

# The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue 4

Autumn 1998

## No more Green hair !



Duncan MacDonald showing David Fraser (7) and Heather Summers (11) of Stratherrick School around the newly open water treatment works.

The new water treatment works near Gorthleck was officially opened on Wednesday 9th September by David Stewart, the local M.P.

The ceremony was attended by the Chairman and Chief Executive of North of Scotland Water Authority, pupils from both Stratherrick and Foyers primary schools, along with local residents and all had a chance to tour the new treatment works and learn about the process using a resource pack produced by NOSWA. The £1.2 million water treatment works will supply water to about 1000 people in the Gorthleck, Foyers, Whitebridge and Inverfarigaig areas.

The general reaction from those present was positive, they were pleased with the clarity of the water and the promise of no more green hair. Some residents, however, have noticed higher levels of chlorine recently. NOSWA has assured them that this is a temporary measure due to heavy rainfall. The claim is that the new filtration system will remove all impurities and as a result the amount of chlorine needed to keep the water clean can be considerably reduced. There is a 24 hour helpline for inquiries on 0345 437 437

**Do you know who this is?**

See page 3



## CLOSURE THREAT TO VILLAGE HALL

Volunteers willing to join the Stratherrick Public Hall Committee are URGENTLY required if the hall is not to CLOSE DOWN! The committee has been left with too few members to make a quorum at meetings. The pressure of work is bringing in resignations from the few that are left, making the closure more imminent. Without a quorum, the Management Committee cannot function. Without a Management Committee the hall will have to close. That is the situation that faces the community.

"Despite the use of the Hall continuing to expand, more and more work is falling on fewer and fewer people," said Hall Management Committee Chairman Hugh Nicol.

The newly formed Playschool funded by the Education Department will have to close, as will the Monday Club, Country Dancing, and Mothers and Toddlers. There will be no dances, no Shinty sales of work, no Harvest Suppers, no Halloween dances in future. In other words - no hall.

"Our constitution" said Frances Abbot current Secretary of the Committee, "says that the Committee shall, as far as is practicable, include a representative from each area of the district and each organisation that uses the hall. If this were indeed to happen the desperate situation we are in might be eased. (cont'd on page 4)

## Changes at Foyers Police station

After 8 years service at Foyers, P.C. Williamson is moving on to Inverness police station. Originally from Caithness, P.C. Williamson moved to Foyers with his wife and three children to take up his post, with responsibility for a huge geographical area stretching from Dores to the top of the Suidhe. Over the years he has dealt with cases ranging from rescuing rock climbers at Duntelchaig to providing sustenance to some sailors shipwrecked off Foyers.

His professional duties included special responsibility as 'Wildlife Liaison Officer'. Working closely with environmental agencies such as the R.S.P.B., this is an area in which he has a particular interest in and hopes to continue in his new post in Inverness.

A replacement for Constable Williamson has been appointed for Foyers despite speculation following an interview given by Chief Superintendent Ramsay McGhee that cuts in rural policing might follow budget restrictions. Torquil Macleod was appointed and will be taking up his post soon. A spokesman for Northern Constabulary confirmed that there was no indication of withdrawal of a police presence in this area and that if in future there was any chance of this happening, any change would involve full consultation with the community.

### Capability Scotland

#### House Collection Errogie

The collection in May this year realised the sum of £46.79. Valerie Weir would like to thank all those who contributed.

Capability Scotland is Scotland's largest disability organisation & provides a wide range of services for the disabled.

Thanks to everybody for the contributions to the BB. We regret that we cannot print all articles and some may have to be shortened but please keep sending them. If anyone would like to help with production: stapling, delivering, reporting, page setting - anything. Contact Jane 486355.

## COMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS

Staff at Stratherrick Primary School have been praised by Her Majesty's Inspectors for their effort and commitment and for their consistently good teaching. The HMI report highlighted the quality of teaching in the classroom, the school's reputation in the community and the leadership of the head teacher Valerie Weir.

'The school ethos was good,' stated the report. 'There was a secure and friendly atmosphere. The staff promoted caring attitudes and had high expectations of pupil behaviour. Pupils were polite and courteous.'

'In general I am pleased with the report and I am sure our parents will be also,' said Miss Weir. 'It reflects the good team work which I believe has been ongoing among the staff.'

This report following earlier equal praise of the Foyers Primary School means that we have every reason to be proud of our educational standards in the district. Congratulations schools!

### Great news for Colin.

Who's Colin? Your local fire-chief - who would love to have a fire engine!! Things are off to a great start. Total cost for a self-contained, water-carrying LDV are £30,000, of which Highland & Islands Fire Brigade will contribute £15,500. First shot - to Alcan, Lochaber - has resulted in a most generous donation of £1000. Moves will immediately be made to set up a fund-raising account and, with Alcan's promise already in place, various other companies and individuals will be approached. Any suggestions and/or contributions to John Forsyth, The Bungalow, Foyers - 01456 486481 - whose car was burned out a few months ago!! Cheques should be made payable to Foyers Fire Engine Account. More information to follow.

### ARTISTS IN OUR AREA

As well as two artists who have been resident in our area for some time, namely Brian Clarkson of Easter Abercharder and Ros Rowell of Edinuanagan, Torness, we have two newcomers. Sarah Forsyth of Lower Foyers uses pastels, oils and mixed media to depict landscapes and seascapes. One of her seascapes was accepted for the Highland Open Exhibition shown in the Inverness Art Gallery and Art t.m. The exhibition is now on tour for the next year.

Nigel Hensby of Leadclune, Torness had an exhibition of his work in Eden Court in August. He paints in water colour, local scenes and flower subjects.

### COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The Community Council have purchased a photocopier for the use of the community, it will be available for use once the details have been decided.

Mr D Fraser from The North of Scotland Water Authority, met with representatives of the Community Council, to discuss the Foyers sewage problem. He was shown various deficiencies in the present system, and while not all the problems were the responsibility of NOSWA, he said he would do all he could to alleviate the situation in the short term. A new sewage system is not in the current works plan but Mr Fraser will push for it to be prioritised at the next planning meeting.

## Glasgow to Gorthleck - the war brought me here!

I really wanted to join the Wrens. When I was fourteen, I left school and worked in a shop as a Junior Assistant at Scotch Wool and Hosiery Stores in Glasgow. I was in the G.T.C. (Girls Training Corps) and maybe that's when I first got a feeling for what I wanted to join when the time came. Well when it did, I didn't get my choice - it was the Land Army for me and I was called up and joined on 6th April 1944, when I was seventeen and a half (and stayed until 30th November, 1950). Although I was disappointed about the Wrens, if I hadn't been in the Land Army I would never have met Alastair or lived here!

When I got my papers and found out that I was going to a place called Whitebridge, my brother and sisters and I looked it up on a map. I said that I thought it must be quite a big place because it was on the map! What it actually was, it turned out, was a hotel and a post office and that was it! So off I went, from Glasgow to Whitebridge on the train. When I arrived in Inverness, I was met at the railway station by Miss Ellis from Tomdoun, who took me for a cup of tea and showed me where to get the bus to Whitebridge. At that time, the bus went from the post office in Inverness. Mr. Jimmy Mackay, the farmer, was there to meet me off the bus at Whitebridge post office, he was on his bike and we had to walk to Drummond Farm, I was used to public transport, not walking! My first impression was that "there's nothing here, just countryside and no shops". At first I was very homesick and had a few sleepless nights, being so quiet there and so different from where I came from, but here I am still! There was no electricity either, which I was used to. My mother had given me some wool to knit a jersey for my brother and she used to wonder why it was taking me so long - it was because the evenings were too dark for

knitting by oil lamp! Then it was off to bed by candlelight.

I first ate brose here, we were used to porridge at home but I found that brose (oatmeal and salt) was better at relieving hunger than porridge. Mrs Mackay used to make crowdie, you use milk that is 'turning' and warm it by the fire until it starts to set, then it is stirred, salt is added, strain it and take the cream off, that is why crowdie is low in fat. So I learned to milk the cow and make crowdie and harrow the ground with the horse and turn the hay with the 'tumbling tom' so the sun could get it, and many other farming duties. I stayed at Drummond Farm for a year and a half until Mr. MacKay decided that he needed a man to drive his tractor.

My next job was at Knockie Lodge. Colonel Grant asked me to come to Knockie Farm to milk six cows and look after the hens, about a hundred pullets and fifty cockerels. I had learned to milk one cow, so this was a lot more responsibility! I went on a trial period of a month and stayed five years! I was quite frightened milking the cows at first! I also had to feed the bull - I was wary of him! It was a lovely dairy and we made butter and cheese too. I had a very happy time at Knockie and I even did my knitting, because they

had a generator so I had lights. Electricity came to the area eventually, in 1956. At Drummond Farm, Mr and Mrs Mackay were very kind to me, but it was rather lonely for a young girl as there was no one else there, whereas at Knockie, being a much bigger farm, there were others working there, young girls like myself and young men too. Ian Mackaskill and his brother Alastair were working there at that time. Their job was different from mine, they used to clean the byre and do other things on the farm. Although I had my own room at Drummond, I enjoyed sharing at Knockie, with Christine Ferguson, we soon made friends. Christine's father was a shepherd and she did the cooking at Knockie. When she left to go to Edinburgh, her sister, Iris took her job. I used to call Christine's mother, Auntie Bessie, because she made me feel just like one of the family.

Although in Glasgow, our house was opposite the locomotive works (where my father worked), believe it or not, we were not far from a farm and used to see sheep walking along the road, going to market in Glasgow. So Glasgow wasn't so very far removed from Gorthleck after all!

*Sadie Chisholm interviewed by  
Jill Cooper*

## SWEDISH TRIP

At the beginning of March, myself and three others were lucky enough to be selected to go to Sweden. The trip was funded by Leader 2 and was aimed at giving us the chance to set up links with Swedish youths who were in the same position as us. It was an opportunity for us to have an insight into the ways young people can improve things for themselves.

We met lots of new people who had received funding from Leader for projects, including one group who had set up their own Youth Cafe/Centre and are now running it themselves as a business. It gave me greater confidence knowing that projects you want to happen, can happen and hopefully we can use the Swedish examples as a platform to work from.

Sweden is ahead of us in getting their youngsters involved in the running of their country. They have youth councils that meet regularly and Youth Parliaments too. We attended a Youth Parliament while we were there and were amazed to see how confident the youths are. They thought nothing of standing up in front of three-hundred strangers and voicing their views. We hope to invite some of the people we met over to Scotland in the near future, to strengthen the link we created.

*Kelly Matheson, Garthbeg*

## LETTERS



### Boleskine Project

A working committee has been set up to look into the new and exciting project for the Lower Foyers area which will see the upgrading of the Factory Field, creating a facility that can be of benefit to the community and encourage sport and recreation.

The proposals outline the plans for the building of a new clubhouse situated in the present car park above the field and adjacent to the present group of units, as well as resurfacing and slightly increasing the size of the Shinty field. The clubhouse would incorporate changing rooms and shower facilities along with access to public conveniences when the clubhouse is not in use.

It is proposed that the facility will have a room which can be used by the community for meetings and recreational use. Kitchen facilities would be included. The schools and other organisations in the community would be positively encouraged to use the facilities and playing field on a regular basis. Boleskine Camanachd currently lease the field and use it possibly only ten to fifteen times a year for shinty matches and coaching/training sessions. Other sports must be encouraged in the area so that children do not miss out on a very important part of their development, something which these proposals will go some way to addressing.

The working committee has been set up, fronted by Boleskine Camanachd along with representatives from the Community Council and the NSHEB and our task is to raise as much money as is required to qualify for Lottery Funding to make this project a reality - a sum of approximately £60,000. Our task is not easy but over a period of time with encouragement and backing from the local community we believe this can be achieved. We need your support and encouragement to carry this forward to a satisfactory conclusion. We also need your

views on the subject and feedback from the community is vital to our aims, so please drop us a letter with your thoughts and views to:

The Secretary, Boleskine Project Committee, 44 Ross Ave., Inverness. IV3 5QJ  
NB 28th November: Annual Sale - Stratherrick Hall



### Predators and Prey

Dear Boleskine Bulletin,

I write in reply to two items which appeared in your Summer 1998 issue.

Firstly, 'Springtime for the Gamekeeper'. Mr. Hepburn justifies the destruction of carnivorous mammals and crows as they 'cause a lot of damage to wildlife'. They are, of course, themselves included in this blanket description of wildlife and have a vital part to play in any balanced eco-system food chain. These predators are killed purely to protect game birds and sheep, which are then killed by people and in the case of the former, in a most in-humane manner.

When man starts to try to change the natural balance of predators and prey, it can have disastrous consequences, we only need to look at the huge numbers of deer surrounding us which now have no natural predators; the wolf, lynx and bear long gone from our island. The predatory animals killed by gamekeepers do not only kill gamebirds and lambs, in fact they make up a tiny proportion of their respective diets, they also control other species which may cause a nuisance to farmers and gardeners.

Secondly, a letter from Mrs. Macdougall entitled 'Pine Martens - a Menace or a Pleasure'. To talk of a 'Silent Spring' caused by an increase in the number of pine martens is the same emotive talk which led to its almost total extinction as a British breeding species. A decrease in the number of birds in an area can be caused by many different factors, e.g. climate, habitat

change, use of pesticides, etc. I have experienced many times the distress of having a well loved nest site, which I have been watching for some time, destroyed by a predator, but I'm afraid that is the way of the natural world, pine martens must eat too!

I hope that this will set peoples minds at rest, who are rather fed up with pine martens, I also appreciate that it is no great comfort if they have come to your property and killed all your game-bird chicks, nesting song birds, hens, ducks or whatever, but it will have no overall effect on local wildlife populations. Remember, that predator may have just killed a rat which would have eaten your hen's eggs, or a squirrel which could eat all your song birds chicks and eggs. It would not be in the best interests of the fox, pine marten, weasel, or stoat to kill off all its own prey species, man is unique in this ability.

Yours faithfully, Nick Ryalls,  
Glenlia, Foyers.

### Highlands and Islands Alliance

A new community based political force in the Highlands is being considered to field candidates for the first Scottish Parliament elections.

The Highlands and Islands Alliance will be holding a series of meetings across the area to develop ideas and gauge support for this project. If anyone would like to know more call Bryan Beattie on 01463 731596; email bryanb@cali.co.uk or Lorraine Mann on 01862 832304; email lorraine\_mann@cali.co.uk.

(cont'd from page 1)

I'm afraid the closure of the hall is not an idle threat. It will be a sad day in view of the improvements that have been made and the level of activity going on in the hall, but we just can't go on as we are. We need people who are willing to put in some commitment, so we are desperately seeking volunteers to come forward."

Please contact Hugh Nicol 486350, Jane O'Donovan 486355 or Frances Abbot 01463 729422.

# FAREWELL TO CARTOONIST

The cartoon which has been a regular feature of this newspaper may be a thing of the past when Roger Latham leaves Foyers for Gloucester to continue his freelance career within easier travelling distance of London where most of the publications which print his work are based. "It's a need to make the face as well as the name familiar," said Roger. Within the past two years, since he gave up graphic design to concentrate on being a cartoonist, he has been a frequent contributor to such well-known magazines as Private Eye and The Oldie, and his cartoons are to be seen occasionally in The Spectator, Fortean Times, Maxim and The Journal of Silly.

He has some regrets at leaving the area he has lived in for twenty four years, but his commitment to moving is shown by the fact that he has left his beloved Harley-Davidson in Gloucester.

The Boleskine Bulletin has been fortunate so far in having free, what many professional publications pay for. Let's hope our luck does not run out completely and we may be able to show some more from time to time. The Bulletin wishes Roger the best of good fortune in his future career.

**Byeeeeeee**



Scottish Hydro have painted the huge gable end of the Foyers Power Station bright blue! Beauty is in the eye of the beholder but perhaps it would help to be colour-blind!

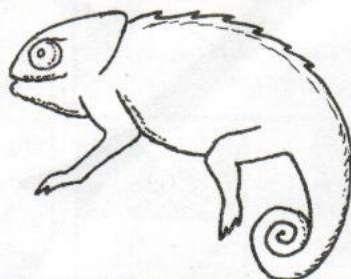
## CARTOONISTS NEEDED !!!

Entries required for cartoon competition. Winning entry £10. Winner published in next issue. All entries considered for publication in future issues on no fee basis. Entries in black and white to Jane O'Donovan by 20th December giving name, address and phone number.

## THE MIXED UP CHAMELEON

On a shiny green leaf sat a small green chameleon  
It moved onto my jotter and turned yellowish  
It moved onto the floor and turned brownish  
It moved onto my home folder and turned greenish  
It moved onto the  
blackboard and  
turned blackish  
You could hardly see it.

Heather (P2)



## BOOK REVIEW

A small book, just published, may be of interest to readers. Entitled 'Ticks - a lay guide to a human hazard' written by two reputable scientists Dr. Ho-Yen, Head of Microbiology at Raigmore Hospital and Director of the Scottish Toxoplasma Reference Laboratory and Dr Hendry a well qualified bio-chemist and ecologist, who also wrote the booklet 'Midges in Scotland'. The book sets out to explain calmly and objectively, the nature of the tick/disease problem

Quoting from the book cover - 'Throughout rural Britain ticks are present in significant numbers - and they carry diseases. One of these, Lyme Disease, is especially dangerous, and has been widely publicised.

The authors have omitted the recent development of a vaccine against Lyme disease, still being trialled. Also omitted is the actual number of cases recorded in Scotland each year - since 1990. The number has varied from 3 to 14 but shows no increase. On the basis of my own researches, I can thoroughly recommend this booklet.

John Forsyth, Foyers

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If you would like your trade or business name to be included in the Trade Directory, please phone Dave Munro on 486400 or fax on 486444

### ADVERTISING

£15 for four issues if you would like to be in the Trade Directory

Display advertising: £2 per cm column; one line adverts £1

### next issue of BB January

Contributions by 20th December to:

Buddy MacDougal, Foyers

Sandy McLure, Gorthleck

Francis Abbot, W/bridge

Jane O'Donovan, Gorthleck

Thanks to Ray Cooper for printing the BB

### **STRATHERRICK FEIS**

Same as last year the Feis will be having two classes on the middle **Friday** of each month from November to April at Farr School. There will be a class from 7-8p.m. and another from 8-9p.m. giving those attending four choices plus a wee ceilidh at the end of the evening. Contact A. Forbes on 01808 521333 for details.

### **Senior citizens coffee mornings**

**are to recommence on Thursday 15th October at Foyers Tea Room**

### **Stratherrick Public Hall diary**

**Monday Club** 6-8pm Monday  
**CountryDancing** 7.30 Wednesday  
**Bowls** 7.30 Tuesdays

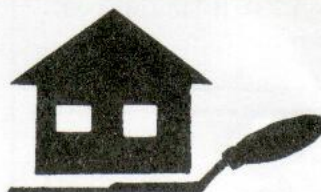
**Oct. 30th Friday Harvest Supper** 7pm

**Oct. 31st Saturday Halloween Party** 7pm-11pm

**Nov. 19th Thursday** Talk 'In Search of the Picts in Scotland' 7.30p

**Nov. 28th Annual Shinty Sale** 3pm

**Dec. 18th Friday Xmas Family Dance** - 9pm with Goat Island Ceilidh Band.



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### **Foyers W.R.I.**

Foyers WRI met for the first time this session on 3rd September when two veterinary nurses, Fiona Main (from Lower Foyers) and Heather Lawson, gave a talk on Animal First Aid using Gigha, Fiona's long-suffering spaniel, as the patient.

*Next meetings:*

**Nov. 12th** - a visit to "Angels" Factory

Leadclune. Members Only

**Dec.** - Christmas Dinner. Members Only.

**Feb. 4th** - A talk by John Forsyth

### **The Annual Harvest Supper & Dance**

is to be held in the Stratherrick Public Hall on **Friday 30th October**, starting at **7 p.m.**, (proceeds for Christian Aid). Details from Rev. Martyn Bateman (486273)



### **Hallowe'en Party**

**Sat 31 Oct 7 - 11pm**

Stratherrick Public Hall  
Fun for all the family  
Competitions, Fancy  
Dress, Raffle & Disco

In aid of Mothers & Toddlers

### **Church of Scotland services**

Boleskine 10 am, Dores 11.30 am,  
Foyers 6pm, (from 1st November  
Foyers 4pm)

### **'LOST'**

A large **old preserving pan** which has belonged to the family of Margaret at Whitebridge Hotel for generations. She lent it out and has forgotten who she lent it to. If it was you, will you please return it to Margaret. She will thank you on bended knees!

**Book** - "STORY AND SONG ON LOCH NESS-SIDE" by MacDonald. Buddy MacDougal of the Coach House Foyers would be very grateful to have this book back.