Now, I know when I started writing for this wee rag I said I was going to say something about the standard of driving in and around Aberfoyle & Strathard. But... I cannae dae it! See, it's my understanding that quite a lot of the folk that read this newsletter are, to be quite frank, a gentle slightly fragile lot and I don't know if it would be fair to tell you just how rubbish your driving actually is.



Ah mean, cars parked on, ACTUALLY ON, the Bank corner with no way for the buses to get round or what's even worse on the pavement in front of Guyana. I mean, as a general rule, are cars supposed to get fully parked on the pavement? I don't remember that bit in the Highway Code.

So better to say nothing about it at all. Best just to draw a kindly veil over it and hope the next generation of drivers are a wee bit more clued up. What do you mean? Forlorn hope!

Anyway moving swiftly on, we were at the Zoo last week. Well, it won't be last week by the time you read this but you get my drift.

Edinburgh Zoo, complete with Pandas! This is the first time in 58 years that I have ever been to a Zoo in Scotland. I was once in Colchester Zoo; they had an elephant!

They didn't keep it though as there was a spot of bother when it crushed its keeper.

So, there we were, all 4 generations of us, wandering round the enclosures and looking at the animals who were sitting around looking back at us. We read the wee bits of information on the sides of the enclosures and generally had a really interesting time. Did you know that Edinburgh Zoo is built on a hill side and that it's one steep mother of a climb from the gate to the top? I found this out the hard way when I got fed up waiting for the wee Safari train that makes the journey and decided to walk; which was one of those mistakes One often makes when One is fed up waiting. Great view from the top though!

We'd booked to get in to see the Pandas and I'm here to tell you that it was well worth the wait. These are seriously dedicated bamboo-shoot chomping beasties. But forget Black and White markings. There are black bits and there are white bits; but the colour that's most noticeable is the brown bits round the back and you'll all know where that comes from. And if you don't, you've doubtless led a very sheltered, not to say odd, life.

Each group gets 20 minutes; that's 10 actually looking & photographing and 10 getting a further lecture on the subject of Pandas and their habitat.

Here's an interesting Panda fact: male pandas mark their territory by selecting a tall tree, standing on their front legs and shoving their rear legs as far up the trunk as possible and then peeing up the trunk as far as possible. Really interesting how some behaviours can transcend species; eh Lads?

What else was seriously cool was when the chimps began hooting and chattering away at each other! If memory serves me correct there was some kind of *coup d'etat* in progress as the previous Alpha male was being reduced to the beta version, didn't like it and wasn't going quietly! Just like those wild life programs on the telly.

On a slightly more sober note, some of the enclosures were a bit on the small side; especially for the big cats. The Tiger and Amur Leopard in particular, were really too small for animals this big. The Zoo knows this and is working to raise funds to improve the conditions for all the animals. Hence the Pandas on loan from China.

But do you know? There's one animal in Zoos that is especially interesting to watch. Humans. Cast your mind back to the start of this article and I said we were reading the blurb on the side of the cages and enclosures; well more than one sign said, "These animals are dangerous please do not climb on the Wall" or "These animals are dangerous please do not allow your children to climb on the Wall" well it was amazing just how many people did exactly the opposite of what the signs exhorted them to do.

I don't have children of my own and maybe if you have 3 or 4 then you have a few spare so maybe that's why the doughballs permitted their off-spring to take chances... I don't know.

What I do know is that Humans are of the genus *Homo Sapiens Sapiens*; Latin for "Thinking Man" but judging by some of the silly antics Humans get up to in Zoos you'd have a hard time believing it!

That'll do for now as writing about twats in human form is so depressing and I'm fed up.

As the late great Jimmy Young used to say, "BFN; Bye For Now!"

The Apprentice to the Scribes Apprentice.

P.S. Afore ye dae onythin' else; awa an' see the Pandas! That's an order; so dae whit yur tell!

A Book and a Brew turn a new page.....

The local Book group has continued to meet every 6 weeks over the summer in the lovely setting of Kinlochard Village Hall. We've been



having lively discussions about our choices which have included **The Observations** by Jane Harris and **That They May Face The Rising Sun** by John McGahern. These were 2 very different books, one historical in its setting and the other describing more recent life in rural Ireland.

Our books ahead for our winter season include **The Accidental** by Ali Smith and **Never Let Me Go** by Kazuo Ishiguro. Books are supplied free of charge by Stirling Council's Mobile Library service so the only cost to participants is a share of the hall hire.

So if you fancy widening your reading and social network why not join us!

Further details from Nelson Busby, Mobile Library Officer busbyn@stirling.gov.uk or James Kennedy jfk1957@btinternet.com 01877 387201

BumbleBee Walk

Bumblebees are fascinating creatures that are a joy to watch. Come along to our BumbleBee Walk on Sunday 26th August at the VisitScotland Visitor Information Centre to find out more about these remarkable insects. The BumbleBee Conservation Trust will introduce you to bumblebees and the problems facing them in a short talk before heading outside to catch and identify Bumblebees.

Times for the sessions are 11.00a.m. and 1.30p.m. and will last for approximately one and a half hours. The BumbleBee Sessions are free but must be booked in advance. To book your place please phone the VisitScotland Visitor Information Centre on 01877 382352



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visitscotland.com/wheretofindus

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Inversnaid Reserve

As wet as everywhere else!

Well, I'm pretty sure when Fraser booked his holiday to Finland for July he was sure he would be basking in glorious sunshine but apparently it is just as wet there as it is here. And wet it is! No doubt you will have seen all of the horrendous pictures on the news of villages in Yorkshire being flooded out repeatedly and are just hoping it doesn't happen to you (fingers crossed) and while the impact of the weather on humans is the priority we do also have to stop and think about the impact on wildlife too (it is kind of what we do after all). Unfortunately this weather has had a massive impact on our wildlife with many broods of young ground nesting birds being washed away by rising water levels, birds like kingfishers and sand martins who nest along rivers banks are in great danger of being flooded and even tree nesting birds like our buzzards are being lost (it looks like both nests on the garrison side failed in the wet). Most broods of birds can survive a day or two of bad weather while they are growing but prolonged periods of rain (and I think we can comfortably call this a prolonged period of rain!) means the parent birds can hunt for food or the chicks get wet and chill. Neither of those things are good for young birds. The constant wet weather isn't good for our habitat management either, we can't put our new interpretation in at the moment as digging holes will just create scenes reminiscent of a camp site at T in the Park and we are having to spend way more time than usual keeping the vegetation around the nature trail under control.

All in all, both the birds and the staff are fed up with the rain and we all want some sunshine. Fingers crossed for an Indian summer!

Allison Leonard
Forth and Loch Lomond Reserves Warden.

Have your say on future of Scotland's National Forest Estate

Anyone interested in how Scotland's National Forest Estate (NFE) is managed is being invited to share their views with Forestry Commission Scotland.

The Commission has launched a public consultation seeking views on its draft 'Strategic Directions for National Forest Estate 2012-2015' document which outlines how the organisation proposes managing the NFE over the next three years.

The Strategic Directions document lays out in broad terms the story of, nature of, and vision for the NFE. The document does not propose any major shifts in the direction or breadth of delivery from the NFE, however, it does adopt a very different approach from previous Strategic Plans, seeking to broaden its relevance to a wider audience, with a greater emphasis on:

- describing what the NFE is and delivers for the nation
 - laying out the Commission's high-level vision for the Estate with strategic principles and directions, to guide its management and use.
- Forestry Commission woodlands are independently certified as sustainably managed under UK Woodland Assurance Standards. Keeping people informed of

management proposals affecting the NFE is an important part of maintaining this certification, and this document will help set the high level context for management proposals at a local level.

The consultation invites people to express their views on:

- The proposed approach to communicating what the NFE is and what it delivers.
- Strategic directions and management principles for the NFE.
- Whether there are any strategic gaps or omissions.
- How you might want to be involved with the NFE.

The consultation will be managed through the Scottish Government consultation website at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/forestry-commission-scotland/strategicdirections> and runs until 12 October 2012.

For further information, please email hilda.todd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk, or write to: Hilda M Todd, Administration Manager, Forest Enterprise Scotland Head Office, 1 Highlander Way, Inverness Business Park, Inverness, IV2 7GB Tel: +44 (0)1463 232811 (switchboard) or +44 (0)1463 252612 (direct)

The Aberfoyle Osprey Project

The Aberfoyle Osprey Project is a partnership between RSPB Scotland and Forestry Commission Scotland.

It's time to go ringing!

We'll we can confidently say that over the last few weeks the weather has not been great, but on Friday 13th July things weren't looking too bad. Just about the perfect weather to go ringing ospreys. Our three osprey chicks had now become two, as due to the menacing weather we had unfortunately lost our youngest chick.

Our chicks were now six weeks old and it was time for them to have their individual leg rings fitted. As we climbed the tree the heavens opened, fortunately this was short lived so the chicks didn't get too wet. Once both chicks were lowered to the ground, Dave Anderson (FCS Conservation Manager) was on hand to show how the leg rings are fitted, to some of our volunteers who had been specially invited as thanks for all the hard work they put in at DML.

Firstly, two leg rings are fitted: a blue plastic one called a Darvic. This year the chicks were fitted with blue ring TM and TN and a metal BTO ring. Both rings will be used in the future to help identify the birds both on migration to West Africa and when they hopefully return to the Trossachs in a few years time. Once this is complete the chicks are weighed and measurements taken and this confirmed that we had a boy and a girl! Because of this the volunteer decided that we should call our chicks Tia Maria and Tony.

Tony and Tia Maria will fledge once they are seven weeks old, when they will begin to build up strength before setting off on migration at about 12 weeks old.

In other news...

Our single buzzard chick, fledged the nest last Sunday (7 July) and both of our barn owl chicks have had their leg rings fitted before they leave the safety of their nest box. So you may be thinking that we have nothing else to show you at DML, but don't panic we've still got red squirrels, with some occasional visits from a pine marten and regular visits from great spotted woodpeckers, siskins and tree creepers on our bird feeders.

For more information, volunteering opportunities, groups talks or a school visits contact Robert Fraser-Binns on robert.fraser-binns@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

Photos courtesy of Annette Reed.



Iain Glen
Interior & Exterior Painting

Iain Glen
Tel: 01877 382 296
Mob: 0773 772 6338

Scottish Wildlife Trust

Non-Native Invasive Species

In 2001 Scottish Natural Heritage listed 988 non-native species in Scotland. Most currently cause no harm or are even beneficial; however, those that become invasive can cause significant problems to the environment, the economy or health.

Detailed information is available on the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat website. <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/>.

The Callander SWT group is looking for volunteers to help report/control three local invaders.

Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), first introduced during the late 1800s and now widespread across southern and central Scotland. While a major pest of forestry, stripping bark from deciduous trees, it is probably best known for its role in the catastrophic decline of the red squirrel by competing for food and passing on disease. Listing on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, makes it illegal to release them into the wild or allow them to escape from captivity.

Reporting of sightings of reds and greys support the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels database either via the SWT website or contact Lewis Pate (lpate@swt.org.uk, tel: 07825 972434). Humane traps ensure other species are released unharmed and contacts are available for removal of grey squirrels. If you would be willing to have a trap on your land, contact Lewis or I will pass on the request.

Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*): this attractive plant is a garden escapee that can be often found along watercourses. It creates a dense monoculture in which native

species are unable to thrive and while bees enjoy its nectar it is at the expense of pollinating native plants. Seeds, that remain viable for years in the soil, can be projected up to four metres so it spreads rapidly, especially in running water. However, it is readily pulled up and I will be liaising with Stirling Council to remove smaller patches. Could you help to report and/or remove it? – Please get in touch.

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), introduced as an ornamental plant in the mid-19th century, causes ecological problems by out-competing native plants but also commercial damage to structures and road surfaces. It can regenerate from very small pieces of plant and its deep rhizome system makes it extremely difficult to eradicate. It is easily spread to new sites through illegal or careless disposal of "infected" soil and by natural processes such as flooding and erosion. It is not an offence to grow it in your garden or on your land but it is listed on Schedule 9 so it is illegal to allow it to spread into the wild. Spraying programmes will address this in autumn but the project can be given a good start if it has a database of locations – could you help to report locations? – Please get in touch.

Finally, if you are looking for family or children's events over the summer, check out the David Marshall Lodge website and keep a look out for information on drop-in events to be organised by the NP Rangers in Callander – happy holidays!

Lesley Hawkins

mlhawkins@tiscali.co.uk 01877 339080

FEASIBILITY STUDY: Education & Training opportunities for young people living in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park in Tourism, Land-Based Work and Local Food Production.

The Community Partnership initiated and now manages a project in which National Park based businesses are supported to take on a Modern Apprentice. The businesses and the apprentices are then assisted financially and in other ways over the four years of the apprenticeship. The project Model relies upon external sponsors providing funds to the CP which are then managed and distributed to the small businesses and their apprentices as a series of training grants over a four year period. During the course of the apprenticeship the CP maintains contact with the participants and assists with extra-mural training or employment issues where appropriate.

The Community Partnership has commissioned a feasibility study to investigate opportunities to build on the success of its Apprenticeship Project, looking at three new sectors, including tourism and hospitality, land-based work and local food production, to develop proposals to support skills development for young people and businesses within the National Park. To tie in with the National Park Plan 2012–2017 the scheme would be expected to contribute to better access to employment opportunities, reducing outward migration from the Park of young people and helping to maintain a stable local labour market.

Mary Jarvie Associates has been appointed to undertake the feasibility study through web

based and face to face surveys, meetings and consultations with young people, employers, public bodies and the wider community. The research aims to gather specific information to identify:

- The skills shortages and gaps in the sectors within the National Park
- The future skills requirements of employers and future demand for training
- The level of fit between current supply skills in the National Park and the demand from employers
- The barriers which hinder effective skills supply and take-up from employers in the National Park
- Opportunities to support the delivery and uptake of skills in the sector within the National Park

We are keen to hear from Local Businesses and Young People living in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park who are thinking about pursuing a vocational career.

To register your interest please send an email to the researchers at: mary@maryjarvie.co.uk or call 01620 894898. For more information log onto www.thecommunitypartnership.org.uk and take part in our web survey during July or contact the Community Partnership directly on 01389 722639.

Milton

Hello Children,

With all this rainfall, it is a good job that I am an otter or, to use our rather posh title, *Lutra lutra*. Grandpa Otter says that is a Latin name given to us by a Swedish scientist called Linnaeus, but that was a long time ago. In Gaelic, the language spoken by Grandpa's parents, an otter is *dóbhran*, said as *doran*. Luckily we are every bit at home in the water as on dry land, with very large lungs and the natural ability to slow down our own heart-rate. This is especially useful for swimming underwater.

The Trossachs Search and Rescue dogs at the Kinlochard Gala were having as much fun as anybody else. Flint, a black and white Border Collie, was furiously splashing and thrashing his way through the water of Loch Ard, as if he was attacking an unseen water-beast. However, in the ring, Flint showed the watching audience his more sensible side and how easily he can detect a range of highly flammable substances. Flint specialises in working with the Fire Brigade.

There were dinghies under full sail, gliding gracefully across the surface of the loch. It was at Strathard Sailing Club that a young Shirley Robertson first learned how to sail, going on to win Gold Medals at two Olympic Games. If you missed the Family Day, held on 22nd July, you can still enjoy all the thrills of the Club Regatta, coming up over the weekend of 11th/12th August. Anyone fancying the chance to compete at future Olympic Games, go along to the training sessions, held on the second Saturday of each month. You will be sure of a warm welcome.

A great day out during the holiday season is to travel around the Trossachs Bird of Prey Trail, starting at Aberfoyle. From the David Marshall Lodge, it does not really matter if you take the high road, over the Duke's Pass, or the low road, skirting Flanders Moss, you will be heading for Doune. The entire round-trip covers 25 miles, during which time you could see as many as a dozen different falcons, hawks and owls. Televised Osprey, on the monitors at the Lodge, and real Red Kites at Doune, are guaranteed, for the rest you will need to keep your eyes well and truly peeled.

Kinlochard Gala was held on St Swithin's Day. There is a very old saying that if a drop of rain should fall upon this day, it will then rain for a further 40 days and 40 nights. Swithin was a bishop of Winchester, dying in AD862. Many sick people, having visited Swithin's grave, claimed to have been cured and, before long, Swithin was made a saint. On the 15th July AD971, his remains were dug up and moved to a grander tomb. This undoubtedly upset St Swithin, the heavens opened and the great deluge began. I am sure the weather will improve soon, probably when we go back to school.

Bye for now,
Milton.



Not here.....but near!

SEVEN YEARS OF GREAT JAZZ AND BLUES Callander 2012 Jazz And Blues Festival

This year's annual Jazz and Blues Festival will once again offer a very full weekend of great music commencing at 6pm on Friday 28th September and finishing on Sunday 30th September at 12 midnight.

We have a superb line up of International, National and Regional performers to entertain you with over 300 musicians staging in excess of 40 live performances using 22 venues in Callander and the surrounding area. Jacqui Dankworth and her Quartet, KingPleasure and the Biscuit Boys, The Guy Tortora Band, The Revolutionaires, The Jiveoholics, Swing Sensation, Winston's Pennine Jazz, The Cosmopolitan Big Band, Fraser George Lindsay's Blues Incentive, Soul'Fi, The Jensen Interceptors, The Lyndon Anderson Band and Jazzmaine are among the treats in store. Check out the full programme on the festival website www.callanderjazz.com Printed programmes will also be available from Callander VisitScotland Tourist Office from early July.

We will also be featuring Dance and Music Workshops over the event weekend; Saxophone Workshop hosted by Jon Sax Taylor, one of the guest musicians playing Jazz Sax over the weekend; Blues Guitar Workshop hosted by Al Hughes; and for the very first time a Jump Jive Dance Workshop. (Check programme for venues and times).

The ever popular Loch Katrine Jazz Cruise, Sunday morning Jazz Parade and Jazz Church Service are again a main part of the festival weekend. Venues this year will include McLaren High School where the majority of the Headline performances will be staged and there is also the welcome return of the Harbour Café at Venacher Lochside which in the early autumn has spectacular views.

Festival tickets are now available on line from www.ticketweb.co.uk and can also be purchased directly from Callander VisitScotland Tourist Office. All Debit and Credit Cards accepted Tel: 01877-330342

Ticket prices are as follows: Weekend Rover Ticket £45 (£40 if purchased before July 31); Friday Rover Ticket £10; Saturday Rover Ticket £30; Sunday Rover Ticket £20.

Rover Tickets admit you to every festival performance in the event programme for the weekend or stipulated day, but please note that there is a boarding charge payable if you choose to go on the Sunday Jazz Cruise and that will be £15-50p per person.

Admission charges on the door at each venue (Non Rover Ticket Holders) and each performance are: Headline Performance £10; All others £5 per person.

Jazz Cruise tickets can only be purchased from Loch Katrine Pier ticket office which can be contacted at Tel: 01877-332000 e.mail: cruises@lochkatrine.com All Debit/Credit Cards accepted.

Free transport to and from Loch Katrine plus a shuttlebus service to McLaren High School, Callander Golf Club and The Gart and Keltie Bridge Caravan Parks will be provided and will leave from and return to South Ancaster Square. For full information or general enquiries please contact the Festival Office on 01877-339399 or e.mail to info@callanderjazz.com

Graham Oliphant
Festival Director



On 16th July comedian and broadcaster Fred MacAulay kicked off his challenge of trekking the mighty West Highland Way in aid of the STV Appeal 2012 – and what's more,

he'll perform a comedy gig at various points along the way!

During this West Highland Way Challenge, Fred will walk the whole, gruelling 96 miles and will be joined for shorter stints by a series of well known faces. Fred was joined on day one by STV's very own News anchorman John MacKay and Scottish rugby legend Scott Hastings. The three well known faces will walk from Milngavie to Drymen where they will finish day one.

And as if that wasn't enough of a challenge, after a day's trek, Fred will perform a comedy gig for locals at The Winnock Hotel in Drymen.

Fred is delighted to be putting his boots on for the STV Appeal this year. He said:

"Walking the West Highland Way for the STV Appeal is a triple whammy for me. First, I get to help out with the STV Appeal, which helps raise awareness of a hugely worthwhile cause, and hopefully encourage people to put a few pounds into the kitty. Second, I'll get to meet and spend time with some interesting Scots while we walk. And thirdly, the West Highland Way has been on my to-do list for a long time! This is all for a fantastic cause, and any cash raised will help so many children affected by poverty in Scotland, so please visit my justgiving page and donate now."

www.justgiving.com/WHWfredmacaulay.



Callander Ramblers' Diary

July

Wed 25th 9:30am Stroll: Cambusmore (4miles) *contact 07766 014933*

Sat 28th 8:30am Ramble: The Mell (11miles) *contact 01786-825198*

August

Wed 1st 9:30am Ramble: Edinample to Kilmahog (10miles)
contact 01877 376200

Sat 11th 8:30am Ramble: Glen Almond–Amulree Horseshoe (12miles) *contact 01786 823265*

Sat 18th 8:30am Hill: Buachaille Etive Mor (1022m)
contact 01877 331067

Sat 25th 8:30am LDP: CtoC (9) Loch Dhu to Aberfoyle (9miles)
contact 01877 330032

Wed 29th 9:30am Stroll: Dunblane to Bridge of Allan (5miles)
contact 01786 825249

September

Wed 5th 9:30am Stroll: Kennett Estate & Tolbooth (4 1/2miles)
contact 01786 842021

We meet in Ancaster Square, unless otherwise indicated. Please bring wet weather clothing, appropriate footwear and a packed lunch. Please let the walk leader know if you plan to join the walk via the contact number given.

Forth Valley University of the Third Age (U3A) Enrolment date Friday 7th September

Have you just retired? Are you already retired or semi-retired? If so, Forth Valley U3A offers you many ways to stretch your mind or body and to socialise with like-minded older people. Forth Valley U3A was established in 2004 and now has over 290 members. You do not need qualifications, just the motivation to learn in small informal interest groups that run from September to April/May in Callander, Stirling and surrounding areas. The groups cover topics and activities such as art, current affairs, languages, line dancing, music appreciation, Tai Chi and many more. They are led by group leaders who share their skills or knowledge with the rest of the group. Open meetings are also held during the year, usually with a speaker. During the summer months a programme of visits and activities is arranged.

runs from September to September. This will entitle you to attend Forth Valley U3A interest groups and meetings and to receive a monthly *Update* on groups and activities, a quarterly Forth Valley U3A *Newsletter* and the national U3A magazine *Third Age Matters*, published five times a year. At the Enrolment and Open Meetings on Friday 7 September you will be able to enrol for Forth Valley U3A interest groups and meet informally with other members over tea or coffee. These meetings will be held at Callander Youth Hub, Bridgend, Callander at 10.30 a.m. and Cambusbarron Community Centre at 2 p.m. We look forward to welcoming current and new members to Forth Valley U3A.

For further information please contact Membership Secretary on 01786 822062 or Interest Groups Co-ordinator on 01786 814681 or visit our website: www.forthvalleyu3a.org.uk.

The annual subscription for Forth Valley U3A is £16 and

Gartmore Church

Times of Worship

Morning worship is at 10am every Sunday. We have tea/coffee after the service on the first Sunday of each month. The Sunday Club meets most Sundays.

GARTMORE WOMEN'S RURAL INSTITUTE

The President and Committee of the Gartmore WRI extend a warm welcome to all ladies of the area to come along and take part in the 2012 session.

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall and our new syllabus has interesting and varied topics which we hope will catch your attention.





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

- Aberfoyle • Balforn • Buchlyvie • Callander • Deanston • Doune Drymen • Gargunnoch • Gartmore • Killin • Kippen • Kinlochard • Lochearnhead • Strathyre • Stronachlachar • Tyndrum

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

The Association's aim is to support rural communities by providing affordable good quality homes for people in housing need. We currently have over 500 rented homes and around 30 of these become available for re-let each year. We also build some new homes each year.

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

Rural Stirling Housing Association
 Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA
 Telephone : 01786 841101
 E-mail: Enquiries@rsha.demon.co.uk
 Website : www.rsha.org.uk

Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849

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

COMMITTEE & CONTACTS

Editor: Margaret Neufeld

01877 386258

editor@strathardnews.com

Treasurer: Bridget MacPherson

01877 382564

treasurer@strathardnews.com

Advertising: Ian Marshall

01877 382211

advertising@strathardnews.com

Layout: Marion Back

01475 560300

newsdesk@strathardnews.com

Reporters:

David Wilkie

01877 382868

reporter@strathardnews.com

Fiona Campbell

01877 382603

Junior Reporter - Emily Bowie

juniornjournal@strathardnews.com

Distribution: Arthur Jones

01877 382682

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Deadline Dates

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Issue 73 15 July Forth Inn

Issue 74 16 Sep - House Folk Festival

Issue 75 18 Nov - RSPB (xmas issue)

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Balforn & Callander Recycling Centres Opening Times:

Monday - Friday: 5pm-8pm

Saturday: 10am-2pm

Sunday: Closed

A wide variety of household recyclables (including garden waste) can be taken directly to the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) at Balforn and Callander. Excess waste and bulky household items, including fridges and freezers and furniture, can also be disposed of at the HWRCs.

Clubs in the Memorial Hall

Mondays

Tuesdays 3.45pm-8.45pm **Tap, Ballet & Jazz For All ages** Contact Carla Duggan 07815146462

Wednesdays 10am-12pm **Toddler Group** Contacts: Cindy 07886511894,

Esther 389355, Katie 389058

Contact John Epps 382276

Evenings **Country Dance**

Thursdays Evenings **Karate For All ages** Contact Julie Glen 382296

Fridays 7pm-8.30pm **Youth Club (P6 & Up)** Contact Marie Wardrop 382568

Also available for meetings, parties etc.

To book tel Cat Gow 389141, email: aberfoylememorialhall@hotmail.co.uk

We need community spirited people to volunteer and join our existing Committee members to ensure the survival of this important village asset. If you cannot commit to being a Committee member, we need help with small repairs and maintenance, painting, gardening etc. We also need new members of our £100 club (you pay £2 per month £1 of which goes to hall funds with the other £1 going in to a prize draw with a member winning the "pot"). Any help is much appreciated. Contact: Andrea Khan, Chairperson 07717418087 or Janet Stewart, Treasurer 01877 382736

Strathendrick Singers

Our rehearsals are held in Balforn Church every Monday evening at 7.30pm, starting on 10th September. Our members come from all over the area some travelling from as far afield as Milngavie and Dunblane. We would be delighted to welcome new members. For more information visit our website www.strathendricksingers.org.uk
Contact: Pat Ashworth 01360 550074
email drazhworth@aol.com

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THE FORTH INN

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