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Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar & Inversnaid

# Strathard News

Stirling Council's Community Newspaper of the Year 2012

ISSUE 82 JAN 2014

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## Retirement of Margaret Neufeld

# Editorial

There can be no denying the Strathard News has come a long way since its inception. Some of villagers may even recall the early 'black and white' editions from the late 1980's, which were hand-typed, and delivered by a merry band of volunteers. It's current status, culminating in a recent Newsletter of the Year award, has been realised by the creativity of the regular contributors, the support of it's advertisers, the loyalty of it's readers, and the drive and enthusiasm of it's committee members. During the paper's lifespan, there have been many people involved in it's growth, displaying a range of skills. There are also some who have offered prolonged commitment. One name that will forever be associated with The News, more than any other, is Margaret Neufeld. While it is an admirable fact that Margaret has not only been part of the team since it's early creation, it is even more remarkable to consider she has taken a leading role throughout. In her position as editor, Margaret has obviously had to be seen to be a controlling figure, but she has managed to mix her 'duties' with calmness, compassion and no small amount of humour. These virtues have had an enduring impact within the confines of the committee and made her a hugely popular, and well-respected figure in the community as a whole. Now that she has finally handed in her pen and notebook, her presence at the meetings will be sorely missed, as will her vast local knowledge. I suspect however she will retain a keen interest, and be on hand if advice is ever needed. On a personal level ( and I sure the committee will have no problem agreeing ), it has been a real privilege to get to know, and work alongside Margaret, and to wish her a long, happy and stress-free retirement.

Footnote :

Margaret has been succeeded in the editorial chair by Mairi Buchanan ( this is her married name - most of you will probably be familiar with the MacDonald's from Manse Road ), so any enquiries should now be directed to her. Mairi's life has just got a lot more demanding with the permanent Supervisor role at the Lodge Forest Visitor Centre also being awarded to her in January. Best of luck for the future, Mairi.

David Wilkie

Welcome to the first Issue of 2014!

From the last issue you will have seen we've had a few changes to the team. Margaret has officially retired and is enjoying a well deserved rest after years of dedication to the Strathard News. I first joined the team in July along with Laura McLean after hearing the Strathard News needed more volunteers to support its continuing success. With Margaret's persuasion I've volunteered to be Editor for this year. If you'd like to try your hand at writing a few articles or offering support to the running of the Strathard News please get in touch. We're looking for more Pet stories for Pet Corner and an enthusiastic school pupil to write for Junior Journal.

Mairi

editor@strathardnews.com

### Anne's foray into the World of the National MOD!



Anne started learning the Clarsach which is Gaelic for "small harp" in January 2013 taught by Cheyenne Brown who was originally from Alaska. Anne entered the Elementary Solo competition for beginners at the National Mod in Paisley and won the Jean C Campbell Quaich. She also entered the clarsach duet competition with Catriona Gorgas from Milngavie, and won the Drumelzier Quaich.

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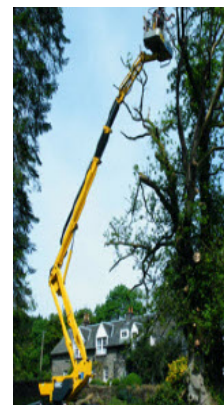
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# School News

## Aberfoyle Primary



### Snow White Pantomime

Primary 3 to Primary 7 at Aberfoyle Primary School recently enjoyed auditioning, practicing and performing their pantomime, Snow White. The children performed for members of the community such as Gartmore Primary School and the Ladies Guild before performing to their family and friends on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th of December. All of the children worked hard to learn their lines and perform all of the songs, and a big thank you goes to the teachers and support staff for all of their hard work and for making the wonderful costumes and props. All of the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience and Erin Gibson, Primary 7, who was Snow White said, 'I enjoyed every part of it, auditioning, practicing, and above all, performing and I would definitely do it again!' Gavin Lothian, Primary 7, who played the Prince, said he went for the part of the Prince because he loves putting on accents and acting and singing are things he really enjoys.



Morven Jackson, Eilidh Jackson and Robyn Steel



Fiona Klaes & Erin Gibson



Innes, Emma, Jade, Chantelle, Rory, Aaro and Amanda

Donna Keir and Fiona Klaes



**P1/2 News** Primary 1/2 have a new topic this term - Dinosaurs. They have learned that dinosaurs lived 65 to 250 million years ago and that dinosaurs come in different shapes and sizes, and some were the size of your hand and some were bigger than your house! They have drawn a poster for their lost dinosaur using the toy dinosaur given to them by Miss Brown. In Maths Primary 1/2 have been learning about time on an analogue and digital clock. They have learnt o'clock and half past, and some children are even learning quarter past and quarter to. Everyone is really enjoying the class novel called 'The Penguin Who Wanted to Find Out' which is about a penguin called Otto. By Beth Dunlop, Florence Bigwood and Noah Kennedy.

**Primary 3/4 News** Our topic is Japan and so far Catriona, Amber, Kyle, Ryan, Megan, Morven and Maiya have all brought things in from, or about, Japan. We have been looking at Atlas' and maps of Japan and we have created cherry blossom pictures because cherry blossom is extremely important in Japan. In Maths we have been learning about money. Some of the children are learning about change and to help them they have made a shop in class to role play different scenarios. By Emma Coakes, Kyle Gibson and Catriona Manders(P4)

**Primary 5/6 News** Primary 5/6 have been learning about electricity and how it works. Miss Richards (a student teacher who is working in our class) borrowed a Van de graph generator from McLaren High School. It produces electricity and all the electricity moves to a dome on top. You can use a metal ball that makes positive and negative charges jump to each other and looks like a lightning bolt. You can also do the same with the parts of your hand. Another activity you can do is when you place your hands on the Van de graph your hair avoids other hair strands.

In Maths Primary 5/6 have been learning about Fractions, Percentages and Decimals and we made posters about Fraction into a Percentage, Decimal into a percentage, and Fraction to a Decimal. One group have been learning about credit and debit cards and budgeting, one group has been learning about simplifying fractions and another group have been learning about fractions percentages and decimals - By Molly Jennings and George Tutin.

**Primary 7 News** In January Primary 7 warmly welcomed our new teacher Mrs Lambert to our school. We are making a start on our new topic 'Scottish Parliament' and so far we have created posters based on the building and its intricate architecture. Hopefully we'll go on to enjoy many interesting and exciting activities including developing our own political parties and discussing and debating the prospect of Independence. We are also going to hold a school election based on our political parties. In Language we have been learning to build suspense stories using: short sentences, dialogue and ellipsis. By Erin Gibson and Innes Manders.

## Nursery News



Nursery News The nursery children are learning about buildings and what materials they are made of. They are exploring and playing with different materials to create small constructions. Soon the children will create a large 3D construction using junk after they have planned what it is they are going to make and how they will make it.

By Zoe Bell and Donna Keir.





## Senior Basketball v St Modans High School

On Monday 25 November a group of senior boys showing a real enthusiasm for basketball travelled to St Modans High School for their very first competitive match.

The boys, although playing hitherto at a recreational level, were not without some experience. Greg Harrower has been playing since primary school and he was ably supported by Andy Innes and John Cuthbert, both very competent round about the backboard. Andrew Nixon, a convert from rugby also shows a natural ability in the game and the starting five was completed by Michael O'Connell. Of the five, only Greg had taken part in a match, being a member of the junior Stirling Knights team.

The McLaren boys got off to a wonderful start with Andrew Nixon winning the tip-off. The ball fell to Andy Innes and he let go a defence splitting pass to set up John Cuthbert for a comparatively easy lay-up - 2 points up after the same number of seconds. The early basket calmed any nervousness. Another couple of scores followed and it soon became evident that the visitors held control of the game.

Soon, all substitutes had been blooded but this did nothing to affect the continuity of the game. James Cameron, Stuart Hamlyn and Jordan Campbell all warmed to the task, enjoying good possession as well as numerous scoring opportunities.

St Modans, to their credit, never gave up and constantly probed toward the McLaren basket. Unfortunately, they found it hard work to recover and the McLaren boys finished worthy winners on the day.

What a great start for the team. This will no doubt fuel some need for another fixture and the boys must now not rest on their laurels, but prepare themselves for perhaps a different kind of challenge!



## Flag Football

McLaren High Hornets took part in the first ever Flag Football Stirling University Community League that was organised, in partnership, by Active Stirling and Stirling University Clansmen. Stirling High, St Modan's, Bannockburn and McLaren all took part and McLaren won the tournament - winning all of their games in the process. The event was held at Stirling University on Friday 6 December. Well done to Finn Rhys who won Most Valuable Player (MVP) at the tournament.



## Children In Need

On Friday 15 November the pupils of McLaren High took part in a 'Children in Need Day' where pupils paid £1 to come to school in 'non-uniform' for the day. The senior pupils turned up in fancy dress and the rest of the school judged them! The winners were Iona Campbell and Kate Preston dressed as Mike and Sully from Monsters Inc. During lunchtime a video was shown which was produced by the Sixth Year boys. A remarkable £871.71 was raised for Children in Need. Hamish Cordner S6

## Badminton

On 11 and 13 November some of the pupils from McLaren took part in a Stirling Schools Badminton Competition. This was a tough competition as there were 5 schools competing. The standard was high and the games were exciting! The McLaren pupils came together to win an outstanding number of medals including 4 golds, with an outstanding singles performance from Euan Woodley.

Another 9 pupils qualified for the Central competition on 11 December, and the standard was suddenly stepped up. All of the pupils gave it their all and hope to return again next year. Alistair Orr S6



## Christmas Concert plus

The 43rd Annual Christmas Concert was a brilliant start to the festivities here at McLaren on Monday evening. The Orchestra, Brass, Strings, Concert and Swing Bands all shone from the first performance of 'Christmas Festival' to the final exit to 'White Christmas' and vocal groups sang their songs with Christmas cheer. There was a piano duet from Niamh Foulis and Finn Newton who played 'Baby it's Cold Outside' whilst the S1 Boomwhackers and ukeleles added some sparkle with a 'different' arrangement of 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas!' Well done to the audience who joined in and sang all the carols and Christmas songs to help put everyone firmly in the Christmas mood.

A big thank you to the PTA who provided refreshments and organised the raffle - around £500 was raised for PTA funds. Also thanks to everyone who donated items for the hampers and raffle prizes. A special thank you must go to Janette and Jim Greer at The Therapy Room, McLaren Leisure Centre, who donated vouchers for any treatment with them and also sold raffle tickets on behalf of the PTA.



I'd like to thank everybody for the items of food that have been handed in for the Small Christmas Hamper Appeal. At the time of writing we have 40 parcels decorated, packed and ready to deliver to people in the wider school community. Pupils will be delivering these this week. Hopefully, we can repeat and improve this for next year. Thanks again. Finn Rhys S6



### The Queen's Baton Relay Nominee

Nicola Allan has been nominated as McLaren High School's Baton Relay Representative. The baton will cover more than 118,000 miles averaging one to four days in each nation or territory. It will finish its journey at the opening ceremony of the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow on 23 July 2014. Here is what Nicola has to say about being given the honour of being part of the relay. 'The Queen's Baton Relay is our schools chance to count down and make preparations for Scotland's largest celebration of sport and culture. With sport having played such a huge role in my life I am honoured and privileged to have been nominated to represent McLaren High School in this exciting and historic, once in a life time opportunity.'

Nicola Allan S6



### Futurechef

Futurechef is a competition open to all school pupils under 16. McLaren held its heat on Monday 9 December and 6 pupils took part. Kirsty Prentice S1, Bethan Rimmer S3 and 4 S2 pupils, Alex Robb, Louise Dineley, Laura Maskrey and Eve Scott. All the entries were of an extremely high standard and chef Mark Heirs from Callander Arms in Falkirk had a very difficult task in choosing the winner. Finally he, Mr Cotter and Mr Fleming awarded the 1st place to Louise Dineley (pictured right) for her delicious dish of Griddled Sea Bass on a Bed of Home Made Open Ravioli with a Chilli, Ginger and Garlic Sauce. Louise is now set to represent Stirlingshire in the Scottish Regional Heat in February where she will be presented with her own embroidered Chef's Jacket to wear in the competition. From there, if she is successful, she could be on her way to London for the final. Good luck Louise!



### Children in Distress Shoe Box Appeal

The Charities Committee at McLaren High have been working hard this year to raise funds for those less fortunate. As Christmas can be a difficult time of year for many people, we decided to take part in the Children in Distress Shoe Box Appeal. This appeal helps children and elderly people in Eastern Europe. McLaren High managed to put together over 30 boxes containing small gifts and essential items to help people in these countries have some sort of present at Christmas time. Thank you to all who donated items. Hannah Ralston S6

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## YOGA



**Mondays: Aberfoyle Memorial Hall 7.30-9pm**  
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I start this column with an ending this week in that I have decided to stand down as your Member of Parliament at the next General Election in 2015. Having been successful in standing in the last four elections I feel that I have now played my part for the people of Stirling and its communities. However, my work is not yet finished and I will continue to be both a full-time and active MP

supporting my constituents until the time of the next election. Many of you will be aware that there is currently a consultation taking place asking for your views on yet another application from a company to take over the pharmacy dispensing licence from Aberfoyle Medical Centre. Having made representation before, I would encourage anyone to make their own representations directly to NHS Forth Valley before the February deadline. Speaking of representations, my office has been inundated with emails and letters from many of you with concerns about the Government's Lobbying Bill which was meant to be the Government's response to what it called "the next big scandal waiting to happen". However, it has been a disaster from the very beginning. Far from delivering the real reform of lobbying that is needed, the Government's Bill would only capture a tiny minority of the lobbying industry and it would not stop commercial lobbyists influencing Government policy and as a previous Depute Director of the Scottish Council of Voluntary Services, I am very concerned that it could stop charities and campaigners from campaigning and that it remains unworkable, badly drafted and partisan.

I was pleased to visit Stirling's newest supermarket this week to help them celebrate their first year of trading in the area. Waitrose, sited within the new Burghmuir Retail Park, is happy with its decision to open its doors away from the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and its Branch Manager, Lindsay Clifford has been delighted with sales to date.

At the time of your reading of this I shall have been to Auschwitz-Birkenau standing alongside many other parliamentarians from throughout Europe for a special remembrance at the site of the extermination camp where hundreds of thousands of Jewish men, women and children were killed. Despite our horror at the Holocaust and its atrocities, genocide continues in many parts of the world as we cannot fail to see on our



news screens on a daily basis. I am also proud to support Holocaust Memorial Day and continue to hope that all of us challenge anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry.



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Carers and young carers are being asked for their views on specific legislation to promote, defend and extend their rights.

The widespread consultation marks a significant step forward in recognising and addressing the needs of unpaid adult carers and young carers across Scotland who care for their families, friends and neighbours.

The proposed legislation, which was announced by the First Minister in October, aims to ensure that carers are further supported and are fully involved in decisions affecting their lives and those they care for.

There are now more people than ever before who are caring intensively, for more hours each week. This means that they are facing considerable challenges.

This consultation seeks views on our proposals for new legislation to improve outcomes for carers and young carers. I am pleased that the Scottish Government has this opportunity to consult with a wide range of stakeholders, especially carers and young carers themselves, about future developments.

I hope that in taking forward these proposals, the input and comment from other key stakeholders, including local authorities, health boards and the third sector who are already offering carers a lot of help and support can be taken fully into account.

Through this consultation, we have the opportunity to ensure that carers are supported and protected through legislation.

This consultation can be viewed online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/01/4757>, and closes on April 16, 2014.

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](mailto: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](mailto:hayesa@stirling.gov.uk)



Councillor Fergus Wood, SNP Stirling Council, Old Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET, tel - 01786 443497, mob - 07824 496 019, e-mail [woodf@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:woodf@stirling.gov.uk)

Community Council



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. 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	Inversnaid	Kinlochard
John Clow	Andre Goulancourt	Fiona McEwan
Ros Dingwall	Ralph Wolfe	
Jimmy Quinn		
Geraint Short		

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## Loch Ard Local History Group



Spring 2014

Monday, March 10th

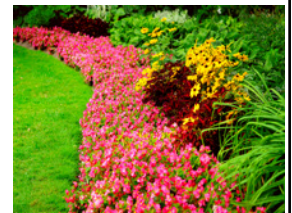
Alan Steel "Mysterious Ways" The Curious Saints of Scotland

Monday, April 14th

John Reid "Polerth" The Lost Dockyard of James Ivth

All meetings in Kinlochard Village Hall at 7.30pm Annual  
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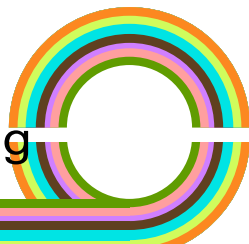
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# Simon says.....



## HEALTH TIP THIS MONTH

This Month Simon Says.....

More and more people these days are now being diagnosed and recognised as being COELIAC.

COELIAC sufferers cannot break down a protein called gluten which is present in wheat, rye, barley and oats. However, most coeliacs appear to be able to tolerate a small amount of oats. This condition often goes undiagnosed for several years. Symptoms include frequent indigestion, abdominal pain, loss of weight and depression. Because fat is poorly absorbed, the stools can be pale, frothy and foul smelling. It is very important that if you suffer from any or some of these symptoms over a period of several months that you see a doctor. The longer you suffer with coeliac disease, particularly if it goes undiagnosed, the more likely you are to do more damage to the gut lining. This greatly reduces the body's ability to absorb adequate levels of nutrients which, in extreme cases, can even lead to malnutrition.

### Foods to Avoid

Any foods containing wheat, rye and barley are absolutely crucial to avoid. Quite a few people with coeliac disease also have a problem with cow's milk and dairy products or soya foods.

You will need to avoid mass produced cakes and desserts.

Until the condition is under control, avoid fatty meats, sausages, pies and processed meat products.

### Friendly Foods

Fortunately these days, there are plenty of gluten-free foods available from your local Health Shop. Some will be high in sugar so be sure to read the labels carefully - sugar turns to a hard fat in the body if not burned up during exercise and in coeliac sufferers, fat is poorly absorbed.

Look for breads, instant foods and flours made from grain alternatives like quinoa, amaranth, millet, corn, rice, buckwheat and lentils.

Dairy alternatives to cow's milk include rice, oat, pea and even almond and hazelnut milk.

Eat plenty of leafy greens, which are rich sources of magnesium and calcium. Cabbage is rich in the amino acid L-glutamine which helps to heal the gut - try making fresh vegetable juices that include raw cabbage, a little root ginger which is very soothing, plus any vegetables you have to hand. If you cook cabbage in water, save the water and make gravy with it. Or add cabbage to stews and soups.

Try to eat more fish to provide Vitamin D which is often deficient in coeliac sufferers.

Eat plenty of nuts, seeds, fish, free range low-fat meats such as venison and turkey to keep up zinc intake often deficient in coeliacs.

Essential fats are needed to heal the gut, so use a little organic sunflower, sesame, olive or walnut oil for salad dressings.

Eat an avocado once a week as they are rich in Vitamin E.

### Useful Remedies

Calcium 500mg and Magnesium 250mg are vital minerals as many coeliac sufferers have a low bone density.

Folic acid, 400-800mcg and Vitamin B6, 50-100mg.

A high strength multi-vitamin and mineral to make up for any other nutritional deficiencies.

Slippery Elm tablets help reduce the irritation.

Remember....it's often the foods you crave and eat the most that are doing the greatest harm !!

Simon Robinson is the main qualified working partner and owner of Natures Corner in Callander.

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You can call on:- 01877 330200

You can e-mail :-health@natures-corner.com You can shop on-line:- www.natures-corner.com

# Free Health Walks

Steps to a Healthier New Year Walk in the Park aims to make walking fun and accessible for everyone. Led by trained Walk Leaders, group walks take place in Aberfoyle on Mondays lasting about 45 minutes.



Walking helps you to maintain or increase your level of fitness or introduce those recovering from illness or a long period of inactivity gently and gradually back into exercise. Walkers can choose to walk at a pace which suits them on that particular day and vary the pace during the walk depending on how they are feeling. Government guidelines recommend that to be healthy, adults need to be active at least 30 minutes a day. The benefits of regularly walking briskly for at least 30 minutes include having more energy, stronger toned muscles, more control over your weight, a better night's sleep, improved confidence and a lower risk of heart disease, stroke or osteoporosis. The routes are chosen because they are mostly flat, with slight inclines, and because they have good walking surfaces. We aim to create a varied and interesting programme of walks so some are around the town, others out in the countryside. A social time is offered in a local café afterwards. The walks are free and no special equipment is needed – just a pair of comfortable shoes or boots and weather related clothing. The Walk in the Park project is managed by the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Countryside Trust, with support from Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, Paths for All, Forestry Commission Scotland, the Scottish Power Foundation and NHS Forth Valley.

If you have any questions regarding joining any of our walks please contact the Project Coordinator- Cathy Scott on 01877 330055 or email: cathy.scott@lochlomond-trossachs.org or call the Lodge Forest Visitor Centre 01877 382258

## Walk Schedule December – January

**3/2/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Loch Ruskie**

**10/2/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Lochan Spiling**

**17/2/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Loch Ard**

**24/2/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
The Lodge Forest Visitor Centre, Waterfall Trail or  
Green Trail**

**3/3/14 Wool Centre Car Park  
NCR 7 towards Rob Roy Motel**

**10/3/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Lemahamish**

**17/3/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
The Lodge Forest Visitor Centre, Waterfall Trail or  
Green Trail**

**23/3/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Loch Ruskie**

**31/3/14 Wool Centre Car Park (car share)  
Lochan Spiling**



**Medical Centre Opening Hours**

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Wed	8.20am-10.15am 3.00pm-5.30pm	By Appointment By Appointment
Thursday	7.30am-8.00am 8.15am-11.00am	By Appointment By Appointment
Friday	8.15am-11.00am 2.00pm-3.00pm	By Appointment By Appointment

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Monday	07.30am-08.00am 8.15am-9.30am 2.00pm-3.00pm	By Appointment (Alt. Mondays) Open Surgery Minor ops
Tuesday	10.30am-11.30am 4.00pm-5.30pm	Open Surgery By Appointment
Wed	8.15am-9.30am	Open Surgery 2.30pm-3.30pm Minor ops/Well Woman
Thursday	8.15am-9.30am	Open Surgery
Friday	10.30am-11.30am 3.00pm-5.00pm	Open Surgery By Appointment

REMEMBER YOU CAN BOOK APPOINTMENTS ON LINE - PLEASE ASK AT RECEPTION

**THANK YOU**

THE DOCTORS AND STAFF AT ABERFOYLE MEDICAL CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE PATIENTS FOR ALL THEIR KIND CHRISTMAS CARDS, GIFTS AND GOOD WISHES AND THEY WOULD LIKE TO WISH THEM A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR

PHARMACY APPLICATION YOU ONLY HAVE UNTIL 11TH FEBRUARY 2014 TO WRITE OR EMAIL YOUR LETTERS WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY FORTH VALLEY HEALTH BOARD THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED A VALID PHARMACY APPLICATION - WHICH MEANS THAT A PHARMACIST HAS APPLIED TO OPEN A CHEMIST SHOP TO PROVIDE PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES IN ABERFOYLE

IS A PHARMACY NECESSARY? IS A PHARMACY DESIRABLE? IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU ALREADY RECEIVE ADEQUATE PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES FROM OTHER LOCAL CHEMISTS PLEASE WRITE TO THE HEALTH BOARD WHILE YOU WAIT AND WE WILL POST IT ASK AT RECEPTION FOR DETAILS

MRS E HADDEN NHS FORTH VALLEY HEALTH BOARD  
CARSEVIEW, SUITE 2 CASTLE BUSINESS PARK STIRLING FK9 4SW  
Or EMAIL [evelyn.hadden@nhs.net](mailto:evelyn.hadden@nhs.net) Closing date Tuesday 11th February 2014 You may wish to mention the following:  
The current pharmacy services are adequate within my neighbourhood

It is as easy to access a pharmacy as it is a dentist or optician  
When I go to work/school or shop I can access a pharmacy  
There are concerns that a pharmacy will not be viable or sustainable in Aberfoyle



**New One Stop Service for Frail Older People Introduced in Forth Valley**

A new 'one-stop' service has been introduced in Forth Valley to improve the care and treatment of frail, older people and help reduce avoidable hospital admissions. The service enables GPs to refer patients to a Rapid Access Clinic based at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in Larbert where a range of tests and investigations can be carried out at the same time. These include blood tests, X-rays, scans as well as a range of cognitive tests. Assessments are also carried out by a Consultant Geriatrician.

A number of appointments are available Monday to Friday (8.30am - 5pm) for older people who meet certain criteria. This includes people aged 65 and over currently being cared for in a nursing and residential home who require tests or treatment and people aged 75 and over living at home who may require to be assessed for a number of reasons perhaps because they have suffered a recent fall, are confused or have problems walking.

The new frailty service is run in conjunction with social work and allied health professionals who are able to put a package of care and support in place which will normally allow patients to return home the same day. Patients referred to the Rapid Access Clinic who do need to stay in hospital can be transferred to a new Inpatient Frailty Unit where they will be assessed by a specialist multidisciplinary team to help identify their needs. A targeted programme of treatment can then be delivered to enable patients to return home, with follow up care and support, if required.

NHS Forth Valley Consultant Geriatrician Dr Liz Millar said: "It's well documented that staying in hospital a long time can lead to older people losing their confidence and mobility and we know that most older people want to return to their own home as soon as possible. By providing rapid access to a wide range of specialist care, treatment and support we can streamline their care, improve their experience and help them to return home to live as independent a life as they can."



**NEW PHARMACY APPLICATION**

NHS Forth Valley has received an Application from Strathard Pharmacy Ltd to provide NHS pharmaceutical services from proposed premises at:

The Studio Fabric Gallery Main Street Aberfoyle FK8 3UG  
Notice of this Application and the process for consideration of new applications can be found on the NHS Forth Valley website: [www.nhsforthvalley.com/get-involved/public-consultations/](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com/get-involved/public-consultations/)

As required under the Regulations this public consultation will last for a period of 60 days, ending on Tuesday 11th February 2014.

Should you have any comments or views, regarding this Application, these can be sent to:  
Primary Care Contractor Services, (Pharmacy), NHS Forth Valley, Suite 2, Carseview House Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4SW Or emailed to: [evelyn.hadden@nhs.net](mailto:evelyn.hadden@nhs.net) by Tuesday 11th February 2014

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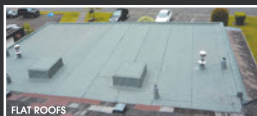
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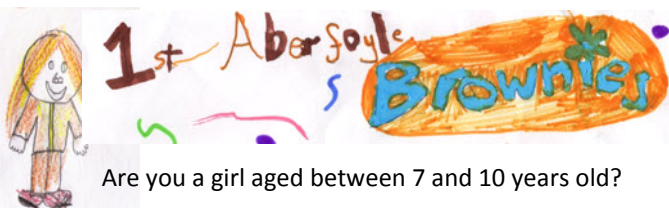
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Aberfoyle Brownies meet on Wednesday evenings and we would welcome new members.

For more information contact: [aberfoylebrownies@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aberfoylebrownies@hotmail.co.uk) or come along to a Brownie meeting to see just how much fun we have!

### Art Classes Kinlochard Village Hall

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[m.neufeld@btinternet.com](mailto:m.neufeld@btinternet.com)

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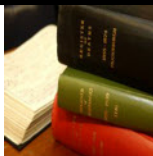
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# Registrar



The Registrar at Stirling Council's Aberfoyle Local Office  
 The last time I wrote, I mentioned that there were still 2013 weddings to take place either side of Christmas and what beautiful weddings they were. Duchray Castle provided the fairytale Christmas setting for the wedding of Jamie Geddes and Claire Ferrier a few weeks before Christmas, while just days after Christmas Forest Hills hosted the wedding of Andrew Hughes and Michelle O'Driscoll, who were beautifully assisted by their two little daughters. Congratulations to both couples!

It wasn't just weddings that were celebrated in the run up to Christmas, and two babies were registered in those weeks. First of all there was the arrival of a baby daughter, Ariane Cathro-Brown, to parents Roseanne and George from Gartmore, Then a little son, Aron Riggott, to parents Alison and Matthew from Balfron Station. Welcome babies!

These winter months also brought great sadness to the area, with the loss of three of our community. Many of us will have known Alistair Ferrie and have been shocked at his sudden illness and death. A kind man, always willing to help, be it week after week as he did with Youth Club, or quietly stepping in to give someone a hand, I know he will be much missed by his family and all who knew him. Such loss is particularly tragic when there is a death of a young person and we are a community distraught at the loss of Douglas Hyslop. So many of us knew Douglas, and will remember him as a local schoolboy, or playing football, or meeting up with his friends, or simply just sitting on the village bench with his sister. Our hearts and thoughts are with his family and friends throughout this sad time. Sadly, January brought further loss, with the death of Andrew Cowan. Andy had been many years retired from his occupation as a gamekeeper, but for those of us who knew him, you could tell that his heart was still in the hills as he told the tales of his days of the past. Our condolences go to his wife and family. Aberfoyle Registration Office continues to be open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am until 12 noon. Appointments can be made by telephone [01877 382 986], by email [regaberfoyle@stirling.gov.uk], or by dropping in to the office during opening hours.

**Sharon Johnston Registrar**



# Milton

Hello Children,

Snowdrops, known as the "Fair Maids of February", are already peeping out in well sheltered spots, a sure sign that spring is approaching Strathard. Below ground, moles are busy at work, tunnelling furiously and throwing up mounds of fresh earth. One mole can produce many molehills, a female casting up her heaps at random, concentrated in one area. A male mole excavate his track in a long, straight line, looking for fresh worms to eat and probably a mate. Love is certainly in the air. Both my sisters have already received Valentine cards, rushing home from school to see if any more have come in the post. Saint Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, having left a message to the love of his own short life, hidden in his prison cell, before he was taken out and fed to the lions. Valentine was condemned to death for being a Christian. It is believed, that ever since that day in the third century, birds choose St. Valentine's Day on which to get married. Gaiothar is the Gaelic description of our recent Scottish weather, rather windy. Great fun for a bit of wind-bagging. This is a game invented by my best friend, George the Hare. Pick up a discarded polybag, there are always plenty littering the countryside, and find a windy place. Lift up the bag, let it fill with a good puff of wind and hold on very tight – and off you go! And then it is back to earth with a bump or two and a fit of the giggles. The twins, Duke and Katrine, just love it. The wild boar roaming in Strathard are not really wild, only escape artists that have recently gained their freedom. In truth they are impossible to keep contained within fences and, over the years, have escaped from Comer Farm, Duchray and Drumlean estates. The present fugitive has even produced a small litter, having been reported as being accompanied by a couple of baby boars. Strathard will provide plenty of cover but, if you keep a sharp lookout, you might just see them. Even though, from time to time, snow has dusted the high hilltops, the weather has been quite warm for this time of year. In the holt, instead of being fully asleep, a few over-wintering Small Tortoiseshell butterflies have taken to fluttering about. Quickly realising that it is still deepest wintertime, they soon find a quiet place to return to their slumber. Grandpa Otter always leaves a clump of stinging nettles growing in his garden, providing plenty of food for their caterpillars. My sister, Braeval, is a member of Butterfly Conservation Scotland ([www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)) As the days continue to lengthen, our feral goats will be making their way down the strath, taking full advantage of lovely fresh vegetation – and popping in to visit any available garden. Remember to keep fences up and gates shut! I'm off the send a Valentine card to a certain someone.

Bye for now,  
Milton.



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## Aberfoyle Tree Planting To mark Jewish festival

Forestry Commission Scotland hosted a tree-planting event at the Lodge Forest Visitor Centre, Aberfoyle this week (Sunday 19 January 2014) to celebrate the Jewish festival of Tu b'shvat.

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities worked in partnership with the Commission to mark the festival, which is often called the 'New Year for Trees' because it is an ecological awareness day and trees are planted in celebration.

Local Jewish people and people with an interest in Judaism attended the event, which along with tree planting, included a ranger-led nature walk a buffet lunch and a discussion on Judaism and Jewish cultural life in Scotland.

Nathalie Moriarty, Outreach Ranger, Forestry Commission Scotland said: "Our woodlands are places that everyone living in Scotland should enjoy. They are also excellent spaces for groups to hold events, whether they are recreational, social and educational events or faith-based celebrations or other community gatherings. "It was a great day and we got to learn more about the festival and help out with the tree-planting."

One elderly participant hadn't been able to manage the walk down to the squirrel and bird hide, but said that she had really enjoyed the day – "it was a beautiful, beautiful day, the centre is very modern, you could sit in the cafe and enjoy a lovely view, whichever way you looked".

Another participant summed up the day by saying: "It was a completely different Sunday afternoon, it was good to meet Jewish people from outside Glasgow. The whole day was amazing, the guides were fab." and another told us that the event was "A mixture of outdoors, education and a bit of Jewish culture added in. There were lots of different people to speak to – a unique experience for us, and on our doorstep!"

Fiona Frank, Scottish Council for Jewish Communities said: "Over 30 people attended from all across central Scotland and had a great day out. These sorts of days are great at helping other communities to learn more about Judaism and Jewish culture."



## The Great Trossachs Forest in 2013

The Great Trossachs Forest is one of the most significant woodland regeneration projects to take place in the UK for a generation. It covers 16,500 hectares between Loch Lomond and Callander and is a partnership project between BP, Forestry Commission Scotland, RSPB Scotland and the Woodland Trust Scotland. In March this year our application to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was successful enabling us to start the next phase of our work: our £1.5 million Gateways Project. The following outlines a summary of the work undertaken by partners during 2013 as part of The Great Trossachs Forest project. Woodland creation: This year, we came another step closer to achieving our aim of creating a native woodland corridor along the lower hillslopes between Callander and Loch Lomond. In addition to our existing woodlands and the new woodlands created at Loch Katrine, this year our fencing and tree planting work was completed at Loch Arklet by FCS. Deer fencing and the first phase of tree planting has also been carried out RSPB Inversnaid Nature Reserve to connect our new woodlands to those at Loch Lomond.

Monitoring our habitats: In March we carried out our annual helicopter deer count to help us monitor our wild herbivore population. Black grouse lek counts across The Great Trossachs Forest revealed a decrease in numbers of males, which has probably been caused by repeated poor summers in 2011 and 2012. Hopefully the good summer of 2013 will result in an improved count in 2014 as anecdotal evidence is hopeful. No sightings this year of the Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly although the habitat management through winter cattle grazing has resulted in improvements to the habitat at various sites

Recreation: As part of our new Gateways Project, the first three features were installed for the Natural Play Trail in Little Drum Wood just outside Brig o' Turk. Construction of the first of our two visitor gateway buildings started. Both the Glen Finglas and the Inversnaid visitor gateways are due to be completed and open in May 2014. Development of The Great Trossachs App commenced, which will be a fun and novel way for visitors to explore and learn about The Great Trossachs Forest.

Work also started on constructing the missing 6 kilometre path along the north shore of Loch Venachar. When completed, this construction work will also complete our long distance path, The Great Trossachs Path, which offers something for everyone by providing a long distance path which forms the central spine of a wider network of associated trails throughout The Great Trossachs Forest as well as linking West Highland Way to the Rob Roy Way.

Events: A range of partner events have taken place including the annual Easter Event at Glen Finglas as well as new partnership between Cruise Loch Lomond and RSPB to provide tours of Inversnaid. Both our weekend of fungi events and our guided walk along the Old Military Road in partnership with the Trossachs Landscape History Network, were very successful and well attended.

Learning: In conjunction with LL&TNP, our secondary school education resource grows from strength to strength. During the 2012/ 2013 academic year, 254 pupils visited as part of their outdoor learning experience. The start of the 2013/ 2014 academic year also started well, with 72 secondary school pupils visiting.

Volunteering: The commencement of our Gateways Project also resulted in the start of our new programme of activity for volunteers. To date we have been successful in recruiting volunteers to build our smartphone app, a media volunteer, two volunteer speakers and numerous conservation volunteering opportunities. We were also successful in recruiting a digital app intern to work with us over the next six months. To date 78 volunteer days have been completed as part of the Gateways Project.

Promoting TGTF: In August, we also held 'The Great Launch' for our stakeholders and feedback was that attendees found the event useful and informative. As part of the evaluation of the Forestry Commission HLF project, we surveyed some of the organisations we work with and 75% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that TGTF had made a step to achieving its vision. 80% of respondents thought that TGTF is a 'worthwhile' on-going project.

## Christmas at The Lodge

Christmas is always an exciting time for us at the Lodge. There was lots to do in December kids and adults enjoyed making magic wands, getting their faces painted, listening to stories of fairies from David Brough's book and watching his skills in wood carving, making wreaths - by intrepid scotland, watching Angela make Christmas decorations, taking part in the Robin trail quiz in exchange for a prize and winning tombola from the Loch Lomond Mountain Rescue stall. And to top it all of Santa and Mrs Claus took it in turns to visit children in the Grotto. Rangers were on hand to help families choose their Christmas tree and spread the Christmas cheer. After taking part in one of the many activities we had on offer visitors could relax in the café with a well deserved hot drink and mince pie. The Winners of the Christmas Hamper Draw were The Dinwoodie family from Doune.



The team With Santa Clause

Christmas Hamper winners

Angella Ballard Handmade Christmas decorations

Magic Wands By Skittlethorp

Loch Lomond Mountain Rescue Team

## The Lodge Events Diary

### **Volunteer Taster Session,**

15th February 10am – 3pm

Drop in for a taster session to find out more about volunteer opportunities at the Lodge and speak to Forestry Commission & RSPB staff and volunteers.

For more information contact [thelodge@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:thelodge@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) or 01877 382258

### **Ospreys Return**

12th April 10 – 4pm,

Celebrate 60 years of Osprey return to Scotland, crafts and activities Cost: donation

Mothers Day Promotions spend £20 in the café and receive 25% off in the shop for details visit

[fb.com/thelodgecafeandshop](https://www.facebook.com/thelodgecafeandshop) or call Jill on 07879 335 731

March Offer – 2 Pizzas for £10 Monday to Friday Café open daily from 10am for breakfast. New Spring Menu available in March

The Lodge Forest Visitor Centre Opening Times 2014

February 10:00-15:00 10:00-16:00 School holiday weekends

March -April 10:00-16:00

Easter holiday weekends 10:00-17:00

May - June 10:00-17:00

July - August 10:00-18:00

September 10:00-17:00

October 10:00-16:00

November - December 10:00-16:00

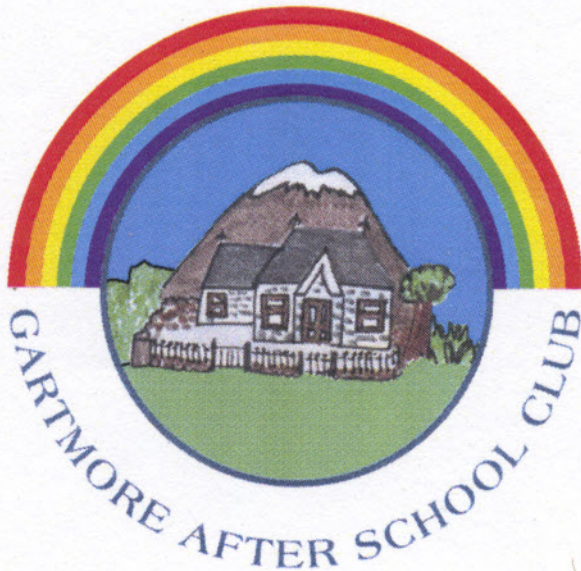
Close 24 Dec at 14:00 Reopen 3rd January 10 – 3pm

## National Tree Symbol

Tree-mendous - Scots Pine is national tree symbol.

The Scots Pine has been chosen by the people as the national tree of Scotland. A recent three month consultation to choose a national tree found that the Scots Pine was the clear favourite, with over 52 per cent (2,374) of all responses opting for the tree. Over 4,500 people responded to the consultation run by Forestry Commission Scotland. The second favourite tree, the Rowan, received 15 per cent (687) of the responses and in third place came the Holly with 7 per cent (333). Announcing the consultation results during a Members' Debate in the Scottish Parliament, Environment and Climate Change Minister, Paul Wheelhouse, said: "Scotland's trees, forests and woodlands are some of our greatest and most treasured natural assets. We are rightly proud of them because they help shape our landscape and make Scotland the fantastic country that it is. "The Scots Pine was an obvious choice and certainly the people's choice. Its designation of being the national tree of Scotland will help create an iconic symbol to highlight the significant contribution trees make to our country. " The idea of a national tree of Scotland came from Alex Hamilton, a member of the public who brought his campaign to the Scottish Parliament through a petition and received cross-party support from MSPs. Mr Hamilton said: "I am delighted at the news and congratulate the Scottish Government. I look forward to this symbol of our beautiful and life-giving woodlands being embraced by all." The national tree of Scotland is a symbolic designation which aims to help promote, celebrate and get people talking about trees, woodlands and forests. Forestry Commission Scotland is developing a funding package and a range of activities to help promote the national tree of Scotland symbol across the country. A formal designation of the national tree of Scotland will take place in the coming months, as part of the events to mark the Year of Natural Scotland.





## **Gartmore After School Club**

**3.15pm-5.15pm**

**in**

## **Gartmore Primary School**

Starting with a snack and juice to restore energy after a hard day at school, we offer a whole range of activities for children including arts/crafts, baking and sports in a 'home from home' environment.

The cost of regular sessions is £6.00 per child per 2 hour session.

Pre-school children aged over 4 years are now welcome to join the club.

Ad-hoc contracts have been introduced to allow you to use the club when required if a contracted weekly session is not required.

We can offer a taxi subsidy for two or more children travelling to Gartmore Primary School from surrounding local schools.

For more information or a registration form,  
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[gpschoolclub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gpschoolclub@hotmail.co.uk)

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Forestry Commission Scotland

## Cowal & Trossachs Forest District

January  
2014

# WILDLIFE NEWSLETTER

All is quiet in our broad-leaved woodlands, just the gentle patter of rain on the leaves carpeting the ground and the wind whispering quietly through the bare branches of the trees. But life is there, waiting for the sun to warm the visible green leaves and the daylight hours to increase, before growth once more starts and nature's year begins.



Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) has distinctive trefoil leaves which at night are folded back into a tent; during the day, they flatten out again. The white flowers have five petals and tiny purple veins; they also close as the light fades, reopening in the dappled sun. The fresh green leaves of Wood-sorrel form distinctive clumps in woodlands and shady hedgerows, often growing from the moss on fallen logs. Rising from these cushions, the delicate flowers hang on tiny stems, blooming around Easter time and giving rise to its popular European name of 'Alleluia'. The leaves are pleasantly bitter & refreshing to eat, but contain oxalic acid so should not be devoured in excess, though they were used in salads and in cooking up until Henry VIII's time when French Sorrel became more popular with its larger leaves and better flavour.

This fern, Common Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*) which is often found growing on old trees, walls and rocks, has several other names, of which sweet fern, wood liquorice and adder's fern are just a few. It is a delicate perennial fern with its fronds growing to about 30cms in length. Rather than growing in a clump, or shuttlecock as many of our other British ferns, this has a creeping rhizome and the fronds rise up singly from this. The Greeks and Romans made preparations from this fern to use as a mild laxative and herbalists used the dried and powdered rhizome to expel tapeworm. However, the rhizome has also been prized since ancient times for its liquorice flavour and was used in confectionaries such as nougat. In 1971 a saponin was found in the roots, which makes it 500 times sweeter than sugar by weight. In this photograph polypody is growing on the bark of an old oak tree, a common haunt in Strathard.



This fungus, Birch Polypore or Razor Strop (*Piptoporus betulinus*) is a large wood rotting bracket fungus specific to birch. As soon as a birch tree dies, this fungus is likely to appear causing rapid decay of the trunk and branches 'Otzi' the ice man, found in a glacier in the Alps in 1991 and believed to have died around 4000BC, had some of this fungus in his pouch. It has been suggested that he was carrying this for medicinal purposes because research has shown that the bracket has antibacterial properties. An example of how our ancestor's knowledge was much more sophisticated than we might have believed. Barbers also used to 'strop' or sharpen their cut-throat razors on tough leathery strips cut from the surface of this fungus. Strips have also been used like sticking plasters and to staunch blood.

Please email any sightings to [jane.jones@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:jane.jones@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) Many thanks!!!

## Inversnaid Reserve



Well after a period of missing articles caused by ineptitude (mine) rather than necessity, I find myself playing catch-up, and checking where I last left the story. A lot has passed since last Spring, not least the completion of our deer fence, which adjoins onto neighbouring Forestry Commission ground. At just under 7km over difficult terrain, it was huge undertaking, but one that was completed with few hitches. Around 100 hectares of natural woodland is being planted within this fence, with another 50 hectares left to grow through natural regeneration.

If you are walking in this area and you see an open gate on the deer fence, can you please close it. There is almost no situation where the gates should be left open, and no one will be mad at you for doing this. We have already had numerous cases of gates being left open and deer getting inside. This causes the deer stress and leaves us with the problem of getting the deer back out (often through culling). This goes for the gates at the deer grids also. For anyone interested to see what the site will be like eventually, I would recommend walking up our glen to the old enclosure. It is a couple of km up the glen, and very obvious due to the young trees. This 24 hectare section was planted with scots pine around 15 years ago, but is also full of other species which have come up naturally with the removal of browsing pressure. It is full of life in the spring on an otherwise quiet hill

If anyone would like more information on our plans for the site, or you just want to chat, you can contact me at [fraser.lamont@rspb.org.uk](mailto:fraser.lamont@rspb.org.uk)

See you on the reserve, Fraser

Fraser Lamont  
RSPB Inversnaid Warden.

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## Maid of the Loch is poster perfect

To celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous Maid of the Loch paddle steamer, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park has launched a limited edition railway style poster and postcard featuring the Maid, with iconic Ben Lomond in the background. The National Park has donated a number of the posters to Loch Lomond Steamship Company, the charitable trust who currently owns the vessel, to help raise funds towards restoration work.

Philip Preston, Chairman for Loch Lomond Steamship Company said: "We are delighted with the poster, it looks fantastic and is a great way to mark the Diamond Anniversary. The poster and postcards will be sold in our shop onboard the Maid with funds going directly to restoration."

Tony McInnes, Head of Visitor Experience for the National Park said "The Maid of the Loch is a landmark on Loch Lomond and the new poster represents it well. We're pleased to be able to make the contribution to Loch Lomond Steamship Company and hope it boosts their fundraising efforts".

Posters and postcards are available to buy on the National Park website [www.lochlomond-trossachs.org](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org) or onboard the Maid of the Loch at Balloch Pier.

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# The Garden

## in early spring



Writing this in late January there is still a lot of potential for winter to happen properly, which it hasn't yet. Plenty of wind and rain so far but only a handful of frosty nights. A few good hard frosts wouldn't be a bad thing to keep some of the pests under control. So regardless so what any forecasters say don't take a chance with the weather; it's time to wrap up warm and get out into the garden now, if you haven't been doing so already that is!

### In The Garden

Get the loppers and secateurs or chain saw out and prune back any broken branches, restake trees if necessary and if hedges have been pushed over too far think about renovation pruning.

While you've got the loppers or pruning saw to hand, carry out any work on apple and pear trees before they come into leaf (while you can still see the branch network); opening up the canopy will enhance air circulation and reduce the chance of fungal disease. But don't be tempted to tackle any of the *Prunus* species (plums and gages – stone fruits) until in leaf. All the fruit trees will benefit from a high potash feed; wood ash is excellent.

Autumn fruiting Raspberries should be cut back to the ground now and new canes planted. And established blackcurrants should have a quarter of the old stems cut to the ground. Also plant other fruit bushes and trees – some may still be available as bare root plants.

February/March is an important time for pruning in the ornamental garden too; prune roses - bushes and especially climbers – cut back ornamental grasses, and prune summer flowering deciduous shrubs such as *Buddleia*. Prune late-flowering clematis to a low pair of strong buds. Trim the tops of winter flowering heathers and there is still time to lift and divide snowdrops "in the green". Start to control slugs and snails now even if you can't see them; starting now may save a lot of damage later on. If you use slug pellets, apply a scattering every few weeks.

The lawn should show signs of growth soon. If there is debris/leaves around clear it off, check that the mower is in good working order and when the weather turns milder be ready to apply a spring feed &/or moss killer.

### Bird Care

Hopefully you've all been looking after the birds all winter so far, but it's not nearly time to ease up on the feeding yet as there's still plenty of time for a further spell of harsh weather. Continue to make sure they have something to eat and unfrozen water to drink and bathe in; obviously it is time for the birds to be thinking about nesting so cut back any deciduous hedges before they start and put up/clean out a bird box or two.

In the **greenhouse** or shed there is plenty to do. Firstly make sure everything is clean including the windows to maximize light levels early in the year. Then get busy with your seed sowing – sow sweetpeas and root crops in modules to avoid root disturbance on planting out; basil, tomatoes and others in a heated propagator. Plant up lily bulbs in containers for making a splash of colour wherever you fancy in the summer.

On warm days keep the greenhouse well ventilated. And keep a good eye-out for aphids – controlling them now will save a lot of effort later in the year.

**Houseplants** can be repotted now so they grow away well for the rest of the year. This includes many **orchids**; assuming they have finished flowering and before they put on new growth, if they have not been repotted for a couple of years think about doing it now. If you're not confident to tackle this job yourself bring them in

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## National Park

In many ways 2014 is set, we are told, to be a momentous year given that we will be hosting a number of major events such as the Commonwealth Games, the Ryder Cup, 700th anniversary of Bannockburn and the Homecoming. And, of course, we will have the Referendum in September. But what would really make it a momentous year for me is if somehow we could see a litter free National Park. Is it possible? Keep Scotland Beautiful is calling for all of us to help. Clearly making sure that we are not dropping litter ourselves will help but we all know that getting the message across so that everyone is aware of the damage litter is doing both to the environment and to the tourism economy is a long educational process. In the meantime Keep Scotland is looking for more of us to join the 70,000 volunteers who helped in clean-ups across Scotland last year. If you feel you could help please contact [www.cleanupscotland.com](http://www.cleanupscotland.com) The tourism industry is a major contributor to the economic welling of Scotland and the search is always on for ways to help it to grow, not necessarily in the numbers of visitors but certainly in the amount people spend when they are here. One way of encouraging that is to make sure that there are reasons for people to stop in an area and not just past through. Borrowing from a idea used in Scandinavia the Scottish Government is promoting the Scenic Routes Initiative over the next ten years and our National Park has been fortunate in receiving funding to spearhead the project. After a competition three sculpture designs were selected for viewpoints adjoining trunk road routes through the Park. The idea being that the structures will be a further encouragement to visit the Park but more importantly will see them stay longer in the area. It is hoped to have installations in place at viewing points at Loch Lubnaig on the A84 and at The Falls of Falloch and Inveruglas on the A82 before the 2014 season starts. And we all know that a dry summer has a major influence on visitor numbers. Will we have another? Reluctant as I am to do a long range forecast I am persuaded that the signs are good. Our annual rainfall is pretty consistent with the only uncertainty being when during the year it will arrive. Last year we were heading for the driest year on record until the rains started at the end of October and saw us return to the yearly average by Christmas. With January this year continuing the wet spell the chances of a dry summer seems more likely. The Community Council has been helping with the review of the Local Development Plan in preparation for the adoption of an updated Plan in 2015. Under consideration is where, in view of the flooding issue and the nature of the terrain in the area, it would be possible to develop. If you own or know of any sites which could be included in the Local Development Plan please contact Stuart Mearns at National Park HQ. The Convener of National Park is elected for a three year term of office by and from the Park Board. The current term of office ends in March and consequently we will be having an election at our Board Meeting on 17th February. In June we will be having the elections for the Local Members who serve for a four year stint. I will let you of more details on that election in the next issue of the Strathard News.

Owen McKee.

As always I can be contacted as follows:

Post: Taigh Na Bhuth, Lochearnhead, FK19 8PR

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email: [owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:owen@thevillageshop.fsbusiness.co.uk)



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Initial work on a large-scale outdoor events field in Stirling is progressing, with drainage improvements well underway.

Stirling Council's Environment Services has carried out work to level the surface of the field and improve the drainage system. There are also plans to plough and reseed the field before the summer. The outdoor events field will be used for the Armed Forces Day National Event in June and the International Angling Festival in August. It is located in the former Royal Park beneath Stirling Castle.

Stirling's Provost Mike Robbins inspected the area with council officers today (Thursday 6th February).

Provost Robbins said: "The Council recently gained local control of the land from the Crown Estate. Our long-term aim is to maximise its potential and create a space that will become part of the Stirling 2014 legacy.

"I'm delighted with the initial improvement work that has taken place so far and would like to acknowledge the council officers who are working hard to have it ready for some of the exciting events lined up this year.

"From the Armed Forces Day National Event, to Bannockburn Live and the International Angling Festival, there really will be something for everyone in Stirling in 2014. We're looking forward to welcoming visitors from across Stirling, Scotland, the UK and indeed the world to this beautiful and historic location."

As part of the improvement works, there are also plans to improve pedestrian and vehicular access in the area.

The outdoor events field will have an estimated capacity of more than 50,000 people for the Armed Forces Day National Event in June.

## Are you in danger of losing your home or looking for other housing options?

Do you know someone who is?

If so, Stirling Council and Stirling Advice Partnership will be providing free confidential housing options and financial wellbeing advice in Callander Local

Office on the following dates:

Thursday 20th February  
 Thursday 27th February  
 Thursday 6th March  
 Thursday 13th March  
 Thursday 20th March  
 Thursday 27th March

There's no need to make an appointment. Simply drop-in anytime between 9.30am and 12.30pm to speak to trained advisers. If you need further help they will point you in the right direction.

For an informal discussion about the advice we can provide contact Louise  
 Tel: 01786 237900 e-mail: vilumsl@stirling.gov.uk.

## Your Views Matter

Are you a council tenant interested in local housing issues?  
 Do you want to have an impact on future housing issues?  
 Do you want to contribute to improving housing services?

If the answer is yes to any of these, then you might want to get involved with Tenant Participation. There are many ways to get involved, from setting up a tenants group to becoming a Tenants Voice for your area. You can participate as much or as little as you like. The decision is entirely yours.

Tenant participation is key if Stirling Council is to meet specific housing needs, as your landlord they need to hear from you, because as tenants you are at the heart of the community.

Every council tenant has the right to influence housing services to ensure that with their input, decisions can be reached that are effective, fair and reasonable. Tenant Participation is a continuous and evolving process, but needs support from both tenants and landlords alike. So if you are interested then please call or email Emma Meldrum and we can discuss how you would like to get involved.

Emma Meldrum

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In the absence of the Interim Moderator as he treks round Ethiopia I write this article with a great deal of relief. At the Sunday service on 19th January the Rev Terry Ann Taylor was unanimously elected to fill the vacant charge. Terry and her husband Graham are joining us having served the parish of Broxburn for the last eight years. They have three grown up children and are doting grandparents. As the date for the Induction Service has still to be confirmed please check the local noticeboards and the Stirling Observer. Our next service of Holy Communion will be held jointly at the Port Kirk on Sunday, 2 March at 10.30am. It will be followed by a Soup and Sandwich lunch when the members of both congregations can socialise together as we work towards a new beginning. During the first week of March the Moderator of the Church of Scotland is visiting Stirling Presbytery and we are excited that she will be here in the Strathard area on the afternoon of Friday, 7 March. A light lunch is planned in Kinlochard Village Hall to which members of the community are invited. It would be appreciated if those interested could let me know or add their name to lists which will be available in the Post Offices. Following her lunch she will then make a visit to the recently renovated David Marshall Lodge, now called the Lodge.

Janet MacCallum  
Session Clerk  
01877 382677

## The maze of life.

You may recall Black Wednesday in 1992 when the British Government was forced to withdraw the pound sterling from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. A few years earlier in October 1987 Black Monday occurred, when stock markets around the world crashed, shedding huge values within a short time.

I knew nothing though of Blue Monday which this year was on the 20th January. According to psychiatrists the day will be for many the most depressing of their year. Apart from being a Monday and doubtless a wet and gloomy one, it is apparently the most likely day upon which New Year Resolutions, concocted in the heady atmosphere of a New Year's Eve, flounder. The promise of a 'dry' January with nothing more than a bottle of mineral water at ones elbow becomes unbearable. The sight of five or more green vegetables on the dining table as part of a healthy lifestyle is too much to contemplate. The thought of turning out to the gym, let alone mounting its implements of torture is distasteful: thus the standing order for membership is sheepishly cancelled. How then was Blue Monday for you?

The fact remains that a New Year, resolutions or no, marks another step upon the path of life. Where will the path of life take us in 2014? The answer is of course that we do not know. It may prove to be a straight and easy journey, but alas for most, negotiating a way through life is like walking a maze.

Speaking of which, have you ever visited the maze at Hampton Court? The palace is located upstream of central London on the River Thames and built in the 16th century. King William III towards the end of the following century embarked upon a massive rebuilding and expansion project in the hope that Hampton Court might rival the French Versailles: it never did. No grand house of the time was complete without a maze and thus King William set to with a will, planting one that covered a third of an acre with half a mile of paths.

'Three Men in a Boat', is a nineteenth century account by the writer Jerome K. Jerome of a boating holiday by himself and two friends on the River Thames. Their boat passes Hampton Court and the three alight to view the palace. Jerome suggests to his companions "We'll just go into the maze, so that we can say we've been, but it's very simple. You keep on taking the first turning to the right. We'll just walk round for ten minutes, and then go and get some lunch."

The three kept on turning to the right, but it seemed a long way, and his companions began to suppose that after all it was a very big maze. Jerome began to think it rather strange himself, but said nothing until, at last, they passed the remains of a penny bun squashed on the ground that he had noticed at least half an hour ago'.

So despite our desire for a straight and uncomplicated life journey, we may find like the three men it otherwise. So it was thoughtful of King William to provide his maze with a number of seats to assist those wishing to stop, sit and ponder the way out. Perhaps we might too rest upon an imaginary seat for a while?

When David Livingstone ventured into darkest Africa he didn't blunder on blindly. Daily he used a compass and sextant but before this he knelt in prayer. 'I trust' he prayed 'that thou will direct my way' Prayer is one means of guidance guide forward and another scripture reading. Look sometime at the closing words of St Matthew's gospel 'Behold I am with you until the end of time' and the promise given by Christ in St John's Gospel that 'I am the way the truth and the life'.

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown. And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way." So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

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## Scottish Wildlife trust

In December Dave Anderson, FCS Conservation Manager and member of the Scottish Raptor Group, spoke on the benefits of modern camera and tracking technology for research into the lives of Scottish birds of prey. Cameras not only allow identification of individuals by reading coloured leg rings and wing tags, but also provide previously unavailable information on behaviour. Early efforts using a cable to a video recorder gave ~1 day's recording but today's cameras can be left in place for a week while satellite tags can deliver live information from migrating birds. Cameras on osprey nests in the Trossachs identified females from Sutherland and the Black Isle while one ringed in Central Scotland nested in Wales. Food sources can also be recorded: a rare powan in a Trossachs nest must have been carried 10 miles while a Cowal nest had local flounders and mullet. Such information is often used in debates on the impact of raptors eg if rabbits are in short supply, buzzards have been shown to take small mammals such as moles and shrews rather than game birds. A link has also been recorded between lack of development of golden eagle chicks when only small items of prey are available. Cameras trained on carcasses of wild animals have shown the importance of this food source to many species: golden eagles, sea eagles, ravens, crows, foxes, pine marten and badgers! Night videos have unexpectedly shown eagles, buzzards and peregrines feeding along with a pine marten removing lining from an eagle's nest and a fox cleaning up a plucking post! If anyone missed this excellent talk there is a second opportunity on 4 Feb, 7:30pm, Raploch Community Centre, run by Stirling SWT group.

In January we were taken overseas by Paul Barr who told of his experiences of Wildlife Policing in Nepal with Rangers in Chitwan NP. This opportunity was funded under the Interpolled Operation Prey, conducted across Bhutan, China, India and Nepal and targeting the illicit trade in Asian big cats and their derivatives. Paul's 2012 2-week review of current practices in Nepal, supported the aim to co-ordinate and develop international law enforcement best practices. Involvement of Interpol, World Wildlife Fund and the Nepal Police Central Investigation Bureau of Wildlife Crime Unit emphasises the high priority of the project but increased resources, including IT systems, will be needed. Nepal sits in a strategic position on trade routes between India, Tibet and China. Poaching of tigers is one of the most publicised wildlife crimes, reducing numbers from 100,000 to ~3000 over the past 100 years. Government targets are to double this by 2022. All parts of the tiger are of high value: skins for decoration and symbols of power, with the rest for traditional Asian medicines. With rhinos only the horn is of value but poaching reduced numbers from 800 in 1950 to 100 in 1966. Conservation efforts have achieved a rise to 503 in 2011. However, the wider trade includes many birds, mammals and reptiles; eg musk deer glands sell for ~£560 each (~8 times a professional monthly salary). Unbelievably, 2 lorry-loads of fur from 5000 endangered Tibetan chiru antelope, used for very fine shatoosh shawls, was worth \$38million!! Phase I of Operation Prey led to nearly 40 arrests and the seizure of big cat skins, rhino horns, ivory and sea horses, in addition to flora such as protected orchid and cactus plants. Such cross-border operations are essential to stop profit-making from these despicable crimes, but how is the education of end-users being addressed to eradicate the driving demand?

Lesley Hawkins

## District Heating Schemes

District Heating Schemes: the cheaper, greener alternative With heating and power costs placing an ever increasing burden on business budgets, organisations throughout the public, private and third sector are invited to find out how wood-fuelled District Heating schemes could save them money – and generate income. District Heating schemes make use of renewable energy sources and low-carbon technologies to supply heat via hot water to a number of buildings through a pre-insulated network of underground pipes. This means that they benefit from the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), which provides a guaranteed, index-linked payment for 20 years for the production of renewable heat. A free workshop is being staged at The Royal Hotel, Bridge of Allan, next month (11 March) by Forestry Commission Scotland's Regional Woodfuel Forum, in association with REHAU Ltd. Virginia Harden Scott, who is organising the event, said: "Wood-fuelled district heating schemes are growing in popularity across Scotland, whether it's for a handful of buildings on farm steadings or for hundreds of homes in urban areas. A great example is the Wick district heating development, which - fuelled with wood chips from a local wood supply - delivers heating to around 200 homes in addition to a nearby public performance venue, and provides steam to Old Pulteney distillery. There are also plans for future expansion of the scheme. "This approach to heating is an effective way of making the most of our heat resources and can result in dramatic energy efficiency improvements. Our event will outline how, with careful planning and management, organisations can benefit from wood-fuelled district heating – by reducing heat spend and generating income under the RHI, enhancing business sustainability, reducing CO2 emissions and boosting green credentials. "It's a very flexible technology that can be applied to almost any situation. Its ideal for housing associations, social housing landlords, farms and estates, public and third sector bodies, educational establishments and other community and commercial organisations. It's also an ideal system for landlords looking to deliver affordable warmth to tenants in off-gas grid areas, helping to alleviate local fuel poverty. "There is ample opportunity for more of these systems to be developed elsewhere throughout the country and our workshop will be a valuable opportunity to hear from industry experts on the best ways to plan, design, install, finance and manage woodfuelled district heating systems."

The workshop will run from 10.00 until 15.10 and will include an opportunity to visit a District Heating scheme managed by Link Housing. Places at the workshop are limited so to book your place, call Virginia Harden Scott on 07919 263 190 or email [virginia.harden@ruraldevelopment.org.uk](mailto:virginia.harden@ruraldevelopment.org.uk) For more information visit the 'EVENTS' section at [www.usewoodfuel.co.uk](http://www.usewoodfuel.co.uk)

# First detailed map of Scotlands Woods



First detailed map of Scotland's native woodlands Environment Minister, Paul Wheelhouse, today (Monday 3 February) unveiled Scotland's first complete map and dataset of native woodlands – the result of an eight year Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS) carried out by Forestry Commission Scotland. Thought to be the most comprehensive habitat survey project ever carried out in the UK and possibly the first example of its kind in Europe, the survey

results include details on the location, type, extent, composition and condition of all native woodlands, and plantations on ancient woodland sites, over 0.5ha in size. Speaking at the launch event, Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for the Environment and Climate Change said: "This survey - unique in terms of its depth, scope and focus - has for the first time given us a detailed, authoritative picture of a vitally important element of Scotland's 'Natural Capital'. "For example, the survey found that over 22.5 per cent (311,153ha) of Scotland's forests are native woodland - with 42 per cent of these being in the Highlands - and that 46% of native woodland is in satisfactory condition for biodiversity. While we have no comparable historic data to compare with the survey, the survey findings suggest that over the past 40 years we have lost a significant amount of ancient woodland in the uplands, and the survey has shown that the most widespread threat to native woodland health and regeneration is excessive browsing and grazing, mainly by deer. "Much has been done over the past 30 years to reverse centuries' worth of damage but – clearly – there is still much to do. With the NWSS, we now have an invaluable tool to assist local authorities, NGOs, land owners and managers to work independently – and together - to more effectively focus resources on managing, maintaining, enhancing and expanding native woodlands across Scotland and we know that already, since the data were collected, a further 7,800 ha of native trees have been planted. "Eight years in the making, this dataset is a remarkable achievement. I would encourage anyone involved in land and woodland management to make use of the NWSS data and consider ways of working with the Commission to develop further applications of it."

This unique, free-to-access dataset can be used for a wide range of purposes – from informing national policy to more local, strategic uses, including: • strategic planning for areas such as national parks, local authorities, river catchments or habitat networks; • development planning and control; • environmental assessments; • targeting incentives for management; • management planning for individual woodlands; • assessing potential exposure to tree pests and disease threats As well as being available in an online dataset and summarized in national, local and regional reports, the NWSS includes a series of general information films about native woodland types. Educational tools are being developed, which can be used in the Curriculum for Excellence (Levels 4 and 5) to teach the next generation about the biodiversity value of this environmental asset. The Commission's Biodiversity Policy Adviser, Gordon Patterson, who has overseen the delivery of the NWSS, said: "The project gives us a firm evidence base for making decisions about managing this vital resource for the benefit of everyone. It can also be used to help predict and monitor the effects of pressures such as climate change. "An example of the value of the data was when we made use of it in November 2012 to quickly identify where in Scotland there were ash areas that needed to be checked for the presence of Ash dieback. The fact that we completed that survey in a remarkable five days illustrates the value - and potential additional applications – of this information."

For more information about the NWSS – and to find out about training and access – visit [www.forestry.gov.uk/NWSS](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/NWSS) Additional Quotes: Duncan Stone, SNH's Land Use Policy and Advice Manager, said: 'This survey is a terrific piece of work, the sustained effort of many people, and contains a lot of valuable information. The analysis showing loss and poor condition in some of these wonderful woods is a serious cause for concern, and emphasizes the need for a renewed effort from land managers and government to reverse this decline. "However, as well as illustrating some problems, the survey is itself part of the solution; it's an enormously valuable tool to help us manage our native woodlands – for example, by helping to target support schemes or to plan land management changes in smarter ways."



Consult  
*Constance*

*Dear Constance,*

Q: Here's a problem for you. If the area of a triangle can be calculated by constructing rectangles around it and I have chosen one side to be the base of the triangle and defined the altitude to be the perpendicular distance of the third vertex of the triangle to the base -then why can't I play the triangle in my local orchestra? Or am I looking at the wrong book?

Musical Mystery: Callander

A: Hmm. Perhaps your construction of rectangles is impeding the tone of the triangle. But, maybe there is a deeper problem - you have not explained just why you have not been admitted to the orchestra. Are you a nutter? Just saying and it is something you should consider. Or at the very least try another instrument -perhaps a recorder -well maybe not, wouldn't like to see you at the local court through a misunderstanding!

Q: Don't know if you have any children, Constance, but perhaps you can advise. My daughter is getting married and the costs are extortionate -dresses, taxis, reception, invitations, never mind the cost of childcare for the kids she decided to have out of wedlock. Frankly, between you and me, I will be glad to see her go! I am just a working class man with shallow pockets. My wife wants to spend, spend, spend. I don't. What do I do?

Frugal: Killearn

A: My late husband was of the same mind as you. When my daughter got married, he carried her on his back behind the Rolls Royce going to the church, just to save £250! Not sure why, though -led to his ultimate demise. But I digress -you should take his example and consider similar cost cutting measures. This little slice of gossip may provide comfort - I have it on good authority from reliable sources close to the happy couple, that if the royals had not coughed up the dough for posh transport, poor little Kate would have been on her Daddy's back all the way to Westminster Abbey. And in front of all the cameras too!



# KORE KICKBOXING

*Over 14's Only*

K1 Kickboxing is a relatively recent sport which is rapidly growing in Scotland. It is a sport which combines both western boxing and eastern martial arts such as Taekwondo & Thai boxing (Boxing Techniques combined with Martial Art Kicks).

The sport is popular with both women and men and promotes fitness, weight-loss, increased flexibility, and self-defence. The Kickboxing class's routines vary but work out is always intense. Classes include warm-up and strengthening exercises, stretching and rigorous routines of technique practice, pad-work, and free sparring.

You don't have to be fit to join! First time students will be eased in with basic techniques and allowed to progress at the level and pace they feel comfortable with. Anyone can come to a class to take a look before they participate to get an idea what the training involves.



Kore Kicboxing



korekickboxing.com



07813 884202 (Neil)

**Balfron Campus Sports Complex**  
**Monday & Thursday**  
**8pm to 9.30pm**

The class has been established for many years in Balfron, coached by Instructor Neil Buchanan 4th Degree Blackbelt who is an experienced coach and international fighter.



*Sean & Tony*



*Callander Highland Games*



*Locals Erin & Mairi*



**LOOKING TO GET FIT? TRY KICKBOXING**



## THE INTERNET

All of us currently live in age that offers a vast range of communication options, the extent of which will surely increase as technology continues to advance at a seemingly alarming rate. Indeed, the choices presently available could already be reckoned to border on stratospheric proportions. The question this month is... How will this effect us, as a populace, and will we be able to cope with the possible implications?

On the positive side, there can be no denying that certain sectors of society, comprising specifically of the medically impaired and the elderly, benefit greatly through the ability to connect with immediate family, and impart information to the likes of the Emergency services.

The capacity for ex-patriots to touch base with friends across the world, either through type or visual association, within a matter of seconds, can certainly be considered a massive breakthrough. We could also adhere to the notion 'search engines' offer an outlet to improve our education on a huge scale. Meanwhile, there definitely exists inordinate scope for traders and companies to take advantage of the massive potential available on a global scale, by way of creating websites to advertise their business, or product.

There are many negative angles to consider, however. Sadly, for one thing, there appears to be a percentage of individuals increasingly willing to misuse the facility, in the form of projecting ill-advised personal comments on the various social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook, believing they are impervious to censorship, through a chronic lack of governance. As a consequence, this has led to several incidents in recent memory involving young people suffering from such a state of confusion and neglect, by way of interactive bullying, that they have been driven to take their own lives. There are also increasingly frequent reports to be found of individuals being criminalised through political and racist comments.

Taking it to another level, there is free access to extremist websites, where you can view such things as recordings of beheadings of human beings who have displeased the drug cartel factions in Mexico, or the skinning alive of cats and dogs by Chinese fur traders. If it is your pleasure, you can also check out some child pornography, images of war atrocities, or even how to make your own bomb. Overall, it would appear to me there is an indoctrination process of sorts currently taking place. Traditional forms of communication, as in the sending of written letters and postcards, for instance, will become a thing of the past, in the course of time. It may also be possible that bookshops will start to close through the advent of the 'tablet'. As we become ever more reliant on our laptops and state of the art mobile phones, my thoughts are that this current generation is in danger of reneging basic ideals such as face to face conversation, in favour of texting or e-mailing on our various gadgets. I feel sure that this has not escaped the notice of anyone aware of this nuance. You need only stroll down any street, in any town, to observe people of all ages and persuasions walking in a strange Zombie like fashion, with a phone seemingly cemented to their earhole, head down, talking loudly, and totally oblivious to anything that is happening within their immediate surrounds.

To the owners of these 'instruments', it appears especially convenient if they receive a call in company, or in a crowded area, exuding an aura of self-importance, in the process. Further, can there possibly be anything more rude, or annoying, both in a personal or professional capacity, when someone announces 'that they have to take this call'?

There should also be concerns over the continued use of computer slang and abbreviated 'speak' in text messages which effectively only serves to bastardise the English Language. There are those who seem excited by this aspect, thinking it to be 'cool'. This is an utter nonsense of course, and a huge folly, to be sure.

As we continue our headlong mass encroachment towards the easier (lazy?) option of ordering goods from the comfort of our computer desks, health issues in society will also escalate, whereby obesity levels, for instance, will surely become a serious problem. This, in effect, is an ugly extension of the 'couch potato/ T.V. dinner' scenario, which has been simmering in society for some decades.

The resultant preference to deal with the conglomerates online will certainly put increasing pressure on local traders to compete for business, which can already be highlighted by the alarming rate of High Street shop closures of late. This will inevitably lead to a reduction of staffing levels and the downsizing of personal services in favour of automated-recorded messages, when seeking a response to an enquiry. I grew up in an age devoid of technology, where straightforward pleasures and traditional family values were adequate requirements for a content and happy environment. It irks me, therefore, to realise this simple ideal has somehow been lost in the scheme of things, as we continue to bow to the advertising 'Gods', who would have us walking around reliant on a rucksack full of appliances to get us through the day.

On the back of Christmas, the aficionados amongst us will have succumbed to the 'best buys' on offer to ensure a sense of credibility, which have assuredly led to secular gatherings in expensive coffee shops around the globe to discuss and compare the latest innovations.

By example, stark contrasts can be realised by the well-recorded level of massive queues all over the world to acquire the latest edition of the 'Grand Theft Auto' video game. This slightly disconcerting hysteria flies in the face of the recent plight of the people of the Philippines, who are also lining up in droves. The difference being, they are simply seeking a bowl of rice, or glass of water, in order to survive. Perhaps, after our bloated festive dinner we should have remembered to send a message of support. Or maybe we were to busy on our I-Phones arranging a meeting to discuss when then the next meeting will take place.

David Dimly.

I would stress that all you have read is only one person's opinion. At the same time, it is designed to invoke response and debate. If you have any thoughts on this article, please forward them in your own chosen fashion, either electronically, or by the old fashioned way, in the form of a letter. Letters are good.

## Not here.....but near!

### Callander Ramblers' Diary

#### February 2014

Wed 5th 9:30am Ramble: Leny Lime Quarry (6 miles) - contact 01877 331621

Sat 15th 8:30am Hill: West Lomond (522m) - contact 01577 862799

Wed 26th 9:30am Stroll: Leannoch Loop (5 miles) - contact 01877 376236

#### March

Wed 5th 9:30am Stroll: In and around Airth (6 miles) - contact 01877 330446

We meet in Ancaster Square, unless otherwise indicated. Bring wet weather clothing, appropriate footwear and a packed lunch. Please let the contact know if you plan to join the walk. Non-members welcome.

### The National Trust for Scotland

The National Trust for Scotland has a Stirling Members' Centre (Registered Charity SC 025499) which provides talks for Members and their friends in the region during the winter and outings to places of interest in the summer. This summer, the trips we have planned are:- Burrell Collection and Pollok House on 10th April 2014, Paxton House, Berwickshire on 8th May 2014, Bo'ness Railway and the Helix Project (The Kelpies) on 17th July 2014, Abbotsford House, Melrose on 13th August 2014, and The National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh on 17th September 2014.

If you are interested in becoming a member (YEAR OF JOINING TILL 1st OCT FREE!), and in any of the above trips, please contact either Neil Pollock - Tel: 01786 841778, Sandy & Margaret Moreland - Tel: 01259 761700, or see website [www.spanglefish.com/ntsstirling](http://www.spanglefish.com/ntsstirling) for further information.



### ITV's Brand New Entertainment Show NEEDS YOU!!

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For more information:

EMAIL: [entertainyou@stv.tv](mailto:entertainyou@stv.tv)

Follow us on Twitter: [@EntertainYouTV](https://twitter.com/EntertainYouTV)

[stvproductions](http://www.stvproductions.com)

### Scottish Wildlife Trust, Callander Members' Centre

*Diary February 2014*

*11 February: 'Poo & Plastic: Threats to Scottish Marine Life' by Matt Barnes, Marine Conservation UK*

*11 March: Wildlife Reintroductions by Johnny Hughes, SWT Director of conservation*

*All talks held in the back room of the Waverley Hotel, Main Street, Callander at 7:30pm Admission £2 members, £2.50 non-members, free to full-time students, includes tea/coffee & biscuits.*

### 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.

## Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

The hall has never been busier....here's what's on offer



Monday			
Tuesday	Aberfoyle Fitness – circuits Dance Connection	9.30-10.30 3.45-8.45pm	Alison Woods 07548677540 Carla Duggan 07815146462
Wednesday	Toddler Group Country Dancing	10-12pm 7.30-9.30pm	Cindy 07886511894 John Epps 01877 382276
Thursday	Aberfoyle Fitness – Aerobics, strength & tone Karate For All ages	10-11am 6.30-9pm	Alison Woods 07548677540 Julie Glen 01877 382296

**Available to hire for meetings, parties, etc. Hourly hire charges from £7.50. For information and booking enquiries 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.

## Balfon & 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 Balfon and Callander. Excess waste and bulky household items, including fridges and freezers and furniture, can also be disposed of at the HWRCs.

## Book Club

Contact James Kennedy 01877 387201

## Community Choir

Contact Jim Lightbody  
aultwhur@hotmail.co.uk

## COMMITTEE & CONTACTS

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## IMPORTANT Information For Advertisers

When you place an advert with the Strathard News we will continue to run it unless you tell us to stop or replace it.

**To place/cancel an advert**  
contact

Ian Marshall on 01877 382211  
advertising@strathardnews.com

**For design/alter an advert**  
contact

Laura McLean  
design@strathardnews.com

Full page advert £100  
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**GREAT GIFT IDEA!**

## Strathard News Subscription

**Never miss an issue!**

Why not have the newsletter delivered to you for the next year for only £12.

If you wish to take out an annual subscription please complete the information below. The completed form should be posted to The Treasurer, Strathard News, Innis Ard, Manse Road, Aberfoyle FK8 3XF along with a cheque for £12 made payable to Strathard News. Alternatively, hand in to Aberfoyle Post Office.

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Your subscription will start with Issue 83



We have now started rehearsing!

These are exciting programmes: For March, we have started work on the Mozart Requiem.

We are still recruiting, and if you think you would like to join us, come along to a rehearsal – though let us know first by contacting:

**Ken Allen: 01360550415;**  
kenallen12@btinternet.com

We rehearse on **Monday evenings at 7.30pm in Balfon Kirk.** We'd love to see you there.

Follow us on FaceBook and at  
www.strathendricksingers.org.uk



# Black Bull

HOTEL, GARTMORE



- Rooms
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- Real Ale
- Pool Room
- Live Sport

*FREE function room*

There is no hire charge for our function room which comfortably accommodates up to 80. Ideal for all kinds of celebrations and gatherings. Our 'Red Room' is perfect for groups of up to 16 and the Function Room is a great venue for larger groups. We'll arrange your karaoke, disco or live music.

*FREE transport!*

Free transport to and from the Black Bull for parties of four or more. Just call us and we'll arrange your transport.



**Bar:**

Monday to Friday from 5pm.  
Saturday / Sunday from 1pm

**Restaurant:**

Mondays & Tuesday Bookings only.  
Wednesday - Friday 5:30 - 8:30  
Saturday and Sunday: 1pm - 8:30

**From Friday March 7th,  
come along to our coffee morning  
every Friday from 10:30am**

Contact us on 01877 382 225  
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