

Aberfoyle - Inversnaid - Kinlochard - Stronachlachar

Strathard Life

Issue 117 | Winter 2020

live here - live well



**Help Eve with her mum and dad walk the West Highland Way
- scan the code on the left with your phone
or visit <http://tiny.cc/ni6ijz>**

Editorial

Winter is putting on an appearance... too late! We can already smell spring, see the resilient snowdrops and today I drove to the printers and home in daylight, which is a cause for celebration.

The circular rhythm of being human appeals. In issue 98 (Autumn 2016), there featured an Enterprising Young Woman called Tamsin, who, in this issue, 118, has stepped up into her Mum's shoes, a much-loved and respected position in the village: the Postmistress. We thank them both: Ros for serving us all so well, in so many ways, and for creating a legacy for Tamsin that secures this valuable village asset.

Aberfoyle Past and Present celebrates past times, rarely more generously than this Christmas when Fiona Armstrong-McIntosh returned to her family home, Altskeith (Pg 5).

Future Times were the talk of the Primary school (Pg 10-13): you are right Johannes, Mr Prentice was impressed and we've got a job at Strathard Life for Mo Crawford if she'd like one!

Emma, Alison, Ross Hastie (the sign writer) and I had a great day in Edinburgh for the Great British High St Awards, which culminated in Alison becoming the Great British High St Hero for Scotland. Well done Emma for pushing us to enter. Here's to us winning the big prize this year. Footfall in the winter sees all the local businesses struggle, if you can spend locally do.





Gartmore Breakfast Club

8:00am - 9:00am Monday to Friday

Gartmore School Partnership have been successful in securing funding from the Heritage Lottery Communities and Families Fund to support a new breakfast club.

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: gartmoreps@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 £5.00 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 Mentieth and Aberfoyle Schools.

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



Post Office

A phone under the ear, a parcel in one hand and passing change over to a customer, somehow managing to hold two conversations at once. A common sight when stopping in at the Post Office over the years. Ros Dingwall, Post Mistress extraordinaire, serving customers and the community to the best of her ability in every way.



I can't imagine that she would have ever imagined how much she would end up giving to the post office when she took over with her husband Tom 34 years ago.

Her time in the Post Office has seen many life changes, taking over with two pre-teens, then finding out she was expecting again just as they were leaving home for the first time, taking a young baby into the shop and still managing to serve customers and make sure her baby was cared for.

Helping at toddlers, joining the PTA, joining the traders, joining the Community Council, becoming the treasurer, the secretary and chair of the community council, not all at the same time... Only ever two at a time.

Organising the Christmas Dinner and food parcels, helping the community takeover of the garage, preventing us losing such a valuable asset, I'm sure I will have missed something so please forgive me.

The amount of knowledge that she has is just immeasurable, even now that she has retired from all of these groups, she is still the main point of contact for many with a question, and we still receive calls in the Post Office from locals and others asking for the fountain of knowledge herself.

Her retirement will mean a huge loss for many in the area but after 34 years of service and a couple of very difficult years, I'm sure you will all be happy for her and, don't worry, she has been in the shop almost every day since her "retirement" at

the start of the year... She has certainly earned a peaceful and enjoyable retirement.

Fret not though, your post office will be remaining open as I take over, but bear with me, I don't have quite as much knowledge just yet!

Many blessings,

Tamsin

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Ephesians 4:2

Alison

Jeni Mundy, Managing Director UK & Ireland, Visa, added: "We're thrilled to showcase these unsung heroes of the Great British High Street, including independent business owners and their teams, as they receive the recognition they deserve for improving their local high streets for all.

"At Visa, we're committed to helping small and independent businesses find new ways to adapt and innovate to secure a successful future. These exceptional individuals and the work they do serve as a reminder of the important role we all have to play in helping our high streets thrive by shopping locally."

Alison Boa accepts the High Street Hero Award for Scotland at the Great British High Street Awards 2019, in proud partnership with Visa and the Daily Mirror. Pictured: Alison Boa; Jake Berry, MP; Lucia Pesce, Visa; and Jason Beattie



Aberfoyle & Buchlyvie Medical Centre

Day	Aberfoyle 01877 382 421	Buchlyvie 01360 850 237
Monday	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 12.30 13:30 - 18:00 <i>Appointments from 17.30-18.15 every 2nd week</i>
Tuesday	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 12.30 13:30 - 18:00
Wednesday	13.00 – 18.00 <i>Appointments from 17.30 – 18.15 every 2nd week</i>	08.00 – 12.30 13:30 - 17:00
Thursday	CLOSED AM	08.00 – 12.00
	CLOSED PM <i>Calls are answered by Kippen surgery between 12.00 and 18.00; only emergencies can be dealt with between 12.00 and 18.00. Please contact the Practice during normal opening hours for routine requests</i>	
Friday	08.00 – 13.00	08.00 – 12.30 13:30 - 18:00

We would like to thank the many patients who handed in gifts and cards with messages of thanks to the surgery over the festive season, it was very much appreciated.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

The surgery will be closed on Friday 10th April and Monday 13th April

SHINGLES VACCINATION

If you were aged 70 to 79 on 1st September 2019 and have not yet had the shingles vaccination please contact the surgery to arrange an appointment with the Linda the Practice Nurse.

Shingles can be very painful and is more common among older people. The shingles vaccination can reduce your risk of getting shingles or, if you do get shingles, it can make the symptoms milder.

PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINATION

A pneumococcal infection can affect anyone, but some people are at higher risk of serious illness and can get the pneumococcal vaccine free from the NHS. The people include

- Babies – the vaccination is given along with childhood immunisations
- Adults aged 65 or over
- Children and adults with certain long-term health condition, such as serious heart or kidney condition.

If you are aged 65 or over and have not yet received a pneumococcal vaccination please contact the surgery and arrange an appointment with Linda the Practice Nurse.

You find information on the above vaccination and lots of other health topics at www.nhsinform.scot

CONTACTING THE PRACTICE

The practice has a new telephone system, on calling 01360 850 237 or 01877 382 421 you are given the options below

Press 1 for reception – this will transfer your call to an available receptionist. Please note you will not be able to order prescriptions on this option.

Press 2 for Aberfoyle Prescriptions – to order repeat and acute prescriptions if you live in Aberfoyle and the surrounding area. This will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Press 3 for Buchlyvie Prescriptions – to order repeat and acute prescription if you live in Buchlyvie and the surrounding area. This will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

ORDERING A REPEAT PRESCRIPTION

Online Please ask a receptionist to register you for Patient Access

Email Aberfoyle - FV-UHB.aberfoyle-repeats@nhs.net
Buchlyvie - FV-UHB.buchlyvie-repeats@nhs.net

Telephone 01877 382 421 or 01360 850 237

Family Matters

Peter and Anne Clayton from Aberfoyle are delighted to announce the birth of their son. Ashley Peter Clayton was born on Sunday the 10th of November at Forth Valley Royal Hospital. Born at 18:44 and weighing 7lb 9oz. Welcomed home by big brother Parker, aged two.

Concert

St. Mary's Episcopal Church's Third Sunday at Three hosted a most enjoyable concert on 19th January given by Sarah Harrington (cello) and Stephen Adam (piano). A large audience of over 80 turned out to hear a wide variety of pieces ranging from Bach Cello Suites to a new piece containing strong jazz elements composed by Diana Hamilton, who was in the audience to hear it. The concert included well-known favourites such as Saint-Saens' Swan and pieces by Sibelius, Faure, and Ravel, all played with panache and verve. Stephen's piano provided the perfect accompaniment. Sarah also demonstrated her home-made cello, comparing it with her (much more expensive) concert instrument.

The next concert in the series will be given by the Engegaard String Quartet from Norway who will play Haydn, Grieg, a Svendsen Romance, and some Finnish tangos. The concert will be on Sunday 16 February and as usual will start at 3 o'clock, and will be followed by tea. The concert in March will be a performance of Faure's Requiem given by St. Mary's Cathedral Chapterhouse Singers.

Forest Theatre Company presents

Into The Woods
Wed 11th - Sat 14th March 2020
Gartmore Village Hall
Doors and bar open at 7pm
Performance starts 7.30pm

Tickets £10 adults £7 child (under 16 years)
Concessions for 60+ £7 on Wed and Thurs performances.

Further information alison.collier20@gmail.com 07749 277815

Heartwarming - a continuation of a story from Aberfoyle Past & Present



Sometimes in life something very very mind-blowing and wonderful can happen; so wonderful that you fear you are dreaming it all. I returned to Altskeith, my first home and birthplace, for Christmas 2019. We had visited 2018 and Alison and Yas, although off on holiday at the time, had shown us around and allowed us to photograph every room to take home the

memories to my aged and frail mother. Altskeith had played a major part in her life; being her first marital home, purchased from Walter Joynson in 1953. Mum so enjoyed all the photos and seeing Altskeith such a successful and grand old lady with the love and attention and work Alison and Yas have poured into her. Mum died in July 2019 and I booked with Alison to come and stay this Christmas.

Unknown to me, Altskeith was not open for business over Christmas but Alison accepted the booking months back knowing they would be away She had enquired what room I wished online , did not take a

booking fee and had it ready and waiting for us. On arrival she informed us to make ourselves at HOME, told us they were away and the place was ours for the six nightsand they would not accept any money from us at all. A Christmas tree had been put up for us and a bottle of champagne had been left, along with a lovely note to toast my Mum and Dad. How extraordinary is that! Altskeith is indeed very fortunate to have such wonderful owners.

Story: Fiona Armstrong-McIntosh



Working for you- Community Police Report



POLICE SURGERY

PC Donald King and I (Trossachs and Teith community officers) will be holding a police surgery on the following dates within the The Hub, Main Street, Aberfoyle-

Friday 21st February 2020 10am-11am;

Tuesday 24th March 2020 7pm-8pm.

This is an opportunity for members of the public to speak to us regarding any concerns/issues or be provided with information on subjects such as rural crime, doorstep crime and road safety.

ROAD SAFETY

Over the last few weeks, police have been providing assistance on the roads due to the poor weather and flooding causing significant problems with a number of vehicles getting stuck in water in the area.

Being prepared for winter can be as easy as a few simple steps before planning a journey on the road:

- Check the weather forecast and road conditions
- If the weather is poor or the road surface is dangerous, consider whether you need to travel right now or if you can wait until the situation improves
- Consider alternate routes
- Consider alternative modes of transport
- Allow extra time for your journey
- Make sure your mobile phone is fully charged
- Let people know where you are going and when you expect to arrive.

Prepare for the winter by keeping your vehicle well maintained and stocked with essential supplies before you take to the road. Take special care that brakes, tyres, lights, batteries, windscreens and wiper blades are in good condition and well maintained. In addition, washer bottles need to contain an additive to stop the water from freezing. Consider keeping an emergency kit in your car for severe weather, this should at least include:

- An ice scraper and de-icer
- A shovel for snow
- A torch and spare batteries
- Warm clothes, boots and a blanket

- Some food and a warm drink in a flask
- A first aid kit
- Battery jump leads
- A map or device with offline maps for any unplanned diversions.

In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads.

Ice and snow can increase stopping distances by up to ten times so keep well back from the vehicle in front.

If anyone has any policing issues that they wish to discuss, please contact us at Callander Police Office on 101 or email TrossachsTeithCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk

PC Lorna Deans and PC Donald King.

Community Council

<https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/blog/strathard-framework-your-place-your-future/>

All community council meetings are public and with more targeted support we can get more done. Outwith the volunteer elected Community Councillors we also rely on subject matter expert support from community members on matters such as planning and healthcare. If you have even a little time, expertise and interest in topics including the built environment, broadband, tourism, transport and education we would welcome your involvement.

P/t role available

Temporary position whilst our wonderful minutes Secretary Alexandra McLelland takes a few months break. We are looking for someone who can attend meetings as above and take/produce timely accurate minutes. This is a paid role at £40 per meeting. Please email hello@ccstrathard.org

Have your say!

2020 is another big year for Strathard with large scale community consultations coordinated by the National Park and their delivery partners PAS Planning Advice Scotland alongside the Community Council happening this quarter.

Strathard Community Council will also be building on the

work of the Community Life Plans which are already in place for Kinlochard, Stronachlachar and Inversnaid.

Our meeting dates for 2020 are:

March 5th: Kinlochard Village Hall

May 7th: Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

June 4th: Kinlochard Village Hall and AGM

August 6th: Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

September 3rd: Kinlochard Village Hall

October 1st: Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

November 5th: Kinlochard Village Hall

December 3rd: Aberfoyle Memorial Hall

Planning

There are several large-scale planning applications and pre applications in the mix already for Strathard so there has never been a better or more important time to get involved

Please email hello@ccstrathard.org with any queries

Minutes and links will be on the website at www.ccstrathard.org

Trevor Geraghty Chair Strathard Community Council

Strathard Business Hub

Dear Hub user,

We have now put an online booking system in place so you can book meeting rooms directly on our website.

To make a booking just head over to www.strathardhub.com/ book it is really straightforward, but if not, just send us a message through the contact form or to hello@strathardhub.com.

If you have the 50-hours or the 100-hours monthly Hub membership, access to meeting rooms is included, but please do use the online booking tool so that we know when you need the room and to avoid double bookings (your first booking will display the real price of the booking, which you can ignore; future ones won't).

For all other users, the price of your booking will be shown on the booking page. We will be in touch with an invoice and a payment link separately.

Trossachs Traffic Chaos Requires Urgent Action

Inconsiderate roadside parking causes congestion problems

After another weekend of traffic chaos in the heart of the Trossachs with cars parking indiscriminately on both roadside verges beside Loch Achray and near the popular Ben A'an footpath, the chief of the National Park's conservation charity has called for urgent steps to be taken to avoid another year of chaos.

James Fraser, Chairman of the Friends of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs, said: "We are only a few weeks into the 2020 and there have already been major problems on at least five days with snakelike lines of cars parked on the verges of the main Trossachs arterial road, which has poor sightlines. This has led traffic coming to a standstill with larger vehicles such as coaches and emergency vehicles unable to get through, which is of great concern and this requires to be urgently addressed to avoid a further year of chaos."

He added: "It is great to see more people becoming active and hillwalking in the area following the recent investments in hill path improvements, as part of the Mountains and the People project involving several agencies, but unfortunately this was done in isolation of other much needed improvements, such as the creation of additional off road parking. The small 30 space car park at the foot of Ben A'an simply can't cope and is often full by 9.00am."

(cont. page 8)



He also considers bold steps should be taken to introduce a regular eco shuttle bus service linking the popular hotspots with Aberfoyle and Callander to ease congestion and improve the area's green credentials. The Friends led an unsuccessful bid for funding early last year to introduce pilot eco bus shuttle services in the Trossachs and on East Loch Lomondside.

His calls for action were backed by Gordon Allan, Managing Director of the Steamship Sir Walter Scott, who said: "Any time there is good weather thousands of people take the opportunity to visit the Trossachs for sightseeing and outdoor recreation and the limited car parking infrastructure is unable to cope. When I was on duty at the weekend I saw for myself the major problems created along the Brig o Turk/Loch Katrine corridor as a result of roadside parking by hillwalkers heading to Ben A'an which now attracts over 60,000 walkers a year and this is now a regular occurrence.

"I am aware there are plans to introduce a clearway which is welcome but this is likely to simply move more pressure for parking to our site at Trossachs Pier and other parts of the Trossachs. There is clearly a need for more investment in car parking and a revival of the previous efforts to introduce a shuttle bus service linking the heart of the Trossachs with surrounding communities."

The Sir Walter Scott Steamship Trust, with the support of the National Park and the Friends, has just lodged a £400,000 funding bid with Visit Scotland for car parking and other infrastructure improvements at Loch Katrine and for refreshing signing and information around the Trossachs Trail to help relieve some of the visitor pressure.

The traffic concerns are shared by Trossachs Community Council, who have identified this as a major issue in the recently published Community Action Plan and there are calls for agencies such as Forest & Land Scotland and the Park Authority to work in partnership to improve car parking at honeypot locations such as Ben A'an.

St Mary's Business Forum

Dear Everyone,

There was an encouraging turnout for the inaugural session of St. Mary's Business Forum on 14 January despite clashing with the meeting at the school. Many stayed until 9 o'clock, and some to 9.30, so there was clearly some networking being done!

Certainly, I have received some very positive feedback, and I know that as a result some deals have been done, I have finally managed to add the names of those who came along and who were not on the original contact list.

There were some 'lessons learnt' from the first session, so the second, on Tuesday 11th February at 7 o'clock, again in St. Mary's Church, will be the new improved version! Just a reminder that this will be the first of our 'themed' sessions which will be on Digital Marketing.

It will be led by Mr Ewan Anderson, one of the digital experts on the CIM Scotland board. He heads up digital marketing at the recruitment firm Eden Scott. Remember, even if you have your own digital marketing effort well in hand, you can pass on your experience to others during the networking session.

The nibbles for this session will be provided by the Aberfoyle Inn, showcasing their excellent new chef. It was decided last time that attendees would be asked for a contribution of £2 to defray costs - liquid refreshment will also be provided - so please bring your shorter pockets.

The session in March is confirmed as Website Design, and Tim Messer of Intrepid has kindly been volunteered to lead on this. Emphasis will be on what factors you should consider in specifying what your website should be doing for you. I am sure it will be interesting!

Please pass this email on to anyone you know who would be interested and is not an addressee, and I shall look forward to seeing you on 11th.

Kind regards,

Christopher Roads
P.S. 'Roads' as in 'Streets'!



Alison Gilkes

DARM DRSM DSM

077297 66631

01360 850110

The Old Surgery,
Main Street,
Buchlivie,
FK8 3LU



@AlisonMassageTherapy

www.alisonmassagetherapy.co.uk

Milton

Hello Children,

Already the mornings are getting noticeably lighter, with me being wakened bright and early by my very own "calling bird". I'm sure that my personal alarm clock must have been one of the four calling birds who sang their song on the Fourth Day of Christmas. One blackbird singing out from his tree-top perch, high above the holt, is a really beautiful way to start any day. Just imagine the sound of four of them singing as a musical quartet.

To check on numbers, we'll all have an ideal opportunity, between February 7th and 16th, to take part in the Great Farmland Bird Count. Last year blackbirds came out on top, ahead of blue tits, chaffinches and robins.

A new calendar year means a new school project for the kits, Duke and Katrine. This time they have to find out about the ancient battles fought in and around Strathard. And, being one of only four main entries into the Highlands, there were quite a few fights. In 1649, Charles I was deposed, losing both his throne and his head.

Loyal Highlanders led many attempts to put Charles II and the House of Stuart back into place. On 3rd September 1653, a large patrol of mounted troops and foot soldiers attacked a party of Highlanders, near the Lake of Menteith, who retreated rapidly into the narrow Pass of Aberfoyle. A well-set ambush inflicted heavy casualties on Colonel Reid and his men, the few survivors glad to get back to safety inside Stirling Castle. This Gateway to the Highlands was firmly kept closed.

This being 2020, there has been quite a bit of excitement about the start of a new decade. Only it isn't. According to my clever-clogs sister, Braeval, the next decade will only begin on 1st January 2021. As "nothing" does not actually exist, there was never a year zero. Maths certainly is not my strong point, but I do see her logic. A decade is a period of ten years, beginning with year one and only concluding at the end of year ten. Next decade is eleven to twenty, where we are at right now. As Alexandr, the very wise meerkat would say, "Simples".

The thick, black, dark nights of winter are being thinned-out around the edges by the return of the sun. But there will still be enough nights under which we can stand and stare up at the star-speckled canopy. Look for the Milky Way, a brilliant band of twinkling stars running right across the sky. Including Pluto, there are also eight non-twinkling planets to find above your head.

At the moment Venus is by far the brightest, noticeable as the "Evening Star". Reaching its highest point in the sky, on 24th March, Venus follows the sun, to nightly set in the west. During the first week of February and March, a Super Moon will be swelling to almost fill the sky, shining off the snow on Ben Lomond.

This time of year is properly known in Scotland as Imbolc, one of the four great Celtic festivals, a Gaelic word meaning the "time of milk". And it certainly is! Above us is a galaxy of countless shining stars, this time a Greek word for milky. All around us, just about everywhere you look, there are drifts of snowdrops nodding their tiny white heads. More formally known as Galanthus, which translates back from Greek as Milk Flower.

It might still be early in the year, but the new-born goat kids at Inversnaid will already be suckling warm, sweet milk from their mothers. It is a time of milk.

Whatever you do, don't forget Mothers' Day, on Sunday 22nd March.

Bye for now, Milton.

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Mrs Crawford's Retirement by Charley



At the end of last term, we were all really sad to say goodbye to Mrs Crawford. She retired from her job as an SLA at Aberfoyle Primary. Mrs Crawford worked at Aberfoyle Primary School for 15 years, but we made sure she had a great send off!

We made a card and every pupil in the school signed it with their name and a little message such as "Good Luck!", "Have a Good Time!"

On her last day we made a pathway from the main entrance door by standing side by side like a guard of honour leaving a gap in the middle for Mrs Crawford to walk through. At the gates we made an archway with two people standing opposite each other while holding a banner above their head. Everyone was given a little tub of bubbles to blow while Mrs Crawford walked down.

We gave her flowers, a gift voucher and chocolates on her way out.

Here are a few comments from some of the pupils about what they will miss most about Mrs Crawford:

I will miss.... "How nice she was." "She was always kind and caring."

"Her kindness." "How she took care of me, taught me and kept me safe."

"She helped me work on my spelling." "When the field was

covered in horse poo, she went out and cleaned it up just so we could play in it."

We can all agree that Mrs Crawford was a great help to this school and its pupils. She was a great support to other staff in the school and she was very helpful with arty ideas and made costumes and props for the pantomime too. We will miss her very much.

Mo Crawford Retirement

On 31st December I retired from my position at Aberfoyle Primary School, after 15 years. During that time, I have had the pleasure of working with an amazing team of teachers and support staff. An even greater pleasure and privilege has been to know and support so many wonderful children.

I would like to thank everyone for the good wishes and gifts I have received and for the wonderful send off I had from my last day in school. I have been particularly touched by the number of cards I have received from former pupils, some now in their twenties, and have enjoyed reading their "memories" of me!

I can't close this chapter of my life without thanking all the parents and wider school community who have given me support over the years.

I would especially like to thank Stu Fielden for sharing all the unforgettable outdoor learning and camping trips and Alison Butler for being my 'Wing Woman' through many ups and downs.

Again, Thank You to everyone.

Mo Crawford



School Refurbishment by Cara



Aberfoyle Primary School has remained relatively the same inside and out for almost 150 years. Now after all that time the school is being refurbished. Everyone is super excited and cannot wait.

All of the classrooms are being modernised. They will have brand new floors and a new learning wall with a smartboard incorporated. The old schoolhouse will become part of the school and will also be the new main entrance to the school. There will be a whole new roof. While the refurbishment is taking place, we will be getting a bus to McLaren High School in Callander which will leave from the Information Centre at 8.30am each morning. I interviewed our headteacher, Mrs Barwick, about the changes which are going to take place.

Mrs Barwick:

What are you looking forward to the most? Being in a brand-new school.

What are you least looking forward to? The fact that we won't be in our usual school.

How has the school changed since you came to Aberfoyle? It has had a small bit of decoration but not as much as we would have liked. The biggest change was all the digital technology for learning that we have got.

I also interviewed one of the P7s. Primary 7 pupil.

What are you most looking forward to? Getting used to the layout of the High School.

What are you least looking forward to? Being in a small classroom and getting on the bus early.
How has the school changed since you have been here? Lots of new teachers and SLAs have come to the school. Also when I started, we didn't have any i-pads or Chromebooks.

Word Art School Bag by Isabelle

I interviewed all the pupils and staff and asked them for just one word to sum up how they are feeling about the refurbishment of our school. You can see we are very excited! It came out top of our list!



Our 'New' School

Rose - Excited for the move and can't wait to see what has happened and I'm excited for the new learning wall

Esmee - I can't wait to see our school all new and we will have a working wall in each classroom and there will be much more space to use and we will be able to enjoy the new building.

Everything will be new and refurbished not an old textbook in sight!

Isabelle - I'm really excited because our classroom will be different, and we will have a working wall and new desks and chairs in every classroom. And I can't wait to go to the high school.

Joel- excited about moving to the high school, can't wait to see what has happened to the school.

Spencer- I'm excited because we will get to have a sneak peek of the high school and then we will come back to an almost brand-new school. I'm also excited because I want to know how the working wall works! I'm most excited about everything.

Katherine - A new school! How cool is that!!! Stripped walls and fresh everything.

Shama- I'm excited because they are putting in a lot of new things in our classroom and in the school.

Cara - Can't wait to see the new classrooms and working wall.

Alicia - I am happy and sad. I am happy because there will be a new school and sad because I won't really get to see it.

Johannes - The move will be exciting because it will be a change and it will be good.

Eilidh- I'm very excited to see the school when it is done and I can't wait to go to the high school. I think the school will be amazing and spectacular when it is finished because it will be all new and there will be no cracks in the roof. I'm most excited about seeing the school when it is finished.

I really really really want to see what happens.

Poppo - I'm very excited to see the schoolhouse and all the new walls because the paint is chipping A LOT. I'm also very excited about going to the high school.

Paul - I'm excited to go to the high school and come back to a new school with a working wall.

Shama- it will be cool to see all the new stuff!

Elias- I'm very excited to see the new school once it's been refurbished and see everything that's been changed. It'll be soooooo cool!

Future Towns Project by Johannes

Aberfoyle Primary 7/6/5 recently got involved in a project called Future Towns. The Future Towns project is all about trying to make towns and villages in Scotland better in the



future and what people would like to see. We entered the competition which was organised by the national towns' agency Scotland's Towns Partnership.

Last week Mr Prentice, one of the people that work on the Future Towns project, came to our school for a visit to talk about how we would like Aberfoyle to look like in the near future. We made models of our own eco villages and we thought these would represent our view on the future of Aberfoyle well. We also showed Mr Prentice slideshows on our villages and, not to brag, but he was quite impressed.

The picture above is one of our eco-villages, with a wind farm and hydropower system. It is officially eco and we would like Aberfoyle to help stop climate change and put an end to the bushfires in Australia. We are asking Aberfoyle to become an eco-village.

The first step to becoming an eco-village is recycling. In school we now have recycling bins and we will be using them as much as possible. It is a great opportunity to be eco-friendly. The bins can be found in all classrooms and in the playground too.

What's Going on in Class? by Eilidh



Ben Venue

Primary 3/2/1

Sam in P2 says that in Maths they are doing chimney sums and taking away four digit numbers. He is reading a book called The Poor

Goose. His class topic is Under the Sea.



Ben Lomond

Primary 5/4/3

Leon and Alaina in P4 say their topic is the Human Body. In Maths they are doing fractions. They are also learning about Gods and Goddesses. In art they made snow globes which were displayed on the wall.



Ben A'an

Primary 7/6/5

Alicia is doing shapes and number lines and she just did an equations test. Their class topic is Australasia and they have been doing lots

of research on it. In P.E they are doing gymnastics. Alicia is reading a book called Fantastic, Funny, Frightening.

Poppy in P6 says that in Maths she is doing angles and different types of triangles. Poppy is enjoying reading a book called The Spiderwick Chronicles.

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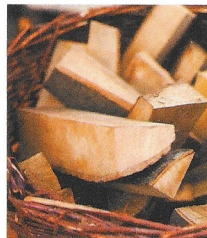
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Stories from Strathard

Three articles on the Pass of Aberfoyle from the Strathard News Archive have been amalgamated, edited and reproduced below. That on the Pass of Aberfoyle was written by Ian R Nicholson. The two articles on the Battle of the Pass of Aberfoyle were unattributed, appearing in the March 1988 (black text on white) and August/September 2004 (white text on black) issues.

Note that there are discrepancies, viz Colonels Kydd and Read are both described as having led Cromwell's troops from Stirling. According to Peter Joynton's book 'Local Past', "Kidd is probably a mistake for Read".

The Pass Of Aberfoil

I suppose in the story of any place, or indeed of any person, there are "gaps" left. For example, names and places are mentioned but exact locations or descriptions are lost. I'm going to give you my version of the Pass of Aberfoil, whether you agree with it or not! First of all, the Pass of Aberfoil, together with the Passes of Balmaha, Trossachs and Leny enabled the McGregors of Glengyle to seal off, at will, all these routes to the north. We'll let these other places worry about their own "passes", but, where was ours? All historians site the Pass somewhere near the foot of Loch Ard. Some say on the south side of Loch Ard, others say it was sited nearer the Milton but, inevitably, Ian, the fool, disagrees! "Why", you ask? Well, I'll tell you!

The old roadway can be traced, in places, from where it leaves the Milton and by a very circuitous route reaches near to the present entrance to Cuilvona. Behind Cuilvona the roadway climbed up through a narrow gorge between the rocks and proceeded on its merry way to Stronachlachar and beyond. So, "This gorge is Aberfoil Pass", he says, but wait, "There's more!"

It must be remembered that the present road between Cuilvona and Lاراich was not hacked from the rocks until the early 1800's. Previously, they were more inclined to hack each other and, in fact, the middle 1600's were lively times in Aberfoyle with murder and mayhem the "in-thing". At this time, two quite sizable skirmishes are recorded in military records as having taken place at the "Pass of Aberfoil". It was the practice, in this period, to bury the dead of a battle on the battlefield. For smaller affrays, two communal graves, one for each side, were constructed a little apart. Today's visitor to the "Pass of Aberfoil" can stand below the gorge and look up in wonder at this lonely and forbidding place, then look down and there, one on either side of the old roadway, are the two

burial mounds of men who came here all those years ago and never did return home again.

Ian R Nicholson

The Battle of the Pass of Aberfoyle

The engagement at the Pass of Aberfoyle took place by the 5th–6th September, 1653

The Earl of Glencairn as General of King James VI forces in Scotland raised a force at Duchray in 1653. The force consisted of:-

Laird of Duchray	40 footmen
Donald McGregor	80 footmen
Lord Kenmure	40 horsemen
Colonel Blackadder	30 horsemen
Laird of McNaughton	12 horsemen
Captain Hamilton	60-80 footmen

In total 200 footmen and 82 horsemen.

Colonel Kydd, Governor of Stirling marched with his regiment of foot and a troop of horse.

On hearing of the approach of Cromwell's troops under Colonel Read, the Earl of Glencairn took care to secure the high ground beside the pass. Duchray Castle is situated about a mile to the east, and a spot, in the trees below the confluence of the Duchray and the Avondhu is still called Bad an-t-Sasunnaich, the Englishman's thicket, where an English officer was shot from the opposite side of the river. Glencairn and his men probably crossed the river at Daldannet. He positioned his foot, Hamilton's cravats (so-called because they were light infantry resembling soldiers from Croatia) and Graham of Duchray's volunteers, in the best positions on either side of the pass, and drew up the horse under Lord Kenmure in the centre. Read must have realised that he would be at a disadvantage if he tried to carry the pass, but he made the attempt. His advance was driven back at the first charge with the loss of between 20 and 80 men. The whole of Read's party turned their backs and fled., Glencairn's horse and foot pursued them, some running from hill to hill, flanking Cromwell's troops, harassing them, and causing further losses. The English forces were then routed by the horsemen, 60 were killed on the spot and a further 80 in pursuit. No prisoners were taken on either side.

A local castle was burnt by Colonel Kydd's men before the battle. Originally this was thought to be Duchray castle but evidence points to Dounans castle as the one which was burnt.

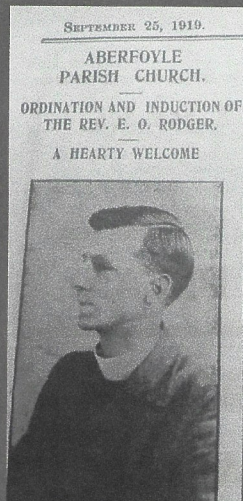
Strathard a Century Ago - 1919

In Issue 112 the news from Strathard for the early months of 1919 were described from the columns of the rural edition of the Stirling Observer. Here's what was reported during the remainder of the year.

As the year progressed April saw a good start to the Angling season with one man catching 14 fine trout during one of the outings from Aberfoyle. Early May saw the reporting of the sudden death of the long standing Aberfoyle Parish Church Minister Rev. William Moncrieff Taylor who died at the age of 64 on 4th May 1919. Later in May the ongoing demobilisation of local soldiers was reported as was the decision to reopen the Aberfoyle Golf Course which had been closed since 1916. By September 1919 a replacement for the Minister had been found and there was extensive reporting of the ordination and induction of Rev.E.O. Rodger. He was from Stranraer and had been a Lieutenant in the King's Own Scottish Borderers and had fought in the Somme and at Arras. He held his first service on Sunday 28th September 1919.

Later thoughts had turned to the issue of a war memorial and in early November the first in a series of Whist Drives was held in the school to help fundraise for the planned memorial. By December a committee was established under the chairmanship of Alexander Blair to consider what form the planned war memorial should take.

In November the Reading Room was a place of regular meetings and activities with access to books and magazines donated by local people. The Reading Room also decided to have a team in the Summer Ice Tournament for the Cayzer Cup.



The Cayzer Cup was presented by Lady Cayzer of Gartmore House in 1907. It was first played for in 1908 by teams from Aberfoyle, Gartmore, Buchlyvie and Drumlean. There are minutes recorded from 1930 to 2012 when the cup was last played for. The cup is continually engraved from 1908 to 2012 except for 4 years during WW1.

James Kennedy with permission from the Stirling Observer and Stirling Archives. Thanks to Laura Nicolson for the Cayzer Cup information.

¹ The War Memorial was unveiled in front of a large crowd on Saturday afternoon 7th May 1921. The unveiling ceremony was performed by the Duke of Montrose, Lord Lieutenant of Stirlingshire.



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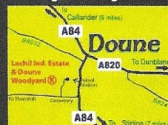
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Protecting Strathard's Rainforests

Many people associate the Caledonian Scots Pine Woodlands as being the iconic native woodland of Scotland. However, Scotland hosts what is considered across Europe to be an even rarer woodland type, some of which surrounds the Strathard area.

The native woodlands of Culivona and Craigmore, which extend from the Dukes Pass heading west past Milton to Drumlean, are an example of the rare Atlantic woodlands which characterise the western part of Scotland. These woodlands, and those around the eastern end of Loch Katrine, are recognised as being significant at a European scale and are designated as a Special Area of Conservation. These ancient woodlands are found in scattered areas along the western coast of Europe; however Scotland's Atlantic woodlands are highly valued as an important remaining stronghold.

The oceanic climate, high rainfall and mild temperature make the Atlantic Woodlands very humid; ideal conditions for lichens, mosses, ferns and liverworts. They are classed as temperate rainforests and considered rarer than tropical rainforest, hence they are also known as the Celtic Rainforest. Some of the trees in our Atlantic woodlands may have lived for hundreds of years and are important, not only for their age and the length of time for which the land has been wooded, but also for the life which grows on and around them. The trees can be seen smothered and hanging in moss and lichens, which indicates two things; that the air is clean and that there is no shortage of water in the atmosphere. Two things you are no doubt aware of!

Some of these 'lower plants', as they are collectively known, are nationally and globally rare, being found nowhere else in the world. You can learn more about these special woodlands by visiting <https://www.nature.scot/landscapes-and-habitats/habitat-types/woodland-habitats/western-oakwood>. Sadly, Atlantic woodlands are threatened by a number of issues. The most pressing for our woodland areas are:

- Overgrazing by deer and goats preventing the lower shrubby plants, such as bilberry, growing, as well as stopping the establishment of new trees, leading to the diversity of lower plants being reduced.
- Invasion of the woodlands by non-native plants, in particular invasive rhododendrons. Although an attractive looking plant, with deep purple flowers, rhododendrons

dominate and shade out any plants underneath it – again reducing the biodiversity of the woodland and the rare 'lower plants'. While removing rhododendrons from only the woodland enables native plants to re-establish, a single rhododendron flower produces thousands of seeds, which can spread at least 150m.

To ensure the effective removal from the woodland, it is vital to remove all invasive rhododendrons from areas surrounding the woodlands. Otherwise there is constant effort required to find and remove rhododendron bushes which continue to grow from seed coming from outside the woodland.

There are many different varieties and species of rhododendron in gardens and the majority are not invasive, so can be retained without risking nearby woodland. Since 2018 Scottish Natural Heritage along with the National Park Authority have been working with private owners of the designated woodlands and owners of properties close to the woodland (known as 'buffer areas') to remove the invasive Rhododendron.

In addition, Forestry and Land Scotland (formerly Forest Enterprise) have been doing this for the last 10-15 years in the areas of woodland they manage. Last year saw work to remove rhododendron from the woodland of Craigmore. This winter we will be starting work at properties in the buffer area to remove invasive rhododendron where permission has been granted. If you wish to know more about this project, please contact Gordon Gray Stephens - gordon@nativewood.co.uk. Invasive non-native species is one of the key environmental threats outlined in Wild Park, the National Park's biodiversity strategy. As well as removing rhododendron, the National Park Authority is working with partners to manage other invasive plants species, including American Skunk Cabbage, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. Visit www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/wildpark to learn more, or contact landmanagement@lochlomond-trossachs.org if you would like to discuss treatment of non-native species on your property.

Alan Bell
Landscape and Ecology Manager
Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority



Walk in the Park

Christmas Lunch

The walking group held their annual Christmas Lunch in the Forth Inn on Monday 2nd December when we were treated to a delicious meal. Volunteer Walk Leaders were thanked for their support and the amazing contribution they make to the success of the project. Volunteers were presented with a gift and certificate from Paths for All in recognition of the contribution they make to the walks and strength and balance sessions in Aberfoyle. The photo shows the walk leaders with their gifts.



Aberfoyle Walk in the Park walks and session times for the winter are: Monday Morning Walk, 10.20am meeting at Woolen Mill Car Park behind the Tourist Information Walk in the Park provides a variety of short walks in and around Aberfoyle. Led by Trained Volunteer Walk Leaders they are a fun, safe and easy way to get fit, enjoy the wonderful countryside and make new friends. Walk at your own pace and distance to suit you. Strength and Balance sessions, Monday afternoon from 12.15 -1pm in the Forth Inn. Using very gentle exercises based on the Otago falls prevention

program we take part in exercises designed to help us to walk more confidently. It is best to let the Coordinator know you will be attending this session if it's your first time.

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 07852334272 or send an email to: cathy.scott@lochlomond-trossachs.org

For more information about Walk in the Park and walk schedules for all groups including Callander, Killin, Aberfoyle, Drymen, Balloch and Arrochar visit www.trustinthepark.org/walk-in-the-park



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St Mary's Church

A significant event.

December for many is a time of anticipation. The shops are busy and the village alight with Christmas decorations. A buoyant and happy mood is in the air. Christmas Day arrives, and festivities begin, stretching through those wonderfully relaxing days between Christmas and Hogmanay. Some greet the New Year, with high hopes for the days to come. And then?

Most agree the days that follow are as uncomfortable as jumping into a loch. In the workplace, problems conveniently shelved before Christmas are now pressing. Thank-you letters have to be written and, for those at secondary school, prelims are just around the corner. The Christmas tree has shed needles and the turkey is a carcass; where is there hope and cheer in the murk of January?

It is here: the message of Christmas doesn't disappear into the attic with the lights and decorations for another year. Rather it remains for every day should we choose.

James Benson Irwin, better known as Jim, was an American astronaut. He served as pilot for Apollo 15, the ninth United States crewed mission, and the fourth to land on the moon. The mission began on the 26th July and ended on the 7th August 1971. During that time, Irwin and his companions used a space exploration vehicle called the Lunar Rover to traverse the moon's surface. 170 pounds of stone and earth was collected, including a rock dubbed 'The Genesis rock'.

Back on this planet, it was later discovered to be some four million years old. Apollo 15 splashed down in the ocean safely, despite the loss of one of its three parachutes.

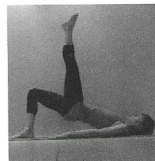
Naturally, the expedition attracted great media interest and soon after his return, Irwin was invited to appear on a television news programme. 'Didn't he think' he was asked by a television compere excitedly, 'that his standing on the surface of the moon and finding the Genesis rock was the most significant event of our age?'

Irwin paused and reflected before replying. 'No, the most significant event of our age is not that man stood upon the moon, but rather that God in Christ stood upon this earth.'

Possibly this was not the answer the interviewer had anticipated. Irwin was however extraordinarily perceptive. History is littered with examples of those who have been treated by others as human gods, but only one example of God becoming man. God chose to leave heaven and come to earth. This is something to dwell upon not just at Christmas but every day of our lives. Nevertheless, it remains a concept almost beyond our imagining...

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Aberfoyle Parish Church

As I write this at the beginning of a new year, the Locum Minister and members of the Parish Church wish all readers a peaceful and healthy 2020. As we reflect on 2019, we think of all those in the community and the world affected by tragedy and sadness and pray that 2020 will be a better year.

Sadly, and with much regret, Aberfoyle Church has not had the best start with our much-loved Locum Minister announcing that she is to resign this post with effect from the 1st March, which will be a joint Service of Holy Communion at the Port Kirk.

Her resignation leaves us as a congregation very much in limbo as we do not know what the Presbytery Plan for the Carse of Stirling is going to be. However, we look forward to the weeks ahead with Dr Valerie Allen and then from that point continuing to work with our linked charge the Port of Menteth in moving forward as worship will continue and we ask that people also continue to support us.

We, as a small congregation, continue to support those throughout the world and nearer to home less fortunate than ourselves. We have supported Start-Up Stirling, a charity organisation for the needy of the Stirling Council area, throughout the year. We thank all those who contributed either in Church or in the Co-op. These donations are very much appreciated and sadly needed.

I would like to thank all those in the community who have supported the Church with the various fund-raising activities we held in the annexe of the Forth Inn throughout the year. The money raised at the various events help maintain the fabric of the church. Without the willingness of the management and staff at the Forth Inn, who allow us the use of the premises, these events, which we hope to continue, would not have been possible.

Whilst we appreciate the support we get from you all, it would be good to see the support on Sunday when we meet for

worship at 11.15 am. All would be made very welcome

The lunches for the elderly and vulnerable started when we received a grant from Stirling Council under Your Place Your Priority in 2018, have continued and have proved very successful, especially when we involved the P7 pupils from Aberfoyle School, who entertain at these events.

We have been successful in securing additional funding so these events will continue throughout 2020, so if you feel you meet the criteria and live in the Strathard area, please be in touch and come and join us.

This year is the 150th Anniversary of both the Church and the school and we are hoping to work jointly with them to commemorate this occasion. The proposal is to hold a 'fun' day, including the appropriate Act of Worship in May, so full details should be available in the next edition of Stathard Life, so ensure you get your copy.

Do you know that the first ever cordless phone was created by God, he named it "PRAYER". It never loses its signal and you never have to recharge it. You can use it ANYWHERE, so please use it and keep us in those prayers.

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**Aberfoyle and Port
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The Guild is open to both women and men and meets at 2pm on the third Monday of the month.
The Guild is now run by members on an informal basis.

The first meeting of 2020 is on Monday 17 February at the Forth Inn when Mrs. Elizabeth Roads will give a talk on the Heraldry Society of Scotland.

Contact Isabel Piper, (382667) in the meantime.



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