

The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue No. 12
Autumn
2000

Postal ballot coming soon

The election for the new
Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council
will take place on Thursday 23rd November 2000. For the first time we will be voting by post. Mr Sandy Maclure of Woodacre, Gorthleck has been appointed Returning Officer.

Anyone wanting to stand for election can obtain nomination papers from Foyers Shop or from Sandy Maclure, the Town House or the Service Point, Church Street in Inverness. Each nominee must be on the current electoral roll and each nomination must be supported by the names of 2 people also on the electoral roll. Nomination papers must be in the hands of Mr. Maclure by 31st October. (Post box is by the gate) Two days are then given for anyone who changes their mind! Withdrawals can be made up until Thursday 2nd November. If there are 10 or less nominations there will be no election and the nominees will be returned automatically.

Postal ballot papers will be issued to all people on the electoral roll before the 13th November. Voting by post should result in a good return - no

excuses!

But there will be no election if there are not enough nominees. Sandy's phone number is: 486435

Elsbeth Hall of Lower Foyers made a banner saying....."C.R.SMITH, GLAZIERS (DUNFERMLINE) LTD. ARE JUST LIKE BRITISH GOVERNMENT - FULL OF PROMISES BUT DON'T DELIVER!" and drove down to the company's headquarters. Within minutes she was invited inside by the marketing director. And her story was told!

Elsbeth had ordered a door and window early in July to be installed in her husband Brian's bedroom which was being extended. She wanted it installed during Brian's week away on respite care, at the end of September, so that it would be all ready for him to move into with the least inconvenience. (Brian suffers from Huntington's Disease). It did not arrive and after continued frustration and endless battles she decided to take action! The door and window were fitted the following day and the job finished for Brian's home-coming.

Photo - Jamie Smith

Elsbeth Confronts Giant



TRANSPORT SURVEY COMPLETED

The Survey of local transport needs carried out by the Stratherrick and Foyers Transport group has been completed. The group is a sub-group of the Community Council, and the survey was funded by both the Community Council and the Partnership for Rural Inverness and Nairn.

Fiona MacDonald, who carried out the survey, covered the majority of houses in the area. 120 households i.e. 46% of occupied houses, supported the need for a better service. Nearly half of the forms were returned with additional comments showing that there is great interest in the subject. Different groups with transport problems were identified. For example, 15% of households have difficulty getting to the Medical Centre.

Ros Rowell of Torness has put together a comprehensive report and has copies for anyone who is interested. A meeting has been held between the Transport Officer (Highland Council) and the Transport Group to decide what to do next. Following the feelings highlighted in the survey it was decided that any further developments should be made with the close co-operation of the community, through the Community Council. It is possible there may be funding available from the Rural Community Transport Initiative or other funding bodies for a locally based solution, including possible finance for a local co-ordinator. If anyone is interested in becoming involved with the planning of this, or has any ideas on the subject, please contact Ros Rowell in Torness, 01463751314.

UPDATE ON THE FOREST

The preparation of the South Loch Ness Design Plan continues and by the time this is published an early draft of the plan will have been discussed at an evening meeting with the Boleskine Environmental Network. Their comments will be incorporated into the structure of the plans. Anyone else with comments regarding the design or management of the forest can contact Kenneth Knott 01320 366322. The draft plan and all other Design Plans are available for inspection in the District Office at Fort Augustus.

There is some harvest work in progress in Knockie Forest, and conifers are being cleared from the Easter Ness SSSI and from adjacent land. This will allow expansion of the native woodland from the SSSI. Most of the felling will be carried out this winter. There is an ongoing thinning programme throughout the area of Camus, Trinloist and Balnagarline. Deer management remains a top priority with the current native woodland restoration. Management of the deer population levels will be ongoing throughout this autumn and winter. Neil MacIntosh from Glenurquhart has the contract for culling for the second year. Having started in September he will work through until February of next year. Neil is fully aware of the locations of both houses and footpaths in the area. In the main, he will concentrate his shooting to the early morning and early evening.

The Camus bridge will have been repaired by the time this is published and there should be no more inconvenience. Thank you for your co-operation whilst work was in progress.

Kenneth Knott - Fort Augustus.

STOP PRESS

**chance to see/comment on forest plans.
Foyers Church Hall - 8pm- Wed.8th Nov.**

Katy looks for help with paths and squirrels!

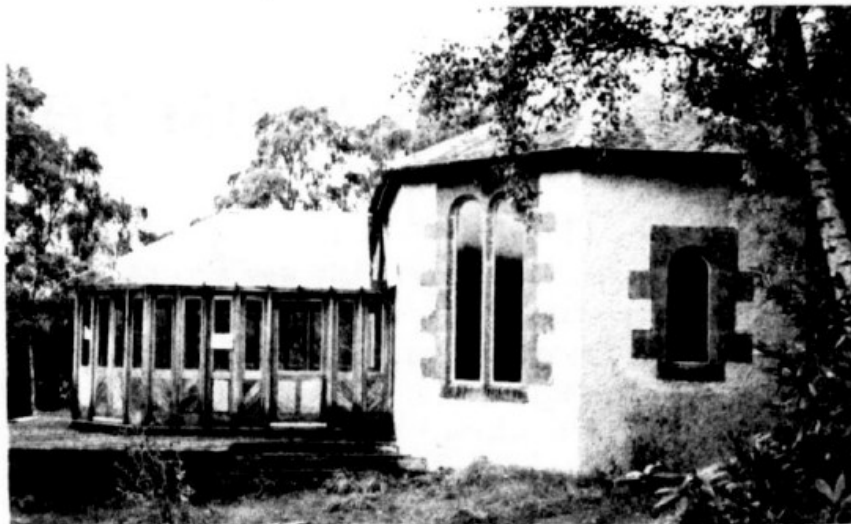
The Foyers path network has been evolving over the last 3 years but Katy is now trying to improve both network and leaflet. Over the next few months she along with Buddy MacDougall and Jane O'Donovan will be looking at the paths in detail. If you would like to help just walking the paths, commenting on the network or leaflet get in touch with Buddy or Jane or ring Katy Stirling (Countryside Ranger) on 01463 724260. and squirrels. 17 people have sent in survey returns so far. Many thanks. Keep sending them in! Forms can be found in the Foyers shop.

Editorial

The forthcoming postal ballot taking place at the end of November could be the first in our area. If there is an election we have very little excuse not to vote! Traditionally community councils had little power but increasingly there is much that they can do. The last time the community council term of office ended there was insufficient support and therefore there was no election. Only the few existing councillors wanted to stand. Those few have continued to serve and over the last five years have been 'topping up' numbers by co-opting people they felt represented the wider community. The Community Council needs support and it needs new people to revitalise itself and to keep democracy alive!

Community owned housing?

At the last community council meeting held in August Mr Alexander of the Small Communities Housing Trust explained the situation regarding his trust's involvement in land at Gorthleck and Inverfarigaig. He made it clear that no purchase of land would proceed unless the community supported the idea of community owned land for the purpose of housing. At Gorthleck (prior to purchase) outline planning permission had been applied for - supported by the community council. At Inverfarigaig there is potential for a purchase and he was keen to find out the local reaction to such a plan. A good turnout at the meeting reflected different opinions and it was agreed that further discussions should take place.



It is good to see two houses that have stood empty for some years now have new owners - the Chapel House (photo above) and the house adjoining Foyers Shop & Cafe. Photo: Buddy MacDougal

The Hall is finished ... Opening on SATURDAY 4TH NOVEMBER

Saturday 4th November will be the grand opening of the newly refurbished Stratherrick Hall. Come along and feast your eyes. Doors will open at 7.00 and at 7.30pm a ceilidh will begin. Various talented people doing things and "Fire in the Bog" a band up from Glasgow, will play on and off throughout the evening (a certain local talent is amongst them!!). There will be stovies to eat, Bucks Fizz to toast with and tea and buns to chat over. A 'Silent auction' will be ongoing to get rid of old tables, chairs, and various odds and ends. There are two sheds to auction off as well.

Silent auction.. you might ask. Well, it's an auction that hasn't got an auctioneer. You write a sum on a piece of paper and you hope no one will write a larger sum underneath but the hall committee hope that someone will and that you will be tempted to put another higher sum under theirs..... Get the picture.

The purpose is for you to admire the new floor, chairs, paint, visible and invisible fire precautions and to remind you that the hall will be taking bookings from the 1st November. The woman to phone is Cathy Stoddart on 486 329. Imagine your birthday party, wedding reception, or family reunion taking place in this exotic new location. Drink a few more cups of tea and imagine organising a dance, a youth club, a painting class. All sorts of things could now happen in Stratherrick Public Hall. Charges as before - see back page.

NEWS FROM THE EAST

Farr Gala

The venue for this year's Farr Gala was a tribute to the success of the years of hard work done by the Farr Hall Fund raising Committee. For the first time, the gala was held in the new Village Hall and its surrounding land. Although the day started grey overhead, the sun soon broke through and kept the rain away for the rest of the afternoon. There was plenty to keep the family occupied with pony rides, side shows and a visit from the Fire Department and the Army Field Regiment. In the Hall itself there were plenty of craft stalls to browse through and refreshments to be had.

For many, the highlight of the afternoon was the Tug-of-War battle between the youngsters of East (Farr & Daviot) and West (Stratherrick). Earlier the Stratherrick Men had won their competition but the Ladies had lost so it was up to our youngsters to put the balance right. This they duly accomplished though I fear there may have been the odd 'bald head' in the West team which went unnoticed by the judge! There were also a number of races with Stratherrick winning prizes in quite a few - including a blistering win for Heather Parrott in the Ladies' race.

With plenty of well-kent faces from East and West, it was a great afternoon to catch up with friends and help to boost the coffers of the Fund-Raising Committee. Future projects include the development of the field into football and shinty pitches with work on this well advanced. All in all it was great to see a neighbouring Strath accomplish their goal after years of hard work. Here's hoping our refurbished Hall looks as good and is as well supported as the one in Farr!

Catriona Fraser

and at the hall

1) **The Feis** starts its winter sessions again at Farr Hall on 17th November. We will be teaching the usual instruments such as fiddle, tin whistle, bodhran, step dance (obviously not an instrument), chanter, gaelic song, and (maybe) drumming, keyboard, etc. The evening always ends with a wee ceilidh, led by the tutors.

2) This year, the **St. Andrew's Day Bonfire** event will be joined with a ceilidh/dance at Farr Hall which is being organised in memory of our late tin whistle Feis tutor, John Jameson, who died at the beginning of this year. Performers will be drawn from local talent as well as more famous names. Proceeds will go to Highland Hospice. A date has not been set (obviously, it would normally have been 30th November) but it is likely to be **1st December** because it is a Friday and will suit schoolchildren much better.

3) The next **BIG** name booked for **Farr Traditional Music Concerts** is Dick Gaughan on **Saturday 20th January**. It may be that additional big names will be appearing before then but that is the only one confirmed at present. These concerts have captured the imagination of the local people and every one is well attended. The **Blazin' Fiddles** concert on Tuesday 12th September was a complete sell out and only standing room in the vestibule was available. The atmosphere and musical quality at that concert will remain in the minds of both the band members and audience for years to come.

4) The construction of brand new shinty and football pitches at Farr is well under way and, following seeding work in the Spring 2001, will be in use next year.

Foyers School Facelift

Foyers School is to have a new kitchen to the rear of the school hall. Work is now in progress and is due to be completed by November. An original canteen, built in 1947, two corrugated iron classrooms, dating from the early part of the century, and a playground shelter were demolished during the school summer holidays. As a result, the School now enjoys more open prospects of the surrounding woodland - and the children's play area has doubled.



Goodbye old classrooms...!



Demolition of the old canteen, built 1947, begins in August 2000.



The woodwork room 1912—2000.



Foyers School in September 2000—after demolition of the old canteen and outbuildings, but before construction began on the new kitchen.

Foyers School's Environmental Project

Children at Foyers School have been studying local wildlife as part of a year-long environmental study supported by a British Telecom grant of £5,000. Although still in its early stages, the project is already well under way with surveys of the insect and plant populations around the school and joint expeditions with Aldourie School to learn about the habits - and habitats - of the mammals of the Loch Ness area.

With the expert help of Katie Stirling, Highland Council's Countryside Ranger for the district, pupils learned to collect samples of local creepy-crawlies by shaking them out of trees and bushes onto sheets - and then sucking them up through 'pooters' into sample bottles for closer examination! Investigations of this kind will continue as the seasons change, conveying a detailed impression of the diversity of life in our exceptionally rich local environment.



Katie Stirling, Highland Council's Countryside Ranger, shows Foyers pupils how to shake down the local insect population.



First catch your.....bug! 8-year old Hannah collects a sample of local insect life with a 'pooter' for closer inspection.

On another recent occasion, the children explored woodland in Aldourie for tell-tale traces of local deer, badgers, squirrels and other mammals. Once again Katie provided 'Sterling' assistance, substituting stuffed exhibits, collections of bones and preserved bats for some of our shy, live animal neighbours.

Information gathered by the children in this way will be included in a public exhibition to be organised at the end of the current school year. The project also involves study of the history, archaeology and social life of the loch-side community.



LETTERS

Boleskine Camanachd.

Dear Editor, We are delighted to announce that we have received £15,000 grant funding from Sport Scotland (Awarding body for lottery) to allow us to resurface and extend the shinty field at Lower Foyers. We have also received £7,500 from the Inverness & Nairn Enterprise allowing a total grant aid of 75% of the project cost.

We hope to start the project by next spring, with a conservative completion date of September 2002. We owe a debt of gratitude to all of you in the local community for your support in our fund raising efforts. Without this support the project would not have been possible.

We would like to hear from local groups interested in forming sports teams and associations. There would be no charge for use of the field by groups from the Foyers & Stratherrick area. Please contact me on 01463 243141 or 239035. Or email to duncan@shinty.freemove.co.uk.

Sincerely Duncan MacDonald

Appreciation

Dear Editor, Thank you for the Boleskine Bulletin, this is an excellent local paper for such a remote and rural area. I have once again enjoyed the article by Dr Erica Traill, Torness on fluoridation and I have kept this in the file as I believe we are likely to have a debate in the Scottish Parliament on fluoridation this Autumn. I have enjoyed several walks in the Forest Enterprise land at Inverfarigaig this summer. My best wishes, Mary Scanlon MSP

Fundraising day

Thanks - Colin & Margaret Adamson would like to thank all who helped make their fund raising day such a success. We have now managed with contributions and other fund raising efforts to raise over £2,000. Our thanks to all

and a letter of thanks.....

TO ALL MY FRIENDS,
big and small, Thank you for all your kindness when I took a tumble. Love from Laurie Chattington

Contributions from the Butterworth family.....

Now that the sloe berry season is upon us, I thought your readers might be interested in a favourite recipe of ours, given by an old family friend - Captain Ian MacDonald of Clachan, Argyll.

"Sloe Gin"

Half fill a standard size (70cl.) gin bottle (or similar) with freshly picked sloes, which have been pierced with a cocktail stick. Add 6-8oz of sugar and fill up to the neck with gin. Store in a dark cupboard, inverting the bottle every other day to allow the sugar to dissolve - about 3 months time - after which sieve and bottle the gorgeous, richly pink nectar and enjoy in time for Christmas & New Year.

from Annie... age 6

Q. Why did the one-handed skeleton cross the road?

A. To get to the second-hand shop!

and from Gavin... age 8

What is White

White is softly falling snow.

A cloudy sky is so white.

White is feeling bright.

The tops of mountains are white and brightly shining far lights.

You can smell white on a daisy.

You can feel white on a sheep's coat.

You can see white in brightly shining car lights.

From a plane so high all you can see are white clouds or a seagull or two.

White is a new beginning.

and from Mum

Bed & Breakfast

House full to overflowing?

Unexpected guests?

Help is at hand!

B & B in warm, comfortable home from home

Evening meal available by prior arrangement.

Reasonable rates

Open all year.

Contact Time at "Crannach" Gorthleck.

Tel. 486275

MARY EVANS

who died on the 3rd September came to Foyers in 1936 as the bride of Leonard who was the industrial chemist for the British Aluminium Company. Her three sons and a daughter were all born in the district, two in the Bungalow at the foot of the drive up to Foyers Bay House. Mary became very involved with the W.R.I., becoming its president for some time. She was keen on sewing and handicrafts, which she also taught. Her hand-made rhododendrons bloomed in the depths of winter confusing quite a few people.

During the war when the bomb fell on the factory she was wheeling one of her babies in the pram up to the farm road and found herself surrounded by a frightened herd of cattle who formed a tight circle around her and the pram almost as though they were protecting the child. The family moved to Fort William in 1950 where she taught for a while (the very young Charles Kennedy being one of her pupils). In 1967 they returned to Foyers and lived in "The Cairn" a house further up the road from the Bungalow. She taught in Dalneigh school for 2 years and then taught in Foyers school until 1972 when she was promoted to head teacher until reluctantly retiring at 65.

Mary was also very musical and gave piano lessons to local children with the admonition 'Don't practise - don't come!' Her husband Leonard died in 1971 and she lived in the village with her son Colin until her death. She is buried beside her husband in Foyers Burial Ground.

OBERAMMERGAU

In early September Sadie Chisholm, Joyce Munn, Jancis Bateman, June Grant and Margaret Campbell set off on a coach trip from Fort Augustus to Oberammergau in Germany to the venue of the famous Passion Play. After crossing the channel to Zeebrugge with "the only hazard being, that some of us had to climb to the top bunk of the cabin!", the journey crossed five countries and involved some spectacular sights, visits to churches, cathedrals and to "the Champagne Cellars which go for miles underground - and we were given a glass of champagne.... mmm."

Their account of the play itself is as follows-
"Oberammergau has 5,000 inhabitants and 2,000 of

them take part in the Passion Play which is held every ten years. They have done this since the Plague in 1633, fulfilling a vow which their ancestors made when their lives were threatened by the Plague. The Story tells of the suffering and dying of the Lord Jesus Christ. The stage is in the open air but the 4,000 people in the audience are in an enclosed area. The play took six and a half hours to perform. The set is very simple - the costumes are wonderful. The crowd scenes are very impressive - women, children, babies, and old men. Live animals are used - a donkey, a horse, and doves fly out of an upturned basket. All the players must live in the village for twenty years before they can take part. There are four performances per week, from May to October. It was a wonderful experience."

Thanks to Margaret Campbell for her fascinating account.

An update from Rose Fortune

The SENIOR CITIZENS' ANNUAL OUTING took place on 19th July - a lovely sunny day. Sixty-six "youngsters" attended the outing to Elgin, where some enjoyed a visit to the Bible Garden. Later we made our way to Baxters at Fochabers, and then on to Buckie where we had an excellent high tea in the Old Coach House Hotel. Our grateful thanks are due to the Knockie Trust committee for the generous donation of £600 towards the costs of this happy day.....

.....and now onto Christmas. We are beginning to think about our 2000 Christmas Dinner arrangements but are having difficulty identifying new pensioners in our area. If you have your 65th birthday before Christmas, if you have moved into the area during this year and are 65 or over or if you are over 65 and did not attend the dinner in previous years but would like to do so, please contact me at "PHOENIX" PHONE NO. 486 663

STRATHERRICK T.V. CLUB Vera Read reports that after a meeting held on the 28th August it was agreed by the majority to switch off the Aberchalder T.V. aerial. From the end of October, therefore there will be no reception of television from Aberchalder.

SO YOU THINK IT'S A LOAD OF OLD RUBBISH?

How many of us really think about what happens to all the rubbish we chuck out? We happily trundle our over-stuffed wheelies out on a Wednesday and, hey presto, the rubbish magically disappears. Problem solved...or is it? With the Longman landfill site due to close shortly and a proposal for a dump on our doorstep at Daviot, perhaps it's time to think seriously about what we throw out and what we can do to reduce the amount of waste we produce.

Enter.....composting! This is one way to put thoughts into actions. Starting a compost heap is the single most effective thing you can do to help to reduce waste, combat global warming and save yourself money. You don't even need a garden!

Why is composting a good idea?

- Waste is reduced
- Gases released from landfill are reduced
- Pollutants leaching into the water table and food chain are avoided
- Peat compost sales are reduced helping conserve fragile habitats
- Gardens grow better - compost improves fertility, moisture retention and soil structure.
- It reduces the need for artificial fertilisers and helps with natural pest and disease control
- It saves you money
- Dustbins smell better!

Approximately 30% of all household waste is organic and therefore compostable. Home composting, as well as bigger central operations, are becoming major priorities for local authorities across Europe. This is because of the huge benefits this simple operation can bring to reducing waste and protecting our environment.

Anything that once lived can be composted, from plant debris and wood ash to hair clippings and paper. A working heap has a sweet earthy smell

and as long as the usual garden hygiene rules are observed, compost making is safe and easy. All you have to do is decide on what kind of heap you want. It can be home made (from old wooden pallets or bricks), or something more classy - there are lots of compost units on the market to choose from.

Strathspey Waste Action Network (SWAN) has been running a successful home-composting scheme for the last two years. On average 3.2kg of kitchen waste per household per week is being diverted from landfill. This works out at 166kg per household per year - a big reduction! Two years on the project is so successful that it is expanding. Could we do a similar thing in Stratherrick and Foyers?

If anyone is interested, confirmed composter or new recruit, contact Heather on 486 426.

THINK GLOBALLY, COMPOST LOCALLY!

next meeting of Boleskine Environmental Network - Monday 30th October - 7.30pm Whitebridge - any ideas on composting come along.

Falling numbers in Foyers.

Foyers Hotel is now closed for the winter. The public bar will also be closed until the Spring due to too few customers.

Numbers are also falling at the Falls. The people counter at the Falls of Foyers recorded 14,764 between 21st July and 18th August. This is slightly down on last year when 20,006 visitors were recorded over the same period. Interestingly, between mid June and mid July figures were up on last year. 10,876 compared to 7,878.

Foyers W.R.I.

(a report by Lyn Cooper)

In October members were given a guided tour of the new Police Station in Burnett Road, Inverness. After an introductory talk and a demonstration of how the CCTV cameras operated in town, they took part in a mock identity parade. Although they all pleaded their innocence they somehow ended up inside a police cell. After being released they were provided with refreshments and allowed to return home. A most interesting evening was had by all.

Trade directory

All Jobs

Darholm Enterprises -
486416/430

Builder & Joiner

Steve Ricketts - 486225

Cafes & Restaurants

Foyers Bay House - 486624
Foyers House - 486405

Contractors

Angus C. Fraser - 486650

Embroidery Classes

Chris Moore - 486255

Hotels & Lounge Bars

Craigdarroch House Hotel -
486400
The Foyers Hotel - 486216
Whitebridge Hotel - 486226
Dores Inn - 01463 751203

Landscape Gardening

Ian Munro - 01463 240413
or 486400

Native Tree Nursery

Jane O'Donovan - 486355

Picture Framing

Hugh Nicol - 486350

Shop & Post Office

The Foyers Store - 486233

Watercolours & Art Classes

Ros Rowell - 01463 751314

Mobile Hair Stylist

Appointments - 486727

Next issue of the BB
January

Contributions by 20th December
to: The Editor, Norbu,
Lochgarthside, Gorthleck, or
leave at Foyers shop marking the
envelope BB or email
odonovan_jane@hotmail.com

Thanks to Ray Cooper for
printing

To advertise:

Call Chris Smith on 486 625.
Current charges: trade directory
£10 for 4 issues; display
advertising £1 per column cm (3
columns per page); Small ads.
are free for items under £100
(not trade). Remember... the BB is
delivered to every house in the
Foyers and Stratherrick area. What
an opportunity!

FOR SALE.

Fiat Panda - spares or repairs -
£50 - 486 348

WANTED.

Cheerful permanent accomodation
before Christmas in return for
housework/cooking/gardening...
Phone Barbara 486708

WANTED

Cleaner for the Hall at Gorthleck. £5
per hour. Once a week during winter,
less during summer. Contact the
Secretary Dave Bradwell. 486377

Home Carer required

for the Foyers & Erroglie area.
Responsibilities include visiting
people in their own homes helping
them with daily tasks. Some evening
and weekend work. Previous
experience is desirable but not
essential as training will be given.
£5.13 per hour. Own transport (car
or bicycle), a mileage allowance is
payable. Please telephone for either
an application form or an informal
chat to Mrs Brenda Codd at the
Telford Centre in Fort Augustus.
(Social Work Services). 01320 366511



Andrew Fraser
Building Contractor

Houses - Extensions - Renovations
Stonework

Ben Sgurrach, Erroglie
Tel. 486408

HAPPENING SOON at Gorthleck Hall

Indoor Bowls

Starting Tuesday 7th November
7.30pm new members welcome

Country Dancing

Starting Wednesday 1st November
7.30pm always want more people!

also Badminton.

contact Steve on 486225

Parents & Toddlers Group

Wednesday mornings

starting 1st November

Hall Opening

Saturday 4th November
7.00pm

SHINTY SALE

Saturday November 11th. 3.00pm
in Gorthleck Hall

Christmas Carol Service

Sunday 24th December 8 p.m. Tea
to follow

Stratherrick Hall Charges

Half day/evening session £10

Committee Room £5

Sales (single day according to
length of use) £20-£30

Sales (even/am & pm) £40

Private Function with use of kitchen
(weddings etc) £30

Childrens Parties £10

Dances £40

Phone Cathy Stoddart on
486329

KEEP FIT KEEP FIT

Kilchuimen Academy, Fort
Augustus, Mondays 7.30pm.

Includes warm up, muscle toning,
Tai-bo, aerobics. £2.50 per class.
Contact Christina Everett on 01320
366235 for further details and
information about dance classes.

Doctor - 486 224
Local Councillor
Mrs Ella MacRae
01463 751 203