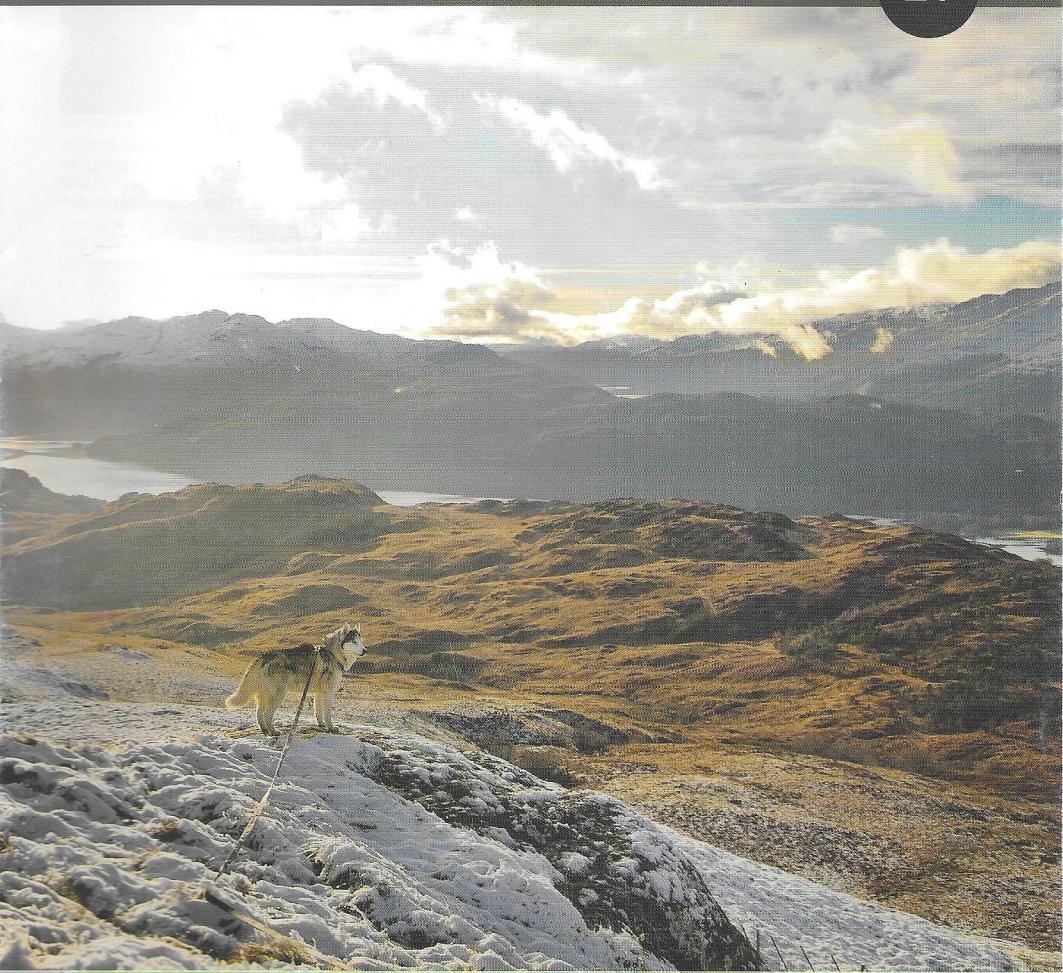


STRATHARD NEWS

Issue 106 | Winter 2018

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Sarcococca confusa (right image)
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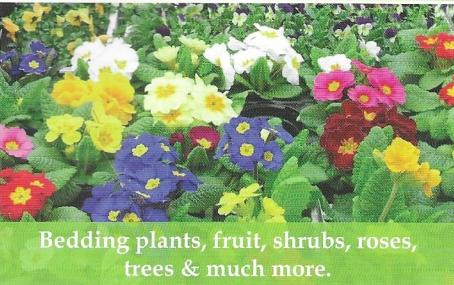


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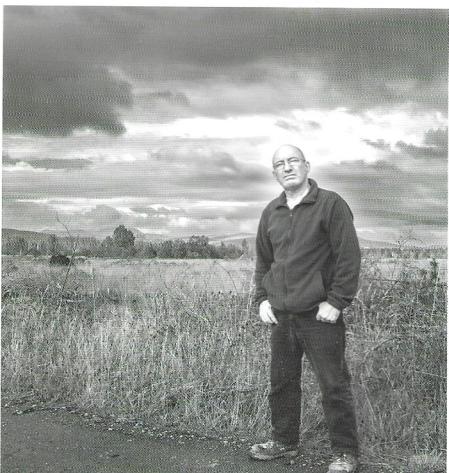
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trees & much more.

Editorial

Full swing it is. The mantle of the festivities has been cast aside and the real work begun.

Time to step up and 'promise to do your best' by supporting the Brownies & Rainbows (see page 23); move beyond hibernation with Aberfoyle Village People to get the village ready to welcome the visitors, who will be back for Easter; sign up for 'Open Spaces' <http://openspacesaberfoyle.spaces.nexudus.com/en>, to ensure your place in our Business Hub that opens this Spring above the Tourist information centre and generally shake the snow from your shoes and get that spring in your step.

But before we get into the joys of spring, sadly we have to express our sorrow at the loss of James McGettigan (right), who provided Strathard News with much of the Aberfoyle Village People photography. He covered this year's Santa Day Parade, which we are unable to share. We will miss his quiet presence and those well captured images of life in Aberfoyle and will continue to remember his contribution: it was greatly valued.

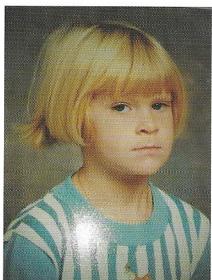


Appeal for long lost family member

Ashley Elizabeth Anderson born 28.9.90 at Stirling Royal, adoption order granted June 91 at Alloa Sheriff Court.

Searching for birth father James McGhee, possible middle name of Beatrice. He lived in St Ninian's and worked in Aberfoyle as waiter in hotel. Slim build and ginger hair.

Birth mother's name Isobel Anderson. Would love to hear from dad or any siblings. Please make contact via this publication.



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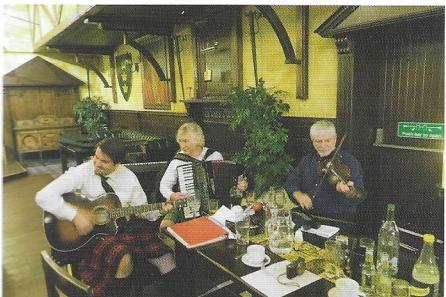
James Worrall - Forest Life

Innes Manders - McLaren High

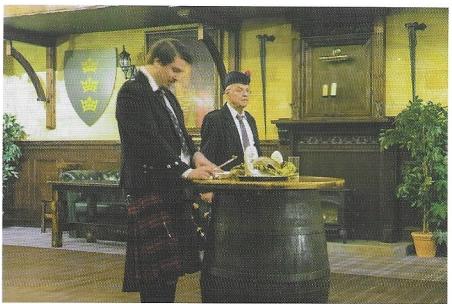
German admirers bring Rabbie home for supper.

Saturday 20th January at the Forth saw an unusual Burns Supper, which celebrated not only our national Bard but also 20 years of friendship between ourselves and the Schultze family from Germany. Musician Peter Schultze learned the Highland Bagpipes in the 1970s and played at annual Burns Suppers in East Berlin (Rabbie was appreciated across the former Warsaw Pact countries). He became the doyen of Scottish music in East Germany, yet it was only after the Wall came down that he got to visit Scotland for the first time. We met through a mutual friend in our climbing club, and most Januaries since have gone to Berlin to join the music-making at Burns Suppers that they organise in a local bar.

This year, 9 of their family and friends came to Aberfoyle and we did the organising - with a lot of help from the Forth Inn staff; heart felt thanks to Lee and all the team for their unending cheery helpfulness. The Baronial



Hall was the perfect setting for the occasion. 35 folk, including family and friends from Scotland, dined on the traditional fare - thanks to Micheal for the excellent cock-a-leekie soup and Trevor for the haggis. Son Max Schultze addressed the haggis; Craig Steele, the only Ayrshire



soul present, shared a poem; and Gillian Sandford gave a spectacular rendition of Tam o' Shanter. Music and song were provided variously by the Schultze family, ourselves and members of the Trossachs Community Choir (thank you Jim for stepping in with the keyboard!).



And an impromptu ceilidh band brought people onto the dance floor to end the evening. Everyone agreed it was a splendid night and had enjoyed meeting new folk. So, in the spirit of the Bard himself, here's to friendship across the nations!

Wendy Faulkner and Dave Donaldson

Betty is now in Ashwood, Callander, where the staff are very good to her and put on a great show for her 100th.

Betty's great niece has also moved up to the Stirling area and had, Poppy, Betty's Great, Great niece, just before Christmas



Great day for the MacGregor family as Betty turns 100!

Great day for the MacGregor family yesterday when Betty turned 100!

Betty spent a lot of her childhood in Kirkton cottage (actually the very first school in Aberfoyle) and returned there from Edinburgh where she spent her working life as a nurse.

Her brother, Walter, was a GP down South and he also returned to the area on retirement, to Ardross Cottage, Kinlochard. Walter and Lilly's son, John, now lives there.

Through her choice, Betty lived right up to the grand age of 98 with no formal care, just help with shopping etc from John and a couple of friends.

Sadly her legs were no longer good enough for her to continue to be safe, living independently.

A Note From Jimmy The Post (ex)

After forty four years delivering mail to the good people of Aberfoyle, Gartmore and Inversnaid I retired on my 65th Birthday on 26th August 2017.

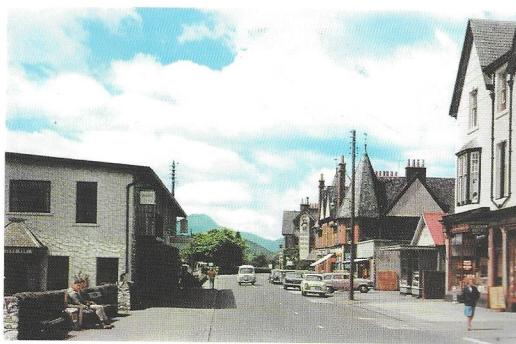
Many of you will know that unfortunately I was not keeping too well at the time and my first BIG thank you goes to all the well wishers who got in touch. My second BIG thank you goes to those who generously donated to my Retirement Gift and also those who gave individual presents. YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

I was thinking back to when I started as a posty. It was in April 1973 and I was a fresh faced 21 year old about to get married. There were new postmasters in charge of Aberfoyle P.O. Bernie and Sue Gallagher and my new workmates were Bunt McLean from Gartmore, . Ronnie Wilson and Billy Steel from Aberfoyle. Sadly all three are gone now. Bunt passed away some time ago. Both Ronnie and Billy passed away just last year.

Aberfoyle was quite a different place then. There was no Old Kirk Loan or Craigmhor View, no Dukes Court, no Lomond Court or Stabballard , no 2 to 18 Trossachs Road and no flats in the Balfie Nicol Jarvie as this was still a good going Hotel.

On the Main Street we had a real Bank Manager staying above the Bank. Next door was Benedetti's Café and before the Post Office was the Co-op Butchers shop. Opposite was the new Trossachs Gift Centre which later changed to Guyana. The Co-op was smaller than at present and beside it was the Co-op Drapery. This was a wooden and corrugated iron building manned by Maggie McKeand which sold everything from a ball of wool to a three piece suite. Next came D & J McEwan, a genuine old fashioned grocery shop. The Clachan Hotel was different as the present day Chip Shop was a newly opened Bar. Next came the Police Station and District Nurse Offices with flats for three Policemen and the District Nurse. The Ice Cream Parlour and the TV shop were home to Big John and Mary Ferguson's Paper Shop, an institution in its day as was Heaton-Armstrong's shop next door which sold tartans and other Scottish goods.

Across the street where now stands the visitor centre was Tommy Frame's shop, a Chemists and a Cobblers shop. The Forth Inn was known as the Pavilion. The Xmas shop was the Welfare Garage with the Bus Garage behind. At that time you could buy a new car from Aberfoyle Motors and Christine and I did that on two occasions. The Doctors Surgery was opposite



Aberfoyle Motors in the old Smiddy which is now called Beck Cottage. The present surgery now stands where the Forestry Commission offices were at that time.

I have always (well nearly always) enjoyed being a Posty but my favourite delivery was the Inversnaid Run. This was like going home for me as I was brought up in Strond and attended Inversnaid School for the Primary Years.

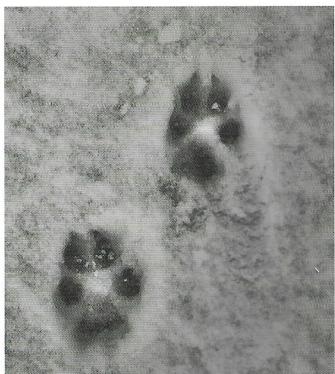
There were many stops in the early days for cups of tea, with home made shortbread, girdle scones, tattie scones,

fruit scones, treacle scones, plain scones, mince pies, pancakes, fruit cake, lemon cakes, ginger cakes, chocolate cake - in fact Mary Berry would have been proud of me as I munched my way from The Glassert to Inversnaid Hotel where, by the way, Geordie Buchan always had soup and sandwiches waiting for the Posty!

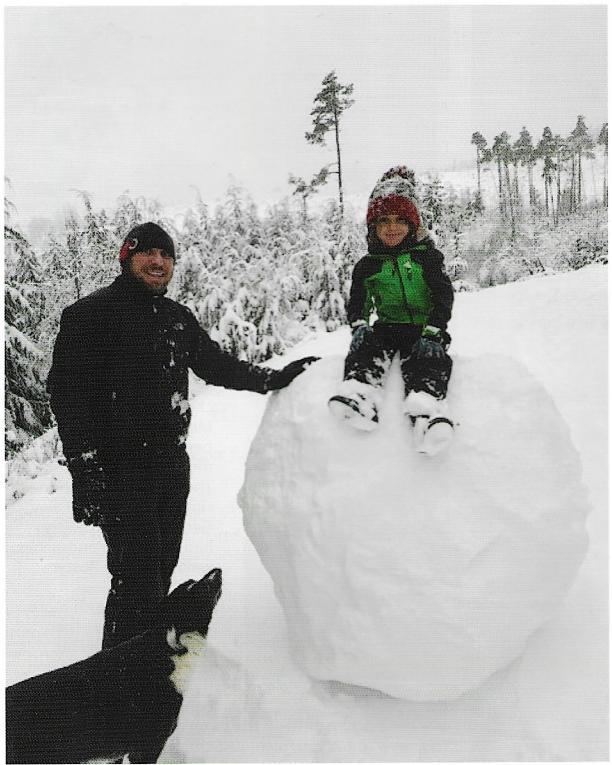
I could write much more about how it was then and how it is now but this is a Thank You letter and if after reading this you hear the Posty at your door why not ask him or her if they would like a wee cuppa. You never know you might just enjoy the crack!

Jimmy (the post)

Welcome to Strathard!



It's Snow Time in Strathard



Pete and Leon Clough show they've got a lot of ball when it comes to playing in the snow! Meg looks on impressed with her pet humans.

Meet Bernard, Strathard's Newest Resident!

This is Bernard, unofficially Strathard's biggest snowman 2018 and undoubtedly an architectural masterpiece.

Having begun life as an igloo Bernard found he wasn't cut out as a shelter and decided to career hop to what he describes as a "more high-profile career". He's not a fan of sunshine and has been enjoying the recent snow as much as the rest of us. Pals, Eilidh Jackson and Catriona Manders, have described him as "the world's biggest nICE guy" and we can definitely all agree he's a pretty cool fella.

Editors note: We know the quality of Bernards photo isn't great but we couldn't leave him out





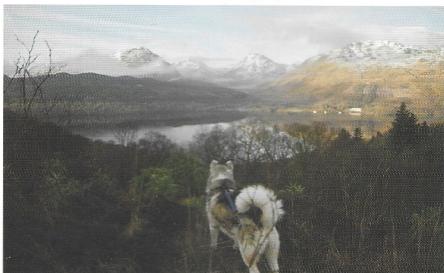
Editors comment

Starsky caught my eye, I think it was at the Santa Day Parade. So I asked Lee-Anne to send this dog fanzine, aka Strathard News some photos.

Here is some background on our Front Cover Starsky and his family

- **Where do you live**
We moved to Inversnaid in June 2017.
- **What breed is your dog/wolf and what is it called**
Our Siberian Husky is called Starsky.
- **Your names and those of your children**
Lee-Anne, Oliver, Olivia and Kyle
- **What brought you to live here**
We had just come back from 2 years in Manila (The Philippines) and wanted to live somewhere isolated but with a community spirit

Like what you see? Some of Lee-Anne's photos will be exhibited for sale at The Pier Cafe from mid-February!





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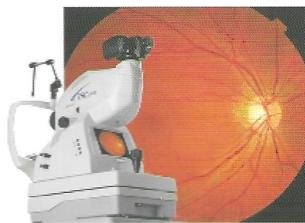
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Gartmore Breakfast Club

8.00am - 9.00am Monday to Friday

Coming Soon! Gartmore School Partnership have been successful in securing funding from the Heritage Lottery Communities and Families Fund to support a new breakfast club, starting in August 2016.

Each session will cost £3.00 per child and includes breakfast.

If you are interested in finding out a little more about our new service please email: gartmorebps@glow.sch.uk specifying the days your child/children may be interested in attending.



Gartmore After School Club

3.15pm – 5.15pm Monday to Friday

Gartmore After School Club currently has spaces available. Each afternoon begins with a snack and juice to restore energy after a hard day at school. The club offers a whole range of activities - including arts/crafts, baking and sports in a friendly '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.

Taxi service from Port of Menteith and Aberfoyle Schools.

For more information please email: gpschoolclub@hotmail.co.uk

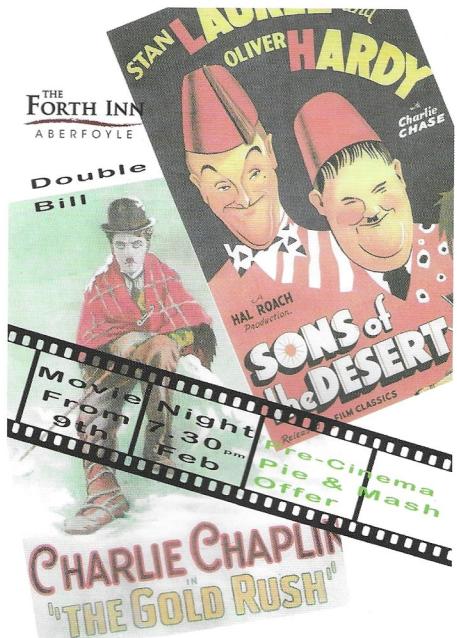




The Community Panto

The Community Panto at the Memorial Hall was supported by these local businesses:-

- Michelle's Snack Bar
- Coachworx Personal Training
- Simply Styles-Go Ape
- CJ Hair & Beauty
- Trossachs Motor Engineers
- Liz McGregor's Cafe
- Kellie Currie Zumba
- Forestry Commission Aberfoyle
- Tartan Butterfly
- Macdonald Forest Hills
- Aberfoyle Delicatessen & Trossachs Butcher
- Macmillans Kitchen



Young Strathard Life, news from Aberfoyle Primary

Whole School News

Children in Need - by Poppy S, Struan and Emily S
For children in need we were in our houses, and we were all wearing spots or dressed up as our teachers and our teachers dressed up as pupils. Throughout the day we played dodgeball against the other houses, coloured in Pudsey and had a whole school quiz and splattered our teachers! We raised £236.10.

Christmas Parties - by Shanna, Nathan and Alana

Towards the end of term we had our class parties. P1,2 and 3 rates theirs 10/10. P4, 5, 6 and 7 said theirs was supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!

the most popular design was a six sided snowflake and surprisingly a snowflake.



Gymnastics - by Charley

The gymnastics club has 3 teams who are practising for a competition at the end of January. We have also got new competition leotards, the leotards are blue and white and we are all so excited. The past two weeks we have been having super early classes at 8am. We are always really really tired in the early classes but we push through it in the morning.

Nursery News - by Poppy S. Struan and Emily S.

Nursery News by Poppy C, Sienna and Emily S

The nursery children have been painting pictures of things they like, they have also been making snowmen and have been learning about winter whilst it has been snowing.

P1 News - by Niamh, Mya and Emily C

Primary 1's topic is castles. They have been drawing their own castles. They have also been learning about knights in their topic. In maths they have been focusing on money, they are also learning numbers. Most of them like reading. In P.E. they are doing Gymnastics.

P2/3 News - by Spencer and Nathan

P2/3's topic is the Rainforest and they're slowly trying to turn their classroom in to a rainforest. Right now there working on the Amazon and so far there doing great work and they've even made monkeys swinging from trees.



In art they created snow men with colourful backgrounds and snow that they worked very hard on! They also made very cool christmas jumpers and the winter got a prize and

P4/5 news - by Charley

In P4/5 our new topic is explorers and inventors and we've been making our own place to discover. We tried to make our own new planet made out of leaves and creatures we have created and made it look creepy. We have also got a new music teacher called Mrs Cushion she is very nice and is teaching us about rhythm.

Another thing is that we have a new helper in art called Dorothy and she is lovely and helpful. In our new topic we've been concentrating on two people: Alexander Graham Bell and his inventions and Christopher Columbus and where he travelled to.



P6/7 news - by Mara

P6/7's topic is the history of Aberfoyle and surrounding areas. We are learning lots about the area we live in. We have all done some research about the history of our own house. In Maths we are focusing on fractions, decimals and percentages and learning how to add fractions and convert them to decimals and percentages. We have also been doing some fun learning in the snow.

We are using our class iPads to help us with learning and research. In science we are learning about the digestive system and conducting a fun experiment using bread, castanets, toilet rolls, sandwich bags and balloons.

In class we are reading *Aquila 2*, the sequel to our class novel last term, *Aquila*. So far we are all really enjoying the book.

Panto - by Cara

In December, P4-7 did a panto: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. We practiced the panto for a really long time from October. It was very fun practicing the panto and also extremely interesting. There was a lot a laughing along the way and everyone put in lots of effort. When it came to the real thing we all had butterflies in our tummies. The staff at the primary deserve a big thank you for the wigs, the makeup and costumes, and helping out during the performances. Miss Bennie, the director of the panto, also deserves a huge thank you for putting it all together. This is some feedback from the parents: "it was spectacular"

"really good job from both the staff and the kids"

"We had so much fun along the way and I am delighted to have been part of such a hilarious, enthusiastic and talented team. So much work behind the scenes at lunchtimes, golden times, at homes and after school from parents, staff and children went into making our phenomenal panto performances. The kids couldn't have done a better job, I am so proud of every one of them. The feedback from the audience was amazing - a huge thank you to everyone who came along and for their lovely, kind words of praise." Miss Bennie



Editor's note: I was very cheeky and asked if I could blag one of the hottest tickets of the festive season. The costumes and make-up were incredible, so much so that without them, the Ad Fab Patsy channelling Wicked Step Mother was unrecognisable. The script was witty and made me cry...with laughter. Best way to start the celebrations ever.



Term Time Success

Last term ended on a high for the

children with the resounding success of their school panto, Snow White. The children were brimming with confidence and enthusiasm and the audience could tell how much they enjoyed performing it!

It was lovely to have members of the community beyond the parent group coming along to enjoy the show too. The children and staff have received high praise from everyone who was lucky enough to be at one of the performances. The proceeds of panto ticket sales will be used by the school towards new interactive whiteboards in the classrooms, which cost roughly £4000.

We were all delighted to learn earlier in the term that Aberfoyle Primary School had succeeded in being awarded the prestigious Gold Sports Award. This was down to the hard work of the staff and pupil sports ambassadors, supported by Active Stirling and parent volunteers.

We would not be able to have as many after-school clubs as we do if it wasn't for the support and dedication of our volunteers giving up their time and sharing their skills to run the clubs! If you are interested in helping out at, or running an, after-school club please get in touch with Lynn Warrington (info@aberfoyleparents.org.uk) or Mr Fielden.

The Aberfoyle Gymnastics Club is delighted to announce that it has entered 19 gymnasts from primary 2-7 in a competition at the end of January. We look forward to hearing all about their success! The Gymnastics Club would like to extend a word of thanks to Mandy Strachan and the School for supporting the purchase of five extra leotards for the competition.

On Friday 8th of December the whole school headed off to watch Chick Wittington at the MacRobert Arts Centre in Stirling. This annual panto trip is part-funded by Aberfoyle Parents to keep costs down for parents. It is a significant cost to us (£600 for 2017) and your generosity at fundraising events helps us to meet this each year.

Paying it Forward

Just before Christmas, Aberfoyle Parents set up a collection point in the school for food bank donations. Parents and pupils donated generously and all donations were taken to a local food bank in time for Christmas.

Fundraising

Thank you so much to all of you who have registered with EasyFundraising and raised money for us while doing your Christmas shopping this year! If you haven't yet done so, please consider registering with EasyFundraising when shopping online. It doesn't cost you anything extra and raises funds for Aberfoyle Parents, which we will use for trips and resources for the children.

Visit our website for the link to our page. Anyone can sign up, you do not need to have a child at Aberfoyle Primary and apps are available for iPhone, iPad and Android. <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/aberfoyleprimaryschoolparents/>

The Rag Bag continues to be a fantastic source of revenue for us and we would like to thank everyone who uses it. If

you discover that the bin is full, please drop us an email at info@aberfoyleparents.org.uk and we'll arrange for it to be emptied as soon as possible.

The Santa Parade organised by the Aberfoyle Village People was a great success. The children came along and sang some Christmas songs, led by Mrs Barwick. They were fantastic and certainly made everyone feel Christmassy!

Our wee stall selling punch-balloons, lucky dip and guess the reindeer's name helped us to raise £85 towards school trips and panto. Congratulations to Kayla Denholm who won the reindeer! Our next fundraiser will be a Community Bingo Night to be held in February. This will be a family night followed by a buffet and social get-together. Please keep an eye out for more details on our website and Facebook page.

Coding Club Update

We would like to thank everyone who voted for our Code Club in the Aviva Community Fund. Unfortunately, we did not get enough votes to be considered for the award. But we got pretty close, which is great for a teeny wee school like ours!

This is not the end for the Code Club though. Our volunteers are determined. If anyone in the community feels that they can help in any way - perhaps with funding suggestions, technology or ideas - please get in touch. Email us on info@aberfoyleparents.org.uk and we will put you in touch with the Code Club team.

Parking and School Travel Plan

You may have noticed the new no-parking signs outside of the school. It was noted by the school Junior Road Safety Officers that people were stopping or parking on the yellow zigzags outside the school to drop children off. On advice from the community safety team, the school decided to purchase the signs to discourage parking on the zigzags and approached Aberfoyle Parents with a request for funding, which we were happy to provide. It is important to have a clear, safe area around the school gates when children are arriving at or leaving school. Thank you for your support in this matter.

The School's Travel Plan has been updated and submitted to the council. Recommendations were made jointly by a parent sub-group and the school in the hopes of improving some aspects of travel to and from the school. As this is such an important issue to our parent group, we look forward to the council's response and hope that they will be able to action our recommendations as soon as possible.

Aberfoyle School's 150th Birthday!

In 2020 Aberfoyle School will celebrate its 150th birthday! Planning for an event is at a very early stage but we would like to ask the community to get their thinking caps on! If you have any suggestions please feel free to get in touch with us at. We are especially interested in stories and photographs from past pupils and staff. So, the next time you are digging around in your loft please have a poke about for photos, report cards, certificates etc that we might use in a display/celebration in 2020. It sounds like a long time but an event this significant will take lots of planning and all help is gratefully received!

Growing up in Strathard, news from McLaren High

Edited by Innes Manders

Mock Trial

On Friday the 3 November a group of S5 and S6 pupils along with Mrs Drysdale went along to Stirling Sheriff Court to take part in a Mock Trial. Senior pupils with an interest in studying law/police/justice system at university were invited to take part as the prosecution.

Girls Rugby @McLaren High

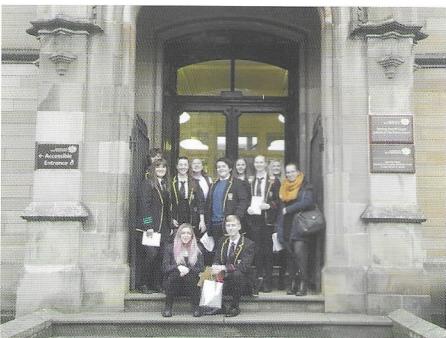
Girls' rugby has been continually growing at McLaren for the past few years. However, this year we have seen an amazing number of girls participating in the sport.

Children in Need

Congratulations to all our pupils and staff who raised the total of £753.67 last week. We held a PA Auction on Thursday, and S6/staff Fancy Dress plus a mufti day for all other pupils and staff on Friday.

Clan MacLaren Donation

On Wednesday 15 November, representatives of the McLaren High School STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) group welcomed Donald MacLaren of MacLaren, the Chief of the Clan MacLaren, to the School. The school's original benefactor and founder 125 years ago was Donald MacLaren, a Callander banker. In recent times the School has forged close links with the Clan MacLaren Society and has also hosted visits by its overseas societies in North America, Australia and Germany.



Fundraising for Start Up Stirling

McLaren High School held a Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 15 December to support Start Up Stirling (Food Bank). Donations of non-perishable food items, festive goodies and small gifts to help others less fortunate than ourselves were collected. Huge thanks to Strathyre Primary pupils who joined our Christmas Jumper day and also brought lots of donations along.

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Big Fishing on Loch Ard

The fishing on Loch Ard is controlled and administered since 1894 by the Aberfoyle Angling Protection Association (known as the A.A.P.A.). It was founded with the following objectives:

- The encouragement of the sport of angling for brown trout, sea trout and salmon on Loch Ard and other waters in the Aberfoyle area.
- The management of the fisheries in Loch Ard and waters in the best interest of the sport.
- The leasing of angling and boating rights from riparian owners in the said loch and waters.
- The cooperation with all other bodies whose objectives include the promotion of the sport of angling in Scotland

The 600 acres of Loch Ard waters have varying depths down to 100 meters in beautiful surroundings. The loch waters have been fished for centuries and offer good fishing conditions for fly fishing of brown trout and varied coarse fishing for pike and perch.

The trout fishing season runs from 15th March to 6th October annually.



24LB PIKE CAUGHT ON LOCH ARD

13TH JANUARY 2018 BY PETER SHAW

Sport fishing on Loch Ard is welcomed and is controlled by the A.A.P.A. on behalf of the riparian owners, including the Forestry Commission, and is regularly stocked with good size 12- to 14-month-old brown trout.

Day and season permits are

issued at several local sites as mentioned below with concession rates for senior citizens and under 16-year-old juniors (juniors must be under adult supervision at all times). Permits must be carried at all times and are controlled by the A.A.P.A. Watcher. Fishing from the banks is allowed as long as the National Parks regulations on outdoor activities are respected and in particular with regard to overnight camping, littering and building of fires.

Anglers are also requested to respect private properties on the lochside and to seek landowners' permission if fishing in the vicinity of private dwellings.

Fishing permits are available in Aberfoyle from the Post Office and Aberfoyle Garage; in Kinlochard from Go-Country Water Sport Centre and the Wee Blether Tearoom; and in Callander from James Bayne Fishing Tackle Shop.

For further information contact the Secretary, A.A.P.A., Blairlullichian, Kinlochard, FK8 3TN Tel 01877 387341 or e-mail jablewis1@aol.com.

Forest Life - Frozen



It's pitch black. I'm wrapped up warm but laying on my back in the middle of a frozen forest track. My breath exhales in great, ghostly plumes, up into the icy air and obscures the stars above. I burst into action! With my arms doing a sort of 'snow angel' motion my legs kick out and for a brief moment I resemble some kind of spasmodic jellyfish as I flail around, for all the world like I'm having a tantrum.

Failure. I have failed to invent a more effective method of progress along

a road that is so icy we have had to abandon both 4x4's and head back into the village of Kinlochard. To my left, Ali is crawling from one side of the road to the other on all fours, whilst laughing so hard that she has collapsed momentarily into a quivering heap. Somewhere in the dark I can hear Charlie and Sadie chatting away. We left our vehicles about 30 minutes ago and we have managed a pitiful 150m of travel.

I've never experienced ice like this. Temperatures have yo-yo'd around zero for weeks, the snow and ice thawing then refreezing. Rising mist from the Duchray and Loch Ard has clung to the glens and coated everything with a sheen of perfectly smooth, frictionless glass.

I give up my ill-fated attempts at 'penguin mode' and roll back onto hands and knees. Ali has spotted a patch of crunchy ice on the opposite side of the track. Experience has taught us that these oases of grip offer as many as three or four meters of progress without the heart-in-mouth, spine-jarring, 'foot panic' that comes with a sudden, catastrophic loss of motive friction. We make a beeline with as much dignity as we can muster.

Our endeavours are illuminated by smartphone torches that appear to be able to determine exactly the wrong moment to conserve battery power. This and the steady flow of expletives that have come to greet all moments of luck, either good or bad, adds to the camcorder-horror-movie vibe. The air of fun is slowly being replaced by bruises and the relentless cold. A part of me briefly imagines the scene as rescue services identify four badly bruised bodies, victims of their own Harold Lloyd folly. I start mentally composing my own Captain Oats speech, just in case...

But no, not four bodies. Who am I kidding? Sadie, still in school uniform, nonchalantly totters along the ice in her 'school heels', absentmindedly slowing her pace to a dawdle so she doesn't get too far ahead. I swear she's browsing Pinterest. Truly, each new generation is a miracle. I resist the urge to claw at her ankles and beg to be carried. Charlie appears to be hover-boarding down the ice track. At this stage I'm not sure whether this is

an hallucination due to the cold or blunt head trauma. I imagine Bob with a wee barrel of Laphroaig hanging beneath his chops...

Eventually we make it to salted tarmac, and soon after that, Jane's house where we are greeted with open arms, hot food and wine and offered beds for the night (two nights as it turns out). Adversity can deliver the best of people and this unexpected festive decampment is one of those calamities-turned-good.



I'm one of those people for whom Christmas just kinda happens. One minute its eighteen thousand shopping days until Christmas, the next I'm frantically wrapping presents, most of which I haven't bought, with a vague notion that tomorrow might be Saturday or Tuesday or something. The Christmas message passes me by and other than a sense of relief around Christmas afternoon it can't really be said that I experience a festive state of mind.

But for those two nights, a week before Christmas, friends and neighbours encircled our family and protected us from the harsh realities of winter here in the Forest. The truly valuable gifts of warmth and food and a safe place to sleep resonate with the story of the nativity and are a reminder that each of us relies on an invisible pyramid of effort and technology to maintain our nests. Without each other, we have nothing. So I had my Christmas unexpectedly early this year and it was very special indeed. Thank you, Jane.

And to everyone else, have a great new year and remember: We find ourselves when we help each other. Here's to 2018.

Forest Life, are the philosophical essays of James Worrall & his family who live in Loch Ard Forest.



Stronachlachar Diaries

Well hello there! It's been a busy few months and with the Festive season now a very pleasant but fading memory, we are looking forward to Spring.

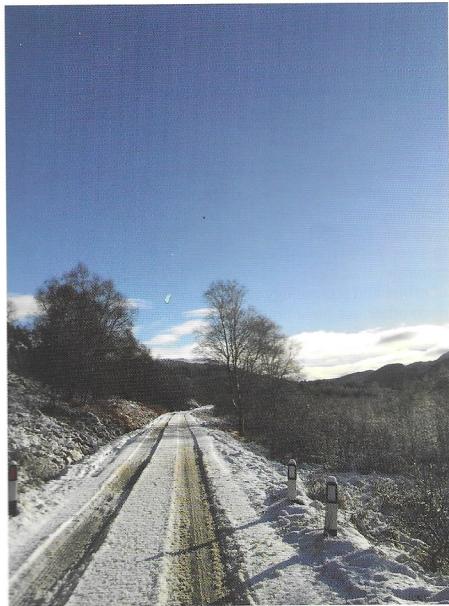
So, what's been happening in the Wild West of Strathard? Well, there's been partying and socialising co-ordinated by the fabulous duo of super-heroes who own the Pier Café, Ciaran Devlin and Brian Graham, who kicked off events with a brilliant festive open night for residents of Stronachlachar and Inversnaid on Saturday, 9th December.

This comprised a Christmas buffet, the likes of which you could travel the world for, and amazing vibrant traditional music played by a brilliant young group from Glasgow and Callander.

If Stronnie had an annual awards night, the award for best community contribution would certainly go to the Pier Café team. There were folks from all over the ward, from Rob Roy McGregor's home place at Glengyle to the Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond, and it set everyone up very well for a brilliant Christmas.

Take the road less travelled

Now, we have all done daft things, haven't we? Well, as country people, we are well used to meeting and guiding lost



strangers around our wilderness and Christmas Eve 2017 proved to be no exception.

In the midst of day two of what was horrible weather, driving rain and low light, a French dad and daughter approached my wife and I asking for walking directions from Stronachlachar to Tyndrum.

"We need to get there before dark," the young lady said (it was 2 pm). Recognising the challenge of what could be several days walking in good weather, as we were heading to Edinburgh for Christmas Eve ourselves, I said "load up, we'll take you there," assuring them it was en route, which was a little white lie as they were very tired and needed a break.

On the way, we found them accommodation at the Strathfillan Wigwams, saw the Harry Potter Viaduct and marvelled at their journey ahead as Christmas Day was to be spent walking towards Fort William. The pair were carrying backpacks the size and weight of a small truck, but they were lovely people making memories.

Seeing them on their way was one of my highlights of Christmas, and, on the road back, we stopped into the newly-opened Mhor Store in Balquidder. Every visit to the Mhor team is like a tonic for the soul and we were greeted like old friends. I strongly recommend a visit or, indeed, if you are feeling adventurous in warmer times, a walk from Stronachlachar over the glen to Balquidder and a stay at the hotel would be a memory maker.

My point here is that sometimes the best of memories are made from travelling unexpected roads.

Welcome to Stronachlachar. There are no strangers here, just friends you have yet to meet.

Hogmanay 2017

Not to be outdone on the socialising front, Inversnaid became the hub for Hogmanay and a great night was had by all with dancing at the crossroads, great food and camaraderie for visitors and Inversnaid residents alike. Well done to Gwenda, the hostess with the mostess.



Thanks to

Thanks to the Scottish Water team. With the heavy loads from the pylon works now stopped for a little while, I must command and thank Scottish Water for seeing that remedial works were carried out on the B829 spur to the Pier Café to remove the potholes.

Thanks are also due to Scottish Water for the removal of several dead trees which were standing next to the road that were very vulnerable to high winds.

Not to be forgotten, thanks to our Councillors Martin Earl, Evelyn Tweed and Jeremy Macdonald. It can be a thankless job sometimes, but I have found the team very responsive to our requests throughout the year.

True Grit Award – Kenny Snedden

The ice and snow have caused some challenges and New Year's Eve saw the road rendered impassable for a period with holiday makers trapped in the warmth of the Pier Café until Stirling Council came to the rescue.

Big thanks to Kenny Snedden for getting the team to go the extra mile – or extra six miles in this case. It made a huge difference.

Strathard Community Council Report

Elections announced for Autumn 2018,

Strathard Community Council will be holding elections for the 11 members of the in September/October 2018. The community council area splits into Aberfoyle, Kinlochard, Stronachlachar and Inversnaid, with representatives sought for each ward. The community council is very active in the development of the community, liaising with the National Park authorities, Stirling Council, The Community Trust and many other bodies. Follow us as we develop our presence at @strathardcc

New website

2018 will see a huge upheaval in how organisations and businesses communicate with their audiences and in order to make this more efficient and in line with the new GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) regulations, we will have our new easy-to-use website live in February.

Meanwhile, details of all our meetings are available on the new Community Trust website www.Strathardct.org.uk

Community Council Meetings

Community Council Meetings are always at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be at Kinlochard hall on 1st February, followed by Inversnaid Hotel on 1st March. These meetings are open to the public and follow councillor surgeries at 7pm, so all welcome.

Pan Seared Cod with Potatoes and Chorizo From our winter warmers collection!



It's winter and the beginning of a new year. The sun is shining (for a change), it's -10 degrees outside, Loch Arklet is frozen over and we're having friends round for dinner. I'm Irish so there must be spuds on the menu, and there's been quiet whispers about diets and calories so needs to be healthy (as if!). We want to spend time pouring wine and socialising, so this is a great option that should take less than 20 mins from cooking to plating if you've parboiled the spuds, so you can enjoy your evening with your guests. Oh, it's inexpensive and easy too!

Ingredients:

4 cod loin steaks, skin on (approx. 170g)
4 large potatoes, peeled diced and part boiled (10 mins)
150g Chorizo of your choice, finely chopped
1 red chilli finely chopped
1 onion finely chopped
2 cloves garlic finely chopped
Tbsp Paprika
100g frozen peas
Pinch Sea Salt
Lemon Juice
16 Vine Cherry Tomatoes
Unsalted Butter

Method:

Earlier that day.... Season your cod loins with sea salt and lemon juice, cover and place in the fridge until cooking. Peel and dice the potatoes and bring to the boil for 10 mins, drain and leave to cool. Wash your dishes! Preheat your oven to 180. Pour a glass of white, preferably Sancerre, have a sip, you've done good so far!

Melt you butter in a pan and bring to a high heat, when starting to smoke place your cod loins skin down on the pan and press for a few seconds. Cover and cook for 4/5 mins then transfer to an oven dish, add the cherry toms and cook for approximately 10 mins.

In another pan heat a drizzle of olive oil, add the onions and sweat for two mins, add the garlic and chilli and sweat for another minute. Have another sip of your wine, it's time. Add the potatoes and your smoked paprika and fry off, don't be afraid to get a good charring on the spuds. After about 5 mins, add the chorizo and peas, and a dash of lemon juice. Keep stirring and taste until your happy with it.

Take the cod out of the oven and rest. It should be somewhere around 45-50 degrees in its centre.

Grab your plates and create a bed of your potatoes and chorizo for your cod. Lovingly place the cod on top, and top the cod with your gorgeous cherry toms.

Place in front of your guests, sit down and enjoy!



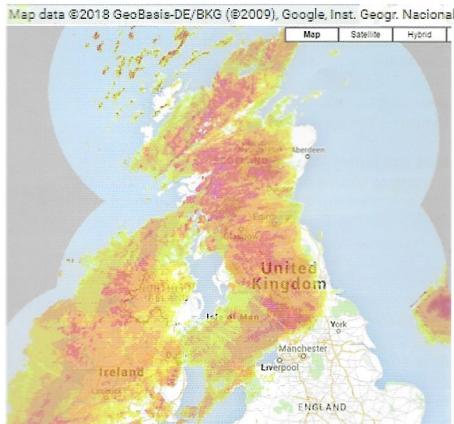
Will it flood?

I wish to set down some observations about available real-time river level data and how they may be used for flood warnings. I write in no official capacity but as an interested local resident, and a retired civil engineer who has resided in Aberfoyle for over 30 years.

Strathard Community Council (SCC) has, through the Strathard News on several occasions referred to these data presented by Stirling Council which can be used as an aid to forecast flooding of the Forth in Aberfoyle, and indeed flooding from Loch Ard onto the road to Kinlochard. Many locals have referred to these data (which are presented in graph form on Stirling Council's website) in order to assess whether measures should be taken. However, it seems that this source of information is still not widely known. In discussion with the Editor, it appeared worthwhile repeating SCC's notices in this regard and further explaining how these data can be used, by presenting examples of the graphs from previous flooding events.

These live data were originally only for Stirling Council's use. However given the value of such data to the community, SCC persuaded the Council and collaborated with it in making the live graphs available on line. The graphs update every 15 minutes when the water levels begin to increase significantly. The Council however cannot guarantee the system as it does malfunction from time to time but is generally reliable.

As you will recall there were three storms passing over Scotland at the end of 2015, named Desmond, Eva and Frank. Below is a view of a radar scan image of rainfall extent intensity during storm Desmond from the website "Rain Today?"



This shows unusually extensive and heavy rainfall over virtually the whole of Scotland. Such intensity and extent will cause flooding and in such a case, the river level data should be looked at to see if and when flooding is likely in Aberfoyle. The live data graphs of river levels can be seen at:

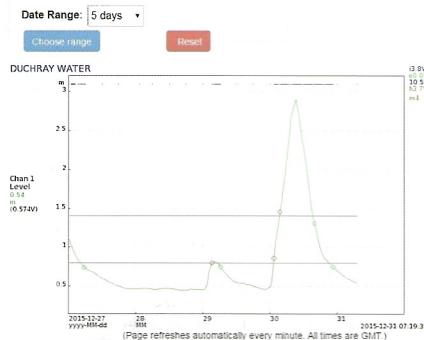
<https://my.stirling.gov.uk/rivers/index/range:week>

The key graphs are Duchray Water, Aberfoyle and Loch Ard. There is also a graph for Aberfoyle Primary which measures levels in the burn next to the school but is subject to the state of blockage of the culvert, so is not so useful.

The Duchray Water gauge is located several miles upstream from Milton. The rise and timing of the water level there is key to determining whether Aberfoyle is at threat later on. Being upstream, the peak water level at Duchray occurs some two hours or so before the peak water level at Aberfoyle.

Below are examples of these graphs. Note that the range of "date" can be chosen on the web site at 1 day, 5 days or 4 weeks. The 1 day range is the most useful for forecasting.

Duchray Water



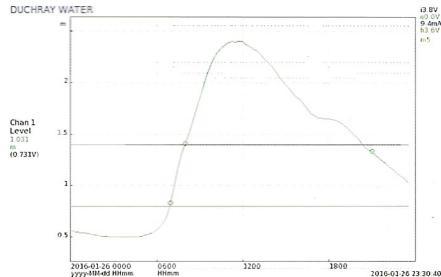
Alarms

The following two alarm indicators (black lines) may appear above (from lowest to highest):

- 1 Rising water levels, be aware
- 2 Expect flooding of Main Street within several hours

The above is a record of the levels at Duchray Water at the time of the flooding from storm Frank. Note that the date range is 5 days. The water level reached 2.8m and produced flooding in the main street, with the B829 impassable west of the Baillie Nicol Jarvie(BNJ). Loch Ard flooded the B829 at Helen's rock, but not at Tigh na Traigh. However it was flooded by run off from the hills, ironically due to the refurbishment of the loch wall in an attempt to prevent flooding from Loch Ard.

Below is a set of three graphs of water levels just after storm



Frank, the first being of Duchray Water. It has a date range of 1 day. It shows the water level reaching 2.4m.

The peak level can be seen to have occurred at 11:00 to 12 noon. Below is the river level response at Aberfoyle which **Aberfoyle**



Alarms

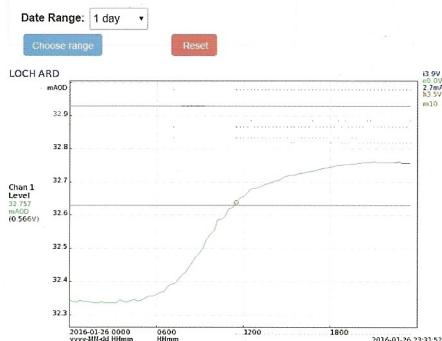
The following two alarm indicators (black lines) may appear above (from lowest to highest):

1. Car park under threat of flooding
2. Loch Ard Road (up to primary school) now flooded & Main Street starting to flood

can be seen to have peaked at about 14:00 to 15:00, two to three hours later.

As can be seen, the water reached 19.75m, The road level just west of the BNJ is about 19.3m so the depth of water was about 45cm at its greatest. The Main Street was not flooded this time.

Loch Ard



Alarms

The following two alarm indicators (black lines) may appear above (from lowest to highest):

1. Water level 100 mm below road level
2. Road under 200 mm of water

Lastly is the corresponding response of Loch Ard which reached a maximum level at about 20:00hrs over 8 hours later than at Duchray Water. The B829 was not impassable.

So, if when very heavy and prolonged rainfall occurs, looking at the graph for Duchray Water to see if the plotted curves look like continuing to shoot up to and past about 2.0m will warn that the B829 is likely to flood west of the BNJ. The depth of flooding west of the BNJ will then be the given water level at Aberfoyle minus 19.35m or so. If for Aberfoyle, the curve is still shooting up and looks likely to well exceed 19.5m or so, Main Street could flood.

Relying on consulting the graphs, however, is not fool proof in determining whether flooding will occur, as some Main Street traders found out at the end of 2015. In that case, the onset of very heavy rain and subsequent rise in levels occurred overnight, when most people were asleep.

There has been talk of other early warning systems being put in place by the authorities, but I am not aware of any to date. The real time graphs produced by Stirling Council are a very good source to consult.

Roger Doubal



Do you need an affordable home?

Rural Stirling Housing Association aims to support local communities by providing quality homes at affordable rents for families, couples and single people in housing need.

We currently have over 560 rented houses and flats. Around 40 of these become available for rent each year. We are in the process of building a further **23 flats in Callander and 12 flats & houses in Killearn**. We currently have properties in the following communities:

Aberfoyle	Doune	Kinlochard	Stronachlachar
Balfour	Drymen	Kippen	Tyndrum
Buchlyvie	Gargunnock	Lochearnhead	
Callander	Gartmore	Strathblane	
Deanston	Killin	Strathyre	

We may be able to build in other communities in the future – please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us plan for the future.

If you are interested in renting one of our properties when they become available please contact us:

Rural Stirling Housing Association
Stirling Road, Doune
FK16 6AA
Telephone: 01786 841101
Email: enquiries@rsha.org.uk
www.rsha.org.uk

Milton the Otter reporting

Hello Children,

I can hardly believe that we are already into the second month of 2018. The days are noticeably lengthening, giving us two minutes of extra daylight morning and evening. Not that it has become any warmer. February is a peculiar month, seeming to be a bit short on the number of days, only 28 of them. Grandpa Otter says that, long ago, two Roman emperors had months of year renamed in their honour. The new names became July and August, after Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus. Each took a couple of days from February, giving themselves 31, the maximum number allowed under calendar rules. Perhaps, after all this time, February should ask for her days back.

The names of our adopted kits, Olivia and Oliver, seem to be very popular indeed, being first and second in the top ten names for girls and boys. Right now they have a new school project, a study of oak trees. If there is one thing that Strathard is not short of, it is oak trees, well established from Aberfoyle to the head of Loch Chon. Beyond that, there are still the odd stand of oak trees to be seen, all the way to Loch Lomond. However, oak trees are not here by chance, they were originally planted by the land owner of the seventeenth century, the Duke of Montrose. This was a scheme to provide some employment for his Highland workers, and make himself a lot of money.

Choosing a mighty oak tree, standing at the corner leading to the old Covenanters' Hotel, the intrepid pair begin by making a bark rubbing. Using a dark brown crayon and a thick piece of paper, the pattern of the oak bark is perfectly reproduced. The bark of one oak tree is similar to any other oak tree, and quite different from other species of tree. At this time of year our oak tree appears bleak and lifeless, but this is not so. On every bare branch and twig, tiny buds are already beginning

to develop, in good time for the coming of spring. And, if you look really closely, you would be surprised by just how much life lives on an oak tree, more than 200 different plants and animals!

One of these creatures is known as the Winter Moth, also called Mottled Umber (*Operophtera brumata*). If you see a ghostly moth flying through the dusk, during the winter, you can say with complete certainty that it is a male moth. Amaze your friends by being absolutely right every time. How do I know? Simple. Female Mottled Umber moths do not have any wings. Being quite unable to fly, the female moths live safely hidden in the cracks and fissures of a handy oak tree, there to lay their eggs. Each female will produce about a hundred eggs. As every oak tree will be home to a great many female moths, there will be lots of eggs waiting to hatch, come warmer weather.

Looking at my new diary, I can see that there are some exciting times ahead. Any day now we will be feasting on a pile of scrumptious pancakes. The very next day it will be all love-hearts and chocolate, to celebrate Saint Valentine. At least for those lucky enough to be sent some chocolate. Even a card, just one, would be nice. On the 16th, the Chinese will begin their own New Year, the Year of the Dog, with plenty of fireworks and night-flying lanterns. March has two Patron Saints to remember, David of Wales (1st) and Patrick of Ireland (17th). Then comes the Spring Equinox (20th) and, only five days later, Summer Time starts. And don't forget Mothers' Day, 11th March!

Bye for now,

Milton.

Forest Theatre Company
presents

Oliver!

Gartmore Village Hall

Thursday 1st - Saturday 3rd March

Adults £10 / Children (U17) £7
(60+ concessions £7 on Thurs only)

Tickets from Gartmore Village Shop
and Aberfoyle Post Office

Further information: 01877 382910

Hello everyone, Bertie here again.

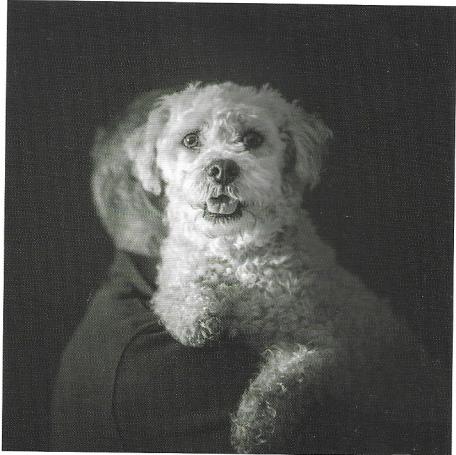
IHello everyone, Bertie here again.

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and New Year. Personally, I am still dealing with abandonment issues after they left me home alone on New Year's Eve while they had a great night at the Fairy Tree. Tommy says that if they do it again I can go and live with him. That will teach them!

Congratulations to the few hardy souls who managed to be present at the golf course for the Hangover Cup on New Year's Day, including Kiwi sporting Nike winter fashion - his wellies. It was eventually won this year by God and this was definitely blamed on the weather and was not in any way a reflection on the state of any of the participants.

Since my last column we've had the Lovely Mabel to stay for 2 whole weeks. 'Him with the Lead' felt that Mabel's pink lead did a lot for his street-cred in the village. Initially the Lovely Mabel got quite attached to 'Him with the Lead' and even cried if he left the room, normally it's the other way round with Mum. Once I had given Mabel a few cuddles and gently explained that her family didn't really love her, we dealt with her abandonment issues and she was fine.

Mabel learnt a lot during her stay at the Tigh Na Craig home for abandoned pooches and now has the title 'Bitch of the Woods'. She is fully competent in begging for food and running away from 'Him with the Lead' in the garden. She currently holds the record for dodging capture for 45 minutes in the snow. Impressive!



By the end of her stay Mabel was fast approaching a very interesting condition. I believe Lord Fraser describes this as being 'vulnerable' whilst I just find it quite attractive. She certainly didn't seem vulnerable as we chased each other up and down the hall. What fun we had indulging in four-paw play before we got yelled at. The lovely Mabel has developed quite a taste for the morning after biscuit. Given that I'm not the dog I once was, 'Him with the lead' says he's thinking of phoning his good friend Jeremy Kyle for a spot on his Roadshow Dogging Special if it comes to Aberfoyle so we can get the all important DNA results.

Poor Mum has had a few problems lately. She has been suffering from a slight crisis of confidence over competence when she recently felt she could replace the bathroom wash basin all by herself, without the aid of a sewing machine (or any knowledge of plumbing). Mum is quite used to fixing things and so a quick look on YouTube only served to further convince her that this small task was actually a 'piece of cake', armed with her womanly toolbar. Two days later she was getting quite conversant at all things plumbing and was able to drop technical terms like 'telescopic P trap' into the conversation with apparent ease.

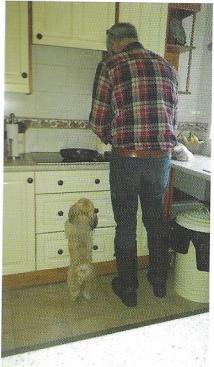
According to Mum, plumbing is really quite straight forward if you have a washbasin in the middle of the room and not in awkward places like up against a wall. I learnt quite a few new words during these couple of days but I'm not sure most of them could be printed. Luckily Bruce was on hand to fix everything properly. Mum has picked up one tip from the experience - next time call Bruce first!. Thankfully Mum has gone back to her Bitch Cave to burn bits of wood and stitch things, 'Him with the Lead' has breathed a huge sigh of relief and normal service has been resumed. Of course, I am still waiting for my piece of cake!

That's all for now folks

Love Bertie
Dog of the woods.

Ps the rumours currently circulating that I entered and won Crufts are entirely untrue. Xx

Sent from Bertie's iPad



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T/a J. Brown
Coal Merchant & Contractor
12-14 Slamannan Road
Falkirk FK1 1LG

Young Strathard Life, News from the...



Happy New Year from 1st Aberfoyle Brownies! Brownies will start back on Wednesday 17 January 2018.

2018 has gotten off to a great start for us with a fantastic award from the Co-op Local Fund. We would like to thank each and every Co-op member who chose us as their charity! We would also like to thank all the staff at the Aberfoyle Co-op for their continued support, especially Emma Ferguson for all her hard work. The funds mean that we will be able to pay for trips and workshops throughout the next couple of years without having to ask our members to pay extra, which means everyone can be involved! We already have a sleepover planned for May and will let you know about all our other adventures in the Strathard News.

We would also like to thank everyone who came along to our Christmas craft stall in the Co-op and supported us by buying our home-made crafts and crackers. Your generosity helped us to raise over £100 for charity! As a unit we donated the materials used to create the crafts, allowing us to pay forward our good fortune and donate all our takings to charity. The Brownies will choose the charity which they would like to see benefit from this donation in the new term.



The first part of the new term will be led by Starry Owl who is helping us to earn our Stargazer badges. Fingers crossed for some clear skies on Wednesday evenings! We are looking forward to a visit from Forth Fisheries Trust and in February we will be celebrating Thinking Day with Girl Guides around the globe.

Many of you will have been making new year resolutions recently. Perhaps yours was to get more involved in your community? Have you considered helping out at Brownies or Rainbows? Brownies is currently looking for adults to join as occasional unit helpers to help us out with trips and sleepovers. If you would like to find out more please speak to Lynne Steele or Celine Woodrow or email us at aberfoylebrownies@hotmail.co.uk.

1st Aberfoyle Brownies meet Wednesday evenings (term time) from 6pm-7.30pm at the Aberfoyle Church Hall. Most of the Brownies attend Aberfoyle Primary School, but we



are especially glad to welcome girls from the surrounding area. The Brownies are very keen to make new friends and wider connections.

If you are between seven and ten and would be interested in joining us you would be most welcome. When you start you will be assigned a Brownie Buddy to support you through your first few weeks of Brownies.

You can make an informal enquiry by emailing us at aberfoylebrownies@hotmail.co.uk or you can register with Girl Guiding by visiting their website at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk>.



Editors comment

We know what the girls of Aberfoyle do, but what about the boys? This great photo of the BB Walk in 1984 is from Aberfoyle Past & Present. What happens now?



Is your new year resolution to help out more in your community? Are you interested in working with children? Would you like to make a difference in a young person's life? If you are over 18 perhaps you might like to volunteer with Girl Guiding in Aberfoyle! 1st Aberfoyle Rainbows and Brownies are currently looking for adult volunteers to help run our units.

Aberfoyle Rainbows provides fun, friendship and activities for girls aged 5 – 7. We are currently looking to recruit another leader to join our team. We meet once a week (Wednesday 5-6pm) during term time. Girl Guiding will provide you with all the training you need. To have an informal chat about what is involved please contact Nicki by email at aberfoylerainbows@gmail.com



Aberfoyle Brownies would like to add an occasional helper to our leadership team. Brownies provides new experiences and adventures for girls aged 7 – 10. We currently have two leaders and one occasional helper. As our Brownie unit is now full we are looking for another adult who would be willing to come on board to help out at sleepovers and trips. You would need to undergo an enhanced PVG check with Girl Guiding. All other training is optional and you can be as involved or uninvolved in the planning of events as you like! For an informal chat please get in touch with Lynne and Celine at aberfoylebrownies@hotmail.co.uk.



St Mary's Church

The weather is miserable, you've just arrived for the start of a new week at work and yes, Christmas is over. Culture, fueled by the media sets high expectations for Christmases and the New Year. In this ideal world, family members celebrating will have co-existed harmoniously, children will have been grateful and well behaved, and the meals served will have been ones that Mary Berry would be proud to own. The reality of course might have been rather different.

The good news is, if you're feeling down in the dumps today, then you're not alone: probably most of the nation is feeling the same. Recently a day was set aside in recognition of the fact and named Blue Monday. What then brings this feeling of helplessness apart from the obvious? Perhaps it is the thought that another year has passed and although we hesitate to admit it, we look to the New Year with some anxiety.

The writer of the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes reflects a great deal on the meaning of life. The word he uses most to describe earthly life is 'mist'. Initially, it is difficult to understand why this of all words should be chosen. In fact, it perfectly describes the concept of time, the very thing that governs our lives. Mist is fleeting – it comes and then is burned away by the sun or blown elsewhere by the wind. Mist is unpredictable – we don't know when it will arrive nor when it will leave. Mist is uncontrollable – we cannot feel it with our hands nor trap it in a paper bag. Human life, and the time that governs it therefore matches that description perfectly.

Although it is easy for me to write this without knowing readers' inmost hopes and fears, we can face 2018 with a degree of equanimity. Amidst the fickleness of life, where everything is 'mist' – fleeting, unpredictable and uncontrollable; there is one static and unchangeable truth. Almighty God remains unchanged and when everything in life

is mist and passing away, he can be our strength, our fortress and our deliverer.

No better was this truth delivered than at Christmas 1939 when the then King George 6th broadcast his Christmas message. Earlier that year, the nation had found itself at war and was bewildered. The war that had ended barely twenty years before and fought to end all wars had not ended war after all. That Christmas therefore, history had repeated itself. Men conscripted into the Forces were again separated sometimes by thousands of miles from those whom they loved. Those remaining feared not only for their loved one's well-being, but for the safety of their homes and children by threat of enemy action.

The King was thus tasked in his speech to dispel the fear and anxiety of the days to come. Measuring his words carefully, he spoke from the heart.

"A new year is at hand. We cannot tell what it will bring. If it brings peace, how thankful we shall all be. If it brings us continued struggle we shall remain undaunted."

I feel that we may all find a message of encouragement in the lines which, in my closing words, I would like to say to you: "He then read from a poem called The Gate of the Year," by Minnie Haskins given to him by his 13-year-old daughter, Princess Elizabeth, now our Queen.

*"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 better than light, and safer than a known way.
He finished by saying,
May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all."*

Rector Richard Grosse



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Aberfoyle and Port of Menteith Guild



The Guild is open to both women and men and meet in Church House, Aberfoyle at 2 pm on the third Monday of the month.

At our next meeting on 19 February Mike Nolan will be speaking on Music Therapy. Our final meeting of the session is on 19 March when we have Gillian Forster from Green Roots. This year's World Day of Prayer will be held at Aberfoyle Parish Church on Friday 2 March 2018 at 2 pm.

In the absence of a Convener the committee will continue running the Guild until the end of this session when it is hoped a new committee can be formed.
Contact Isabel Piper, Treasurer (382667) in the meantime.

Aberfoyle Parish Church



As I write this the snow is falling and creating a lovely Christmas card scene, a little late as we look forward to Easter when we will have the longer days and hopefully sunshine and warmer weather.

Easter, is of course preceded by Lent and this year during the period of fasting for 40 days beginning on the 14 February, the suggestion is that we take up the Lent Challenge as Foodbanks identify the period around Easter when stocks are low. Also we are hearing about hygiene poverty. Given the choice between buying food or personal hygiene and cleaning products people opt for food. However not keeping themselves clean can have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental health. So with this in mind we ask that you to put an item into a box or bag during Lent, dropping them off at Church, or contacting me if you would like them uplifted.

Donations of Easter Eggs would also be greatly appreciated and all these items will be taken to Start Up Stirling.

Aberfoyle are this year hosting the World Day of Prayer on Friday, 2nd March at 2pm and a warm welcome is extended to all who are able to join us.

We are also hosting a Messy Church on Sunday, 25th March, the theme being The Parade. This will be held from 3pm to 5pm in the Church House and all are welcome but children should be accompanied by an adult.

The Good Friday service is held jointly with St Mary's and will be held at St Mary's at 10.30am for those able to join us on this important day in the Christian calendar.

On Easter Sunday, 1st April, a day of celebration when we remember the resurrection of Jesus we will be holding our early morning service at Kinlochard at 8.00am. Followed by our usual service at 11.15am in Church. It would be good to see you at either but both would be great.

Of course before these significant dates we do hold a church service every Sunday at 11.15am and it would be nice to see more people there. A warm welcome is extended to all and despite being in vacancy we have been blessed with Dr Valerie Allen as our Locum who would be delighted to welcome some new faces.

My contact details are
janet.maccallum@btinternet.com
or 01877 382677

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Session Clerk

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Health walks tackling rural isolation and improving mental and physical wellbeing.

Walk in the Park, led by Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Countryside Trust is a series of low level health walks in five communities in the National Park. Starting in 2007, the walks now have over 100 participants in Balloch, Callander, Aberfoyle, Killin and Drymen. The walks last between 45 minutes and an hour and are tailor-made to suit all levels of mobility. Many of the participants have been referred to the project by GPs and physiotherapists, others have self-referred themselves and joined the walking groups. Providing much needed recovery from operations such as hip and knee replacements, or offering a safe walking environment to Parkinson's or dementia patients, the walks are being heralded by health professionals.



The Countryside Trust work closely with NHS Scotland with part funding from Paths for All, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Speaking about the project, Walk in the Park coordinator Cathy Scott said: "Walk in the Park is a great way to vastly improve both mental and physical wellbeing for people living in rural communities. Often people can become isolated living in villages without means of transport to help them get out and about. Our walks provide not only rehabilitation to wellness but also a social network to help people who are on their own and others who suffer with mental illness such as depression. We are very lucky to live in such a beautiful part of Scotland and studies have shown that getting out and enjoying the countryside has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. We take every measure to make sure the groups are inclusive with volunteers walking at different paces to suit all abilities. I'm incredibly proud to be part of this project and to

watch members grow in confidence and fitness." An important part of the programme is the social side to the walks and group members regularly include a café stop into their walks.

Along with the health walks, the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Countryside Trust run a strength and balance programme. Weekly workshops are run before or after the walks and combine strength and balance exercises with advice on walking to help older adults stay active and independent.

Sue Watson, Senior Physiotherapist for the Rural North West Forth Valley Partnership, spoke about the success of the programme:

"Walk in the Park provides a really valuable service that promotes a long term commitment to keeping people mobile and all the associated health benefits. As a community rehab team working in the National Park it is fantastic that we can refer patients on to the Strength and Balance sessions led by the Walk in the Park team knowing that these sessions are safe and supervised by experienced staff and volunteers. We regularly see great changes in confidence and fitness from the people taking part."

Participant's quotes

"I attend the Strength and Balance sessions and take part in the Callander walks. I have circulation problems so it is important for me to keep walking and the exercises certainly help me do just that. Our walk leaders give me confidence to extend the length of my walks and take me routes I would not normally do on my own."



"The social side of the group is really important. We can share our experiences with the rest of the group. There is a lot of laughter so the social side is so important to motivate regular participants and new members."

"This walking group has helped me a lot since I had my stroke. I am not as able as I used to be and find it difficult talking at times. The group and the walk leaders have been a lifeline to me. I can come out for a walk with confidence and enjoy the company"

Aberfoyle Walk in the Park walks and session times for the autumn are:

Monday Morning Walk, 10.20am meeting at Woollen Mill Car Park behind the Tourist Information
Strength and Balance sessions, Monday afternoon from 12.15-1pm in the Forth Inn

The photos show some of the group members on our Christmas walk through the woods near Ballelich on this spectacular frosty morning.

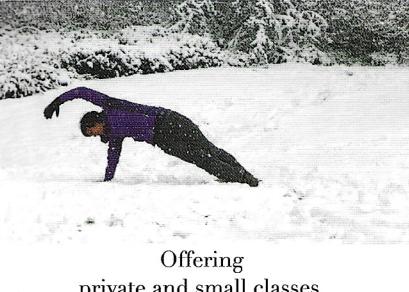
This was followed by a delicious Christmas lunch in the Forth Inn when we celebrated another successful year before stopping for our Christmas and New Year break.
(Photos supplied by Robert Scott)



If you have any questions about joining in any of our walks or exercise sessions please contact the Walk in the Park Coordinator - Cathy Scott 01877 330055 or send an email to: cathy.scott@lochlomond-trossachs.org

For more information about the Walk in the Park programme visit www.trustinthe park.org/walk-in-the-park
Our project video: <https://youtu.be/xoezDZGfGuw>

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Walk in the Park welcomes people living with dementia and their carers onto our walks. Routes identified with this logo are suitable for most abilities.



Date	Meeting at 10.20am	All routes: Walk from 15min - 1hour
05/02/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Loch Ard (car share)
12/02/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Loch Ruskie (car share)
19/02/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Lemahamish /Cobbleland (car share)
26/02/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Lochan Sping or Duchray Road (car share)
05/03/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Gartmore House (car share)
12/03/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	NCR7 to Rob Roy + loop
19/03/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Lodge Forest Visitor Centre (car share)
26/03/18	Woollen Mill Car Park	Balleich Loop 45min or 70 min - you choose!

No need to book, just turn up | social time after the walk (optional)

For more information contact: Walk in the Park Project Coordinator Cathy Scott
cathy.scott@lochlomond-trossachs.org
tel. 01877 330055

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Aberfoyle and Buchlyvie Medical Centres

Firstly a Happy New Year to everyone. It has been a busy time at the practice over the last couple of months. We have had a good response to our 'flu campaign and once again uptake of the vaccine has been pretty good across the area. We have however seen our fair share of influenza across the region which has kept us busy. We do still have a few vaccines left and I would encourage anyone who is eligible for the vaccine and has not yet had it this season to make contact with one of the practices.

Many of you who are taking long term medications may have been issued with a "medicine sick day rules" card or may have been advised of these rules. There are certain medicines which can cause increased problems if they continue to be taken when unwell with a fever, sweats and shaking episodes such as you might experience with the 'flu. Vomiting and diarrhoea illness, unless very mild, can also cause problems. The medicines which can cause problems are ACE inhibitors group (medicines ending in "pril" e.g. lisinopril, ramipril etc.); the ARB group (medicines ending in "sartan" e.g. losartan, candesartan etc.); NSAID group of anti-inflammatory pain killers (e.g. ibuprofen, naproxen etc.) the diuretic group or "water pills" (e.g. furosemide, spironolactone, bendroflumethiazide) and metformin which is taken for diabetes. If you are uncertain about whether or not to stop a medicine when unwell please contact the practice for advice.

We were sorry to say goodbye to our practice manager, Donald Morrison, who left the practice in the middle of January to move to pastures new. We wish him well and thank him for all the hard work he has done for the practice since he joined us. We are delighted to be able to welcome our new practice manager, John McLeod, who will be joining us at the end of January. He brings with him a wealth of experience working within the NHS in various roles including practice management.

Appointment Times

Aberfoyle:- 01877 382421

Monday	9:00 - 11:00	On the day and emergency appointments bookable from 8am
Tuesday	8:30 - 11:00	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
	7:15 - 8:30	Pre-bookable on alternate Tuesdays for commuters, etc
Wednesday	15:00 - 17:00	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
Thursday	9:00 - 11:00	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
Friday	8:30 - 11:30	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments

Opening times

Telephone availability 8.00am–6.00pm

Monday-Friday

Buchlyvie

Monday	8:30 - 12:30 13:30 - 17:00
Tuesday	8:30 - 12:30 13:30 - 17:30
Wednesday	8:30 - 12:30 13:30 - 17:00
Thursday	8:30 - 12:30
Friday	8:30 - 12:30 13:30 - 17:30

Aberfoyle

Monday	8:30 - 13:00
Tuesday	8:30 - 13:00
Wednesday	13:00 - 18:00
Thursday	8:30 - 13:00
Friday	8:30 - 13:00

Buchlyvie - 01360 850237

Monday	8:30 - 10:45 14:00 - 16:00	On the day & emergency appointments bookable from Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
Tuesday	8:30 - 11:00	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
	14:30 - 16:30	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
Wednesday	8:30 - 10:30	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
	7:15 - 8:30 14:30 - 15:30	Pre-bookable on alternate Wednesdays for commuters, etc Minor surgery & well-woman clinic – by appointment
Thursday	8:30 - 10:30	Pre-bookable and emergency appointments
Friday	8:30 - 11:00 15:00 - 17:00	On the day and emergency appointments bookable from 8am Pre-bookable and emergency appointments



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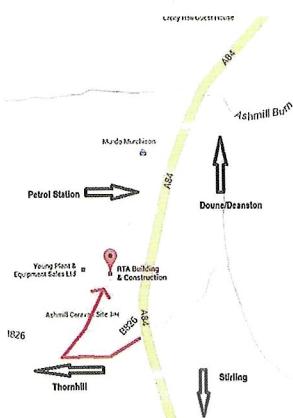


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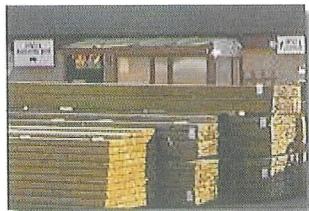
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What's On

Fri 2nd from 8:30pm **Ab-Trad informal jam session**, The Forth Inn

Sat 3rd 8pm Gartmore Community Cinema - **il Postino (U)** £4 adult / £2 children

From 3rd Coverage of **The Six Nations**, The Forth Inn

Wed 7th 7:30 PM Lochard History Group "**Inchmahome - An Augustinian Priory**" with John Snodin. Kinlochard Village Hall. Contact Joyce t: 01877 387292 or James t: 01877 387201

Fri 9th 7:30pm Classic Movie Season presents "**The Gold Rush**". The Forth Inn, Aberfoyle. Free entry.

Sat 10th **Valentines Menu**, The Forth Inn, Aberfoyle t: 01877 382372

Tue 13th 7:30 - 9:30pm Ruskie Rural - '**How glorious a greeting the sun gives the mountains'** Ruskie Rural Hall - Subscription £20; Visitors £3 www.ruskierural.co.uk

Wed 14th **Valentines Menu**, The Faerie Tree, Aberfoyle t: 01877 382191

Fri 16th **Chinese Night**, Faerie Tree, Aberfoyle t: 01877 382191

Mon 19th 2pm Aberfoyle & Port of Menteith Guild - **Mike Nolan Music Therapy**. Church House t: 01877 392667

Sun 25th **Quiz**, The Forth Inn

1st - 3rd 7:30pm Forest Theatre Company Presents **Oliver!** Gartmore Village Hall. £10 Adults / £7 Children (up to 16) / Concessions for 60+ on Thursday evening only £7. e: gartmorevillagehall@gmail.com

Fri 2nd 2pm Aberfoyle & Port of Menteith Guild - **World Day of Prayer**. Aberfoyle Church

Fri 2nd from 8:30pm **Ab-Trad informal jam session**, The Forth Inn

Wed 7th 7:30 PM Lochard History Group - "**Summer Ice**" with Laura Nicholson. Kinlochard Village Hall. Contact Joyce t: 01877 387292 or James t: 01877 387201

Fri 9th 7:30pm Classic Movie Season presents "**Seven Brides for Seven Brothers**". The Forth Inn, Aberfoyle. Free entry

Sat 10th 5 - 8pm **Bingo Fundraiser** at the Memorial Hall for Aberfoyle Primary. All welcome, recommended donation for entry £1 & then £1 per card to play.

Sat 10th 8pm Gartmore Community Cinema - **A Streetcar Named Desire (12a)** £4 adult / £2 children

Sun 11th **Mothers Day Menu**, The Faerie Tree, Aberfoyle, t: 01877 382191

Sun 11th **Mothers Day Menu**, The Forth Inn, Aberfoyle, t: 01877 382372

Tue 13th 7:30 - 9:30pm Ruskie Rural - '**Herbs and their amazing uses**' Ruskie Rural Hall - Subscription £20; Visitors £3 www.ruskierural.co.uk

Mon 19th 2pm Aberfoyle & Port of Menteith Guild - **Gillian Forster, Green Roots**. Church House t: 01877 392667

Sun 25th **Car Boot Sale** in aid of Trossachs Search and Rescue.

Sun 25th **Quiz**, The Forth Inn

Sat 31st 8pm Gartmore Community Cinema - **Out of Africa (PG)** £4 adult / £2 children

Thursday

Parent & Toddler Group, 9:30 - 11:30am, Gartmore Village Hall **Zumba Fitness** 9:30am £5.50 drop in Memorial Hall t: 07859 226761

during term time. e - elita.glenhead@yahoo.co.uk **Table Tennis** 6:30pm (Kids) & 7:30pm (Adults), Kinlochard Village Hall

Yoga 7:30 to 9:00pm, Memorial Hall

Tuesday **Yoga** - 10:30 - 11:30am, Gartmore Village Hall. Anne Corbett - 01877 376291

Zumba Fitness 6:30pm £5.50 drop in, Memorial Hall t: 07859 226761

Yoga 7:15pm, Kinlochard Village Hall

Wednesday

Aberfoyle Toddlers 9:30 - 11:30 during term times at Memorial Hall. £2 per family or £1 each.

Country Dancing 7:30pm, Memorial Hall

If you would like any events included in a future "What's On" Page please send the details to kaggi@hotmail.com

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