

The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue No 21
Winter 2002

Break-in at Torness

It was early evening on Tuesday 3rd December when the occupants of two houses at Torness returned home to find their property had been broken into. A bicycle, a small amount of cash and a children's piggy bank were all that had been stolen. The break-ins occurred during the day when the occupants were out. The police were quick on the scene and subsequently arrested a man in Fort Augustus.

More Hydro for the Highlands?

Scottish and Southern Energy will shortly be submitting a proposal to the Scottish Executive for a 100 megawatt hydro scheme in the Monadhliath Mountains above Fort Augustus. A new reservoir with a 100 foot dam will be erected at the head of the River Tarff.

New roads into the hills will be required for the construction phase and a series of tunnels and overground pipes will transport the water to a new power station on the shores of Loch Ness near Glen Doe. In addition to the upper tributaries of the River Tarff water will also be extracted from the headwaters of the Glen Brein catchment, the River Killin and as far east as Glen Markie.



One of the runners supporting his own cause at the start of the Baxter's Loch Ness Marathon this autumn.

Baxters organised the run which raised a total of over £80,000 for charity.

Police offer ideas for Foyers centre

There is to be a public meeting, held in Foyers Church Hall, on Tuesday 17th December to discuss the future of the old "Outreach Centre" at Lower Foyers.

The Northern Constabulary are keen to establish a modern facility on the site. If people living in the area are in agreement this could be managed and run for the benefit of disadvantaged young people from all over Scotland and would create a facility for the people of Foyers to use as they wish, within the guidelines of the management committee.

More information in November community council minutes on page 4.

Local man raises £322 in charity run

Six hundred people ran for charity this September in the recent Baxters Loch Ness Marathon. They were not just faceless people from elsewhere but local people too. Eddie Moore of Inverfarigaig raised a total of £322 for his chosen charity - the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. His time was 4 hours 55 mins. Most of the runners arrived in coaches and ran in aid of different charities of their choice. The day proved a great success despite some confusion at the start of the race, where it appears that not enough portaloos had been provided. Unfortunately some runners had felt the desire to relieve themselves in rather a public manner - close to Eddie

Fraser's house. The pipe band from Fort William School played at the start of the run and the Highland Clansman from Fort Augustus lined the start. Many people turned out to watch the runners go by. At Whitebridge, Lorraine Clark, with the help of local children, gave out drinks and watched in amazement as more and more runners came through. Especially amazing were Superman and Nessie running past! Lesley MacGregor in Foyers, along with all her helpers at Foyers and Inverfarigaig, had to quickly fill up the jugs. The road between Whitebridge and Foyers was closed for an hour but Chalky was still able to deliver the papers on time.

Shinty

The 2001/02 season, which had started so well, finished disappointingly with exits from both the Strathdearn and Sutherland cups. The league title also slipped away after two unexpected defeats from local rivals, Inverness. However, after the team's problems of previous seasons, it was pleasing to be able to field a team on the park every week and fulfil all our fixtures. The 2002/03 season has started extremely well and after three league games Boleskine is sitting joint top of North Division Three. Saturday the 2nd of November saw a fine 8 - 2 home win over Skye in the Sutherland Cup and with a stronger team than last season and a favourable draw who knows what might happen?

Youth shinty coaching At Farr Hall, on a Thursday nights at 7pm, approximately fifteen to twenty kids turn up every week, the majority of whom are from the Stratherrick area. The youth development has been so successful that we have entered a team in "The Bank of Scotland Primary School League" combining both Stratherrick and Farr schools under the name of Boleskine.

- Liz MacDonald



Pictured above is the start to the Marathon sponsored by Baxters which took place this autumn. This and the photo on the front page were taken by Dave Allen of Whitebridge

Land Secured

The Hydro Board has promised land at Lower Foyers for a future fire station. However it will be some time before funding will be forthcoming to build.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Stratherrick and Foyers

John Campbell (chair)	486 240
Fiona Kirkland (sec)	486 283
Tine Butterworth (tres.)	486 275
Angus Fraser	486 650
Kenny Fraser	486 220
Elizabeth Macdougall	486 366
Liam Macnally	486 605
Sandy Macpherson	01463 751213
Eileen Martin	486 661
Martyn Bateman	486 273

Highland Councillor

Mrs Ella
MacRae
01463 751
203

Meetings are normally held on the 4th
Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.
Minutes can be seen in the Foyers shop.

**next meeting - Tuesday 17th Dec.
in Foyers church hall - 7.00pm for
council meeting, followed at
8.00pm by Public Meeting about
the Foyers Outreach Centre.**

Minutes of Meetings

Tuesday 24th September (abridged)

Correspondence Maggie's Highland – cancer care centre to be built at Raigmore Hospital and the request for community fund raising. **Inverness Local Plan** – comments by November 9th. Two copies of the plan are to be passed around and be discussed in full at next meeting.

Treasurer: Current account £700.67; project account £1370.92. £100.00 had been sent to Foyers Fire Brigade and £4.66 to Canon.

Planning: house at Lower Cultie, Gorthleck- 13 holiday lodges at Craigdarroch- extension and alterations to the Ark, Erroglie-house and granny flat at site 1 Tom A'Mhoid, Gorthleck

Roads and Transport Fairyburn- steep sided ditch. Inverfarigaig Pass Road - there should be a review of the passing places as there are long narrow curving stretches where one is required. The steep drops at the sides of the road make reversing hazardous. The Foyers (Hotel) - excessive speeds causing a danger to vehicles accessing the hotel (as was), Wester Farigaig and the Coach House. The secretary to write to the Highland Council. Erroglie Corner- new signs and chevrons have been ordered. Extra money has been made available by the Scottish Executive for projects that will be completed this financial year. Cllr Mrs Macrae has secured money for a mobile flashing speed sign that will be moved about her ward and also money for the road to Foyers school.

AOB Footpaths – The CC earmarked 6 walks in the area for inclusion in the paths network ;1) Forest track from Balcraggan, past Dirichurachan to Oldtown and down the Crofdhu road.2) Start at Erroglie, past Newlands onto Wades Military road, along forest track to Leadclune road, past Loch an Ordain and back to Erroglie3) Easter Aberchaldar to Dunmaglass4) Dun Dearduil to Balcraggan 5) Knockie Yew tree6) Whitebridge to Beinn Sgurrach

Loch Ness Marathon – The CC expressed their dissatisfaction at not being informed or consulted by the organisers of this event and felt that there should have been more local involvement.**Abandoned cars** Cllr Mrs Macrae stressed that she should be contacted prior to any individual taking action.

Loch Ness View Points - Ms. Beck informed the CC that the

tenders had been issued that day and a month had been allowed for responses. **Fireworks** – Mr Houston made a request for a donation. To comply with regulations he has had to apply for an explosives licence so increasing his costs. The CC agreed to £350.00. **Computers for the Community** – There is a Scottish Executive initiative to give internet access to all and so are supplying equipment and connection free of charge so long as it is available a min of 40 hrs a week. It was suggested that one could be placed in the hall.

Tuesday 22nd October (abridged)

Correspondence Maggie's Highland – Ms Susan McDonald invited to attend the meeting in February. **Loch Ness Nursery** – donation of £50.00 should be given for Christmas celebrations also to Foyers and Stratherrick schools. **Loch Ness Partnership** – meeting 26 Nov **Bio-Diversity** -- Making the Most of Our Heritage – Friday 8 Nov. **Fire Brigade** – Thanks from Mr Mick Bryant for the donation for radio equipment. **Highland Council** – **Local Housing Strategy** – consultative draft ; **WHAM** – launch of Practical Solutions 2002 on 2 November .INE – details of forthcoming training seminars

Treasurer Ord. account £376.97 ;project account £1370.92. £350.00 for the firework display issued and a deposit of £26.30 from the photocopier.

Planning applications:- dwelling house at Shenval, Gorthleck- Extension to house, Druim An Ault, Inverfarigaig- Temporary change of use from garage to residential, Ault Na Goire, Erroglie **Roads and Transport** Large potholes on the road to Lower Foyers. Bushes along all roads in the area require cutting back The secretary to contact the Highland Council and to notify Mrs Macrae of all outstanding road issues.

Garden Project -Mrs Walker, Public Health Administrator The aim of the Garden Project is to grow and sell fruit and vegetables at an affordable price to community. The gardens would be run as a small business and could give employment to long term unemployed, disabled or those with learning disabilities. Mrs Walker has accessed £25,000 through the new opportunity funding for Badenoch and Strathspey health area, £5,000 of

which will be used for the setting up of the project. A manager will be appointed to oversee all individual projects. All general decisions about the Garden Project must be made by 6 December so that a joint bid, together with Lochaber and Caithness, can be placed for a portion of the £2.46 million available to the North of Scotland. A meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey area on the 4 November (TBC). Those interested in starting a local garden scheme should be involved at this stage to access the funds. Mr Bateman agreed to try to go to learn more.

AOB Loch Ness Marathon – Contrary to newspapers reporting that the marathon was a success, people living in the vicinity of start of the race were appalled at the behaviour of the runners. Despite large number of toilets provided, runners were urinating and defecating in gardens and drives, in full view of everyone, including children. When asked not to, they became abusive. The Community Council were disappointed with the lack of consultation with the local community prior to the event and certainly would oppose such an event happening in the area in the future. The secretary was instructed to write a letter to Cllr Mrs Macrae **Computers for the Community** – the hall would not be an eligible venue for the computers as the site would have to be manned. **Foyers Graveyard** – there is still no seat. **Lower Foyers Notice Board** – there is no perspex to protect the notices, but as it had been broken as a result of vandalism and that all notices are on display in the shop, it should not be repaired.

Tuesday 26th November (subject to approval)

Foyers Youth Outreach Facility

Inspector Macaulay and PC Robb informed the CC of proposed plans for the youth and community facility at Lower Foyers. At this stage everything is open to discussion and change and will only go ahead if the community back it. They have a grant of £150,000 to be used on the redevelopment and have a large number of private sector organisations that have agreed in principle to make up most of the balance of the £500,000 needed. The police anticipate that there will be a partnership formed with the local community. There will be a charge made for the use of the facility to cover on-going revenue costs. The plan is to flatten the existing building to provide a long-term, all year round facility. It will be a single building, mainly single storey for security and cost reasons. The track through the trees could be upgraded to a road so that the main access is not through houses. There will be as large a car park as is possible. The plan is for an upstairs meeting room that could be a large revenue earner from businesses wishing a venue outside the city. There will be 8 rooms, each sleeping 4/5 with their own bathroom facilities. They will be accessed off a corridor down the side of the hall, but with no direct access into it. It is hoped that the rooms could be furnished through sponsorship. This would require that publicity is maximised, with the use of the media. There would also be a kitchen/ diner lounge with partitions to make it multi-functional. Changing rooms and a drying room would be off the foyer area. It is anticipated that the facility could be used by both youth and community groups, for such events as conferences, games, sports, films etc. There would be a management committee with members from the police, community and other bodies involved.

Problems would be sorted with strict management, any group that is being rowdy for example would be warned and if necessary told to leave and banned from returning. Although the feasibility study provided for a manager it is not deemed that this would be necessary, so making a dramatic saving to the running costs. Bookings would be made via the Community Safety department at Police HQ. Each group would be required to sign a disclaimer and contract, and pay a deposit. All money would have to be paid prior to arrival. If there were any problems either Police HQ or the local constable should be contacted so that it can be dealt with promptly. There will be a phone on the premises. Members of the management team would be encouraged to visit regularly. Many of the costs of day to day running could be covered in 'kind', such as community members carrying out grass cutting and having a local key holder. It is reasonable to expect that the facility would be filled to capacity for 4 – 5 months of the year with youth groups, based on past experience. It would be possible to increase this if the Education Authority used it. Inspector Macaulay hoped that work would start as soon as possible, however he asked for support from the CC, to which there was unanimous agreement. He will draw up an A4 sheet of details to be added into the BB so that there are no misconceptions regarding the project prior to the public meeting, which will be held in Foyers Church hall on Tuesday 17 December at 8.00pm. He will arrange for 20 business plans to be delivered within a week or so.

Forest Enterprise land at the Vennel, Gorthleck

Mr Weild was invited to discuss the possibility of use of the land at the Vennel for a community project. He has already been in discussion with members of BEN regarding the harvesting and re-planting of the area and is keen that members of the community could be more involved in forest planning and running on a wider scale. The community would never have the final say on what happens in a particular area, but FE are open to discussion and consultation. The CC are proposing that the Vennel land could be used for a play park, football pitch, path network etc. Mr Weild said that although FE don't have any money they would be willing to enter into a partnership with them, providing land and expertise. They would retain ownership of the land and therefore liability. It was agreed that a sub committee should be formed to look at the land and make suggestions for what could be done. Mr Weild could access internal FE information about playgrounds that they have, to get costs and ideas. He may also be able to help direct the CC to areas of funding. A date for the site visit will be planned at the next meeting. Mr Campbell, Mrs Kirkland, Mrs Butterworth, Mr McNally, Mr MacPherson and Mr Houston agreed to be on the sub-committee.

Treasurer project account £1370.92; current account at £376.97. Three cheques for £50.00 each to go to the schools for Christmas activities. Stratherrick Primary School PTA – request for a donation to upgrade the football pitch which cannot be used at present because of recurring drainage problems. They have a quote for £5170.00. The PTA have £1000.00 from their funds and Cllr Mrs Macrae has given £800.00. CC agreed to give £300.00.

Planning Amendment to application for a hydro-electric generating scheme on River Fechin at Garrogie, Whitebridge.

Roads and Transport After the recent accident at the monument at Gorthleck, there should be a sign warning drivers to slow down. The road to Killen is in a very bad state of repair and is requiring attention. The secretary to write to Highland Council.

AOB Doctors weekend cover – it was brought to the attention of the CC that there had been a recent incident where a doctor was called for an emergency and he took 1 1/2 hours to arrive. The call was taken by the Fort Augustus practice and the doctor in question had a map out at the end of the phone to find out where to go. The ambulance was also called but this took even longer to arrive than the doctor. It was stressed that the family involved were not making a complaint, but the CC were very concerned at the length of time it took to get help and felt that at the very least the doctors should be familiar with the area that they are covering. **Whitebridge Bus** – There are complaints from children travelling to school that the bus is cold and there appears to be little heating. The secretary was instructed to inform the bus company.

Fireworks – Mr Houston thanked the CC for their donation.

Foyers Graveyard – There is still no seat. The Secretary will chase. There are two broken stumps at the small gate entrance which could potentially cause an accident.

Loch Ness Marathon – the feeling amongst many people in the Foyers area was that the marathon was a success despite the initial problems.

Loch Ness Partnership – Mr Campbell attended the recent meeting and informed the CC that there is to be a cycle route from Inverness to Fort Augustus, via Foyers. There is a proposal to run a ferry from Dores to Drumnadrochit. INE are going to do some marketing for the area. British waterways are planning to organise several events and promotions, including the Nessie Hibernation series, in which they hope to attract boats to use the canal in the winter months; Sail Caledonian 2003; try to attract the Tallships to sail through the canal and several other ideas.

Public Meeting

to discuss police proposal
in Lower Foyers

**Tuesday 17th
December**

Foyers Church Hall

8.00 p.m.

YUK!

Mystery signs appear at Falls.

Two signs highlighting the 'environmental degradation' of the River Foyers appeared recently - one above the falls and the other opposite the view point. Soakaways from the houses in Upper Foyers enter the river at this level while all the way down the river to Foyers Bay further septic tanks seep into the calm waters of the mouth of the river. Once upon a time it must have been a great place for a swim.

Missing Jock



The loss of the services of roadman Jock Stoddart is now having an effect - blocked drains causing flooding on roads - slippery leaf strewn areas - and, in the months to come, dangerous icy patches. The loss of his hand sanded areas in the winter will be missed. The lack of grit bins on the road down to Foyers will not help any "do it yourself" efforts.

Artificial Fluoride - The Right to Refuse

The Scottish Executive's Consultation Paper on Children's oral health includes proposals for water fluoridation. Claim your right to refuse by writing before 31.12.02 to:

Sandra Smith,
Public Health Division,
Scottish Executive
Room 3E(S), St Andrews's House
Edinburgh. EH1b3DG
e-mail childrensoralhealth@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Planning Application: Mr & Mrs I. Mitchell, per Roy Construction, 12 Lotland St., Inverness, for erection of single storey detached dwelling and single garage, Lower Knockchoilum, Whitebridge.

Community photocopier for all to use

in Stratherrick Hall and operates
by card with an honesty box.
A key to the hall can be arranged
with Cathy Stoddart on 486 329

Janet Lawson

Janet died in tragic circumstances on September 24th at Duhallow, her late parents' home, in Errogie. Like her mother before her she was an artist. She used watercolour and ink to create simple landscapes and architectural reconstructions. She was the only daughter in a family of three. She attended Inverness Royal Academy, graduated from Edinburgh College of Art and spent several years in the restoration department of the British Museum.

In 1970 she returned to Scotland. From her studio in Edinburgh she worked in theatre - creating backdrops - and she was a well respected art-restorer working on fragile typescripts and manuscripts. In 1988 she decided to sketch and paint again, travelling alone around Spain. It was in Spain that she was brutally attacked. The incident had a profound effect on the rest of her life. She cut herself off from her former friends and returned to Errogie to live in her parents' house.

Her death has inevitably brought into sharp focus memories of Janet's parents Ray and Alan Lawson.

As close neighbours to the Lawsons, Rose and Fergus Fortune of Errogie have contributed the following appreciation:

"Ray was an accomplished artist producing many beautiful watercolours of local scenes in the Strath and Inverness. Perhaps less well known were her 'nailies' in which a picture was made by driving different sorts and sizes of nails into a wooden background. Mrs Lawson served as President of the Inverness Art Society and held several exhibitions of her work in Eden Court.

Alan was Deputy Director of Education for Inverness from 1953-1973. After his retirement he became part-time archivist for the Highland region. He served as chairman on the community council and had a great interest in local history in which he had done much research. He was a president of the Inverness Field Club and wrote two books about this area. 'An Account of the Kirk of Boleskine in 1978 and 'A Country called Stratherrick' in 1987.

They were kindly, hospitable neighbours and are happily remembered by many whose walls are decorated with Ray's pictures."



Local womans work

Some years ago Dr. Simpson of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary contacted families in the Highlands who had members suffering from Huntingtons Disease (a genetic disorder) and invited them to form a support group. Elspeth Hall of Lower Foyers, whose husband Brian is ill with the disease, was appointed Chairperson. She now serves as Director on the Council of the Scottish Huntingtons Association. Recently, funded by the Lottery Fund, a Huntingtons Advisor (comparable to a MacMillan Nurse) has been appointed. Elspeth campaigned energetically for a Genetic Clinic

in Raigmore. This is now being held on one day a month conducted by geneticists from Aberdeen. A great deal is owed to Elspeth for her hard work and determination in fighting for support for Huntingtons sufferers.

In this area, Elspeth along with Chris Smith began a monthly draw to raise funds for the Association. It has been running for several years.

If anyone wishes to join, contact:
Chris Smith (tel.no. 486 625).

Leadclune and Loch an Ordain

Turn off the main road at Torness bridge and take the road to Leadclune, a small estate which at one time belonged to the Fraser family. Leadclune House is said to have been built by William Fraser of Aldourie about 1760. The Frasers of Leadclune produced a succession of distinguished soldiers. One is commemorated by a stone by the side of the road at Leadclune - Sir James John Fraser of Leadclune & Morar a member of Wellington's staff at Waterloo, who also served with distinction in the Peninsular War. Tim Pow, a former resident of Leadclune, was a well-known breeder of prize Cheviot sheep.

Balnaberran, the next farm, once formed part of the old Balnain estate. Hugh Fraser (in the nineteen fifties) was well-known for his Blackface sheep.

Oldtown croft near Loch an Ordain is now only marked by an old steading - the old croft house was demolished a few years ago. It used to be the house of an old

bard, Angus Cameron, whose poems were published at the time but, on his death bed he expressed a wish that none of them should be preserved.

Croftdhue - (the black croft - as the name suggests) was hidden by trees until a former Farraline proprietor decided to cut down much of the neighbouring woodland leaving the dwelling extremely exposed on its hill crest. It was the home of Donald and Jimmy Shaw until recently.

On passing Carnoch and its bordering line of ancient beech trees, the road leads down to where Erroglie House, a former dower house once stood, now replaced by a more modern building. Newer, more recent houses line this part of the road which leads down to the main Inverness road.

Schools Feature - in following issues the BB would like to feature each of the old local schools. Taking each school in turn and starting next issue (March) with Torness School. If you have any material connected with the school - photos, memories, articles - please send it to us by the deadline. Details on how to get it to us on page 15.

Making the Most of our Heritage.

On 8th November a training day in Fort Augustus was organised by P.R.I.N. for local community groups in the Loch Ness area. The objective was to look at opportunities for community projects focusing on local natural and human heritage. A wealth of information was made available on a range of sources of advice and financial assistance available to help communities turn ideas into projects which could in turn create jobs within the community. From our own community Martyn Bateman represented the community council, along with several members from B.E.N. (Boleskine Environmental Network) and from the Stratherrick & Foyers Tourist group.

B.E.N. would like to host a meeting in the hall at Gorthleck in the spring to discuss the setting up a local heritage/history group. Fort Augustus Heritage Group has recently produced a historical leaflet on Fort Augustus and would be keen support a similar group in this area. Phone Jane 486 355 if you are interested and would like to get involved.

The AGM of the Boleskine Environmental Network - (B.E.N.) took place in September. It was reported that :-

- 75 compost bins were now in place throughout the area and more were available;
- the Real Nappy Project, with funding from PRIN, was coming to an end. The display had been taken to six locations from Tomatin to Fort Augustus. The display and information would still be available for local use at any time;
- discussions are taking place with the Forestry Commission on the restructuring of the woodland in the Vennel area at Gorthleck;
- responses had been written to consultation papers on the local plan, land reform, forest strategy and waste strategy.

Although the group is small in number things are being achieved. Anyone interested would be welcome. For any further information contact the secretary - Jane O'Donovan 486355

FORESTS AROUND BOLESKINE



The final phases of removing non native conifers from Knockie and Farigaig are underway. The photo above shows the extent of native woodland restoration in Knockie (viewed from across Loch Ness). Timber harvesting is due to start in Camus Forest so please take care and observe all warning signs. Any queries phone Forest District Office 01320 366322.

They are in the shops now!

An improved map produced by Highland Council Ranger Service with all the waymarked trails and forest tracks is now available. The waymarkers have been rationalised and tidied up. The Highland Access Project, a new body set up to fund and promote local walks for local people funded the reprint and waymarkers. The viewpoint path works at the Falls of Foyers are now completed. This means that the 300m footpath to the upper and lower viewpoints has been upgraded to include new surfacing to cover the slippery tree roots. The steps on the steeper sections have been upgraded and the drainage improved. There has been a minor rockfall at the



upper viewpoint, closing the viewpoint while engineers make the site safe. During the winter there will be more improvements at the gateway, benches, picnic tables will be provided and the roadside fencing replaced.

Ground preparation and planting next spring will be starting at Erchite in the new year. The forest is gradually being restructured to develop a more diverse range of tree ages, with open space and broadleaves as well as non native species for timber production. Thanks go to B.F.N. who contributed to the South Loch Ness Forest Design Plan.

The gradual replacement of old fences where needed will continue in the Whitebridge and Farigaig area, with the help of neighbouring farmers and landowners.

The viewpoints from the picnic sites between Foyers and Dorees will be opened up and picnic benches replaced, in a joint project between Forest Enterprise and the Community Council next spring.

FORESTRY FACES

Eddy Fraser

Eddy started his career with the Forestry Commission back in 1967 and for over thirty years worked as a wildlife ranger, building up a tremendous knowledge of wildlife behaviour and habitat within Knockie and the surrounding area. All who have come into contact with Eddy will know him not only for his professionalism and passion for the outdoors, but for his jaunty gait and inexhaustible fund of good stories (eg the siege of Knockie Lodge Hotel many years ago).

For the last few years Eddy has diversified into the harvesting team, working mainly on site monitoring, timber measurement and despatch.



Boleskine Bulletin

Foyers School Supplement

Autumn Issue

November 2002

Rediscovering the past...

Foyers School - a lifetime ago!



This early 20th Century photograph of 'Foyers Public School' is dramatic evidence of the pace of landscape change. Generously donated to the school by Dr. Eric McKay of Aberdeen, it is believed to have been taken at about the end of the 1914-18 war when his father was head teacher here. Some biographical details are included overpage.

The scarcity of trees is obvious, though the old 'granny' pine on the extreme right of the skyline is still with us—amongst trees since planted by the Forestry Commission. The far side of Loch Ness is also devoid of trees and other features; the main Inverness to Fort Augustus road had not yet been constructed. But this remarkable picture, taken when about 130 children attended the school, raises as many questions as it answers. Some of these are listed on page 2 in the hope that local people may be able to provide answers and help to improve our understanding of local history.

Dr McKay's thoughtful gesture in sending us this photograph is a reminder that valuable records of the past, like this one, are vanishing. Collections of old postcards are being broken up; family photographs are lost with the passing of generations. Perhaps there's a case for a community archive?

Solitary Reaper?

Look carefully at a point just below the gate in the fence below the old school annex. Can you spot the mystery figure—who became visible only when the original photograph was scanned digitally at high resolution? Perhaps you can take an educated guess at what s/he is doing—or even who s/he was. To help you, we reproduce an enlargement of the figure overpage.

Any ideas? Do let us know...

Can you help? Our new photograph of Foyers School as it was in about 1918 raises interesting questions. Can you answer some of them? Perhaps you can even identify the mystery figure in the enlarged detail below. What is s/he doing? We thought tree-planting or weeding were likely answers. But can we even be sure there's someone there at all...?

1. We would like to know the exact date of the photograph. Can you see any clues that we might have missed?

2. Trees growing in furrows seem to occupy the foreground. What kind of tree-cover/vegetation covered this hillside between, say, 1920 and 1940?

3. A path wound up through the small valley which is now occupied by an unused reservoir, through the gate, and round the back of the school to the house. When was the reservoir built, by whom, and for what purpose?

4. When was the present road up the school hill constructed? It doesn't appear on the photograph, though General Wade's old road seems to be visible

5. Does anyone have photographs of the school and environs? If so, would you be prepared to have it digitally copied for a local school and community archive—for non commercial purposes.

6. An enlarged photograph is on display in the school. Those interested should call 486 612 to arrange a convenient time to view it. Photographs of pupils and staff of that period are also on display.



A message from the front:

Dr McKay's father, Edmond, was head teacher at Foyers from 1913-19. However, he served in the war in Belgium. Mrs McKay joined teachers in the school during his absence.

Despite the horrors of that conflict, Edmond McKay maintained contact with his pupils. The Foyers School log contains an entry dated 1st August 1917 - a message to be read out to each class from their headmaster:

'Keep up the reputation of Scotland, for it's the best country. Be true Highlanders and you'll have nothing to be ashamed of and much to be proud of.'

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Hansel and Gretel -

The Foyers Connection!

Foyers School's Annual Christmas Concert will be held in the school hall at 7pm on Thursday, 12th December.

Admission £1. Refreshments included.

All proceeds to school funds—please support us!



NORTHERN CONSTABULARY - YOUTH OUTREACH FACILITY

Northern Constabulary is involved in the development of a **Youth Outreach Facility** in our Force area. This will lead to a wonderful opportunity for young people. The project aims to promote citizenship amongst young people with a view to reducing crime and enhancing community safety by

- Positive, interactive work with young people regarding citizenship, road safety, personal safety, substance misuse, responsible behaviour and relationships with the Police
- Challenging negative or destructive attitudes
- Promoting fun and constructive activities to divert young people away from criminal behaviour
- Socially include young people who are disadvantaged by economics or geography.

Our organisation has run such a facility in the past at Foyers which proved to be of real and tangible benefit to the young people participating. It also led to greater understanding and awareness about the role of the Police. The Foyers facility regrettably had to be closed due to its deteriorating condition.

The use of the existing site at Foyers is to be the subject of community consultation, before any decisions are made regarding it. Part of this community consultation will be a public meeting on **17th December 2002**, within **Foyers Church Hall**, at **2000 hrs.**

If the community decide that they do not wish the facility based at Foyers then other potential sites will also be considered.

The facility is being planned so as to be as multi functional as possible. We believe it will benefit the community in which it is situated , by being utilised as a community facility , as well as the groups of young people from outwith the area who will use it.

Northern Constabulary is delighted to announce the Scottish Executive have donated £150 000 funding towards a **Youth Outreach Facility** in our Force area. A number of other partnerships are being progressed with a view to source further funding.

Green Energy or a New Klondike?

Scottish Executive policy is to achieve 40% of electricity generation from renewable energy sources by 2020. This ambitious target will have huge implications for the



Highlands and Islands. Proposals for windfarm developments have already generated bitter controversy in some communities - most notably at Edinbane on the Isle of Skye. The Isle of Lewis is likely to host the largest windfarm in the world with 300 giant turbines. Few areas will remain unaffected. More than 35 plans have been approved and 180 proposals are in the pipeline for Scotland, though many of the latter may be rejected. 2 windfarms above Strathnairn are already projected. It seems, too, that plans exist for a hydro-electric scheme involving a mile-long reservoir and a dam in upper Glentarff and several miles of tunnels and pipelines through the surrounding hills to feed a new power station in Fort Augustus.

Difficult issues

Wind turbines have become sophisticated and capable of making significant - if uneven - contributions to our urgent need for 'clean' energy. On the other hand, new-generation turbines are as tall as cathedrals and their effectiveness is maximised when they are located in large numbers (say between 20 and 30) on prominent, windswept hilltops. Exceptional landscapes are a minority concern and rank far behind economic interests in popularity. Debate on this issue has already - and predictably - reduced itself to polarised arguments about the likely consequences of windfarm construction for tourism. Whether or not it constitutes a net attraction or a net deterrent, it seems probable that those who value Highland landscapes as one of Europe's few approximations to pristine wilderness will begin to look elsewhere.

'Joined-up-thinking'?

It would be reassuring to believe that these developments were the product of what recent governments have called 'joined-up-thinking'. Scottish Natural Heritage, the statutory agency responsible for advising government on environmental issues, has taken the initiative of providing a workshop for local authorities and windfarm developers to consider ways of reducing impacts on wildlife and landscapes as a result of the construction. However, this is only one element

of the kind of long term strategy which is urgently needed. SNH is concerned that there has been an excessive focus on onshore wind power. A spokesperson confirms that agency's desire for a very much more structured approach to the whole question of alternative energy generation. In addition to the requirement to balance local, national and global interests there is the need to research and evaluate an increasing variety of alternative energy technologies. There is also the need to ensure that developments are not driven by the sales targets of turbine manufacturers or the ambitions of landowners for rent income from windfarms - but by the urgent need of people everywhere for new sources of clean energy and decent environments.

Waste and want

Britain's track record is not impressive. We have seriously neglected the potential of energy conservation in the struggle against global warming and our consumption of electricity is still wildly extravagant. Nevertheless, in the past year about 50,000 people died of hypothermia-related conditions. This is a major problem only in the British Isles. Homes in other northern European countries, particularly frigid Scandinavia, have been built to higher standards of energy efficiency. Despite government grants to encourage the installation of solar panels in houses, the BBC recently reported that the UK target is to have only 6,000 roofs fitted with these unobtrusive, highly effective energy saving devices by 2005. Germany's target is 140,000 and Japan's is 400,000. There are also realistic prospects for large-scale offshore wind and wave power schemes as well as a rapidly developing photovoltaic and solar panel technology which could make many homes nearly self-sufficient in clean energy by converting daylight into heat and electricity.

The big picture

Environmental pollution and global warming are clear and present dangers. Solutions will undoubtedly require sacrifices. If one of these sacrifices is to be the industrialisation of many world-famous Highland landscapes, it requires much more justification than has so far been provided. The problems are national and global. The answers must not be the succession of localised skirmishes and propaganda exchanges that are beginning to emerge, partly in response to antiquated planning procedures. We need a coherent, properly researched, 'transparent' long term strategy from governments - and we haven't got one yet!

ken brown -foyers

editorial

Proposals for renewable energy schemes, mainly windfarm and hydro power, are being submitted to Highland Council at an ever increasing rate. The Highlands are clearly seen as an area where energy companies can exploit our natural resources while landowners will also benefit from a lucrative annual rent. Yet much, if not all, of this electricity will be exported to the south, perhaps to France and beyond. There are few direct benefits to local communities. Scotland already has a great many hydro-electric schemes although there is certainly scope for windfarm development. But, despite the Scottish Executive setting targets for renewables it does not have any strategy for what type of scheme or where these should best be sited. At the moment all developments are submitted for approval on an opportunistic basis - currently there are 2 windfarms and 2 hydro schemes planned for the Stratherrick - Strathnairn area. Renewable schemes do produce clean energy but also carry an environmental cost, be it new roads into the hills or the impact of dams on our rivers. How many more can our landscape take?

letters



Four generations of one family

It was 1935 when my grandfather, chose a cottage at Inverfarigaig where he could bring his family. I doubt if he could ever have realised what he was starting.

The link with Inverfarigaig continued. My father spent a wartime leave there, and in 1953 brought his own family for the first time. It was in the hot summer of 1959 that I can remember the sheer excitement I felt as a thirteen year old, being able to roam about freely. Many more visits followed. I was lucky - my own wife, and then my children, also fell in love with Ness-side. Until now, I calculate that I've spent some sixty four weeks there. Four generations of one family, over a spread of nearly seventy years.

Roger Creegan - Burnley, Lancs

.....

Unique running event

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people in the Boleskine area for their fantastic support during the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon. The event was an amazing success.

Just under 600 runners came, a very healthy figure for a first year. Over 150 locals helped marshal the event which included keeping the runners hydrated to manning key road junctions.

Many of the most hardened of runners told us it was the best organised and well supported event they had run in - people who had run in events including the New York and London Marathons - a great accolade indeed! The overall message from runners was that it was a challenging but spectacular course. Money raised for various charities including the Scottish Community Foundation totalled just over £80,000.

The Baxter Loch Ness Marathon has now established itself as a unique event in the UK. It has been predicted that it will grow

and become a leading event in the sporting calendar. It is also expected to become a major charity fundraising event for many charities as well as having a major impact on the local economy. We are planning to hold it the same weekend namely the 27th/ 28th September 2003.

Thank you for making this a truly special event. I would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and all the very best for 2003.

*Malcolm Sutherland -
marathon director*

.....

Neglected for Too Long

Despite numerous requests, no replacement seat in the Foyers burial ground has been provided by Highland Council. There is nowhere to sit and have a rest in this tranquil beautiful place. As well as the missing seat there should be a fence beside the small gate at the entrance making it a kissing gate. The previous fence disintegrated and was discarded leaving two small stumps waiting to trip up some unwary visitor. Would it be too much to ask the powers that be to replace this fence?

Buddy MacDougall - Foyers

.....

The I can Learn Foundation made £250 on the last Ceilidh, providing another 50 hours of one to one teaching. All four kids in the highlands on this learning programme are doing remarkably well, compared with the usual practice in autistic teaching. We thank you for your enjoyment of our Ceilidhs and help in furthering this trail. Look out for the next ceilidh in early February - Check your local bill boards. Cat Spinks - Gorthleck

Hall still modernising

Modern instrument for modern people!..... when Stratherrick Hall was upgraded last year the old fittings were auctioned and the money raised was earmarked for the purchase of a new electronic piano. The amount was short of the £1000.00 cost and it looked as though it might be some time before this figure could be reached. Now, thanks to a grant from The Knockie Trust, a new Casio 'Celviano' has been installed. It has all the modern facilities expected - 32 voices, a rhythm section, recording facilities, a screen and computer links. It will be heard in public for the first time at the 'Songs of Christmas Praise' Service on the evening of Sunday 15th December.

return of Fiona Knowles..... thank-you to all who completed the questionnaire included with the last "B.B.". The comments were varied and constructive and will help to formulate future programmes. Already booked for Friday 21st March is a return by actress Fiona Knowles, with her latest one-woman comedy drama "Women on the Verge of a T Junction." Written by award-winning playwright Rona Munro, this is a new comedy drama about three very different women whose lives get as entangled as their bumpers, with unexpected results! This is one that you won't want to miss!

new sign.....in the event that you may not be able to find the hall, the committee commissioned Peter Tyler of Strathnairn to make a new sign for the hall which now sits proudly on top of the new notice board by the road side.

editorial changes

The A.G.M. of the Boleskine Bulletin took place on Friday 25th October in Stratherrick Hall. People from all parts of the area braved a rather dreich night to attend. Jane O'Donovan, the editor has decided to retire after setting up and successfully running the Bulletin for the last five years. New plans for the editorship have been put in place. Our sincere thanks go to Jane for all she has done to keep the whole community in touch through the medium of the Bulletin. The management committee has been able to take on several new members, representing all areas of the community. - *management committee*

University of Aberdeen Talks in Stratherrick Hall
Review:-

Malawi, the Scottish Connection. November 5th
Douglas Willis presented a lively account of his 21 year association with Malawi. He portrayed the mood and feel of the country using excellent slides showing Lake Malawi with incredible mountain backdrops, small communities perched around the enormous lake, and rough roads linking villages. He and his wife stayed in David Livingstone foundations - churches, schools, hospitals and homes all over Malawi - hence the Scottish connection. Many of the Malawi children are still called Cameron, Heather, Fiona and other Scottish names. The boat used to convey goods on the lake, was built on the Clyde in 1940. It was brought to Africa, dismantled and then transported overland to Malawi.

Priest, Pilgrims, Hospitaleros on the Camino de Santiago. December 3rd.

Barbara Cameron gave an enlightened account of time she spent as a volunteer working in a Pilgrims' refuge in Northern Spain. Pilgrims came from all over the world - believers, doubters, new age travellers. In mediaeval times over half a million pilgrims a year would travel along the Pilgrims' route. We were shown slides of wonderful 10th century buildings, paths winding through small fields, orchards and various stops at different Pilgrims' Refuges. This amazing trip ended in Santiago at its beautiful cathedral with magnificent carvings.

It is such a pity that so few people were present at these very enjoyable talks.

Make up or Drink Up!!

About 15 people turned up at a "Virgin Vie Cosmetics" Make up Party which was held on Saturday 2nd November and organised by Eileen Bain of Glenlia. Craigdarroch House Hotel kindly supplied the venue (the conservatory), snacks and wine. While the women enjoyed make-overs their men-folk had a good excuse for a drink in the bar.



Harvest Praise

Around eighty people came to Stratherrick Hall on 29th September to thank God for this year's harvest. The contributions from the choir and musicians, under Rosie Kern's able direction, with the energetic support of the children's percussion group led by Margaret Campbell, were well balanced by warm and tuneful singing from the congregation. Canon Martyn Bateman's message, using three circles of garden hose as props, appeared to make quite an impact on the children (as well as the grown-ups) and the verses from scripture were read by Tine Butterworth and Peter Arrowsmith. The Rev. James Christie coordinated the proceedings and highlighted the plight of people in Africa and other parts of the world who have to travel miles to find water. A total of £300 was raised for Water Aid and other charities.

The Praise Group welcomes new members of all denominations (both singers and musicians),
phone
Rosie Kern (01456 486 739) or
Eddie Moore (01463 486255)

Songs of **Christmas Praise** will be held in Dores Church on Friday 13th December and in Stratherrick Hall on Sunday 15th December both at 7.30pm.

Other Christmas services are arranged as follows:-

St. Pauls Croachy, Christmas Eve 6.20pm

Whitebridge R.C. Chapel, Thursday 19th December - Carols and 'Live' Crib at 7.30pm; also Christmas Eve 11.30pm

Blythswood Shoebox Appeal

I was very privileged this year in being asked to arrange the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal on behalf of Inverness Royal Academy. I have had a wonderful response to the appeal and met lots of very remarkable people - in the local area, throughout Inverness and the associates of Blythswood.

The appeal has been widely advertised and generally the response of the community has been amazing. Many people look forward to making the boxes up every year and to quote a close friend of my mum they even find themselves 'putting in a little something for

mum' or 'a teddy for the baby'.

The congregation of the local church Boleskine Parish conjured up a marvellous effort and even delivered them to my home. The boxes were beautifully wrapped and packed and they were received at the school with a great number of 'wow's'!

I would like to thank everyone who so generously contributed on behalf of Blythswood, Inverness Royal Academy and all the people in Rumania where the boxes will be heading for in time to transform the Christmases of those most in need.
Jessica Ricketts - Errogie

Church Meetings

Church of Scotland

Sunday 11am Boleskine;
11.30am & 6pm Foyers; Rev. J. Christie 01456 486 206

Episcopal Church

Sunday 11am Croachy;
Rev. J. Evans 01808 521397

Free Church

Sunday 12 noon Farr; 6pm Errogie;
Mr. J. Campbell 01456 486240

Free Church (continuing)

Sunday 10.30am and 4.15pm Dores; Wednesday 7.30pm:
Mr D. Fraser 01456 486408

Free Presbyterian Church

Sunday 12noon Farr; Mr E. Fraser 01456 486282

Roman Catholic Church

Sunday 12 noon Whitebridge
Rev. P. Bonnici 01320 366451

Inter-Denominational Bible Study

Rev. M. Bateman 01456 486273
for details

Christian Comment

"Gift Catalogues seem to come in ever increasing numbers in the autumn months; and children are often wondering what gift they will receive at Christmas time. What do you and I really want? Our father God planned long ago to give us his son (John 3 v16) - an amazing gift! One who can satisfy our deepest longings. This gift comes to us today through God's Holy Spirit who transformed the first timid followers of Jesus into bold ambassadors of God's news for the whole world. All over the world that God loves, in spite of all the bad news we receive through the mass media, individuals are finding Jesus to be the best gift they ever received. Have you found this everlasting joy for yourself?" *Martyn Bateman*

The Boleskine Bulletin accepts no legal liability for the views expressed by individual contributors

Please give name and address when writing to the BB so that the editor can contact if necessary.

New Business Clocks On



With the help of Inverness and Nairn Enterprise, local clock repairer Roy Nightingale is aiming to establish a full time business.

Originally from Barnsley in Yorkshire, Roy has been living with his wife Patricia at Wester Aberchaldar for the past seven years. He started learning his trade in the family repair shop at the age of seven. His great grandfather started this business in 1836. He worked there for over 20 years, then spent several years driving coaches for National Express - a definite career change!

Now, after repairing clocks on a casual basis for a number of years, he has decided to return to it full time. He also has facilities for jewellery cleaning. Patricia, originally from Edinburgh, works as a secretary in Inverness.

New Babes

To Jimmy and Anna Kennedy, Elmbank, Foyers on 19th Sept., a girl - Eilidh 8lbs.

To William & Sarah McGuigan (nee Bell) a son, Andrew Stuart born in Downpatrick Maternity Hospital, Northern Ireland on October 4th, 6lbs 13oz. A grandson for Stephen and Pat Bell of Gorthleck.

The Canadian Maple tree on Foyers Green taken this summer. This lovely tree was planted by Charlie Macdonald as a way of showing appreciation for the many happy visits and fishing trips he and his brother Hector made to Foyers. The brothers owned 43 Glenlia for some 26 years. *photo Rosie Kern*



The Last Adventure of "Whizz", the Glenlia Cat.

Friday 21st March

Stratherrick Hall

Fiona Knowles

in

"Women on the Verge
of a T Junction"

a

comedy drama

Written by Rona Munro



Farr Hall

Traditional Music

18th January- Kieran Halpin

22nd February- Fraser Fifield

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26th April- Andy Irvine

In March (dates to be confirmed)
Session A9.

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Gorthleck	11.00
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Deadline 20th February

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Whitebridge	1135 1630	1815
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Invern	8.50 13.40 17.08	9.50 14.10
Invs	11.55 15.20 17.40	12.30 17.40
Foyers	12.45 16.20 18.30	13.20 18.30
stopping at Low, Foyers & Inverfarigaig		

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Strath.Sch.	---	---	1535	---
Upp Foyers	---	0930	---	---
Low Foyers	---	0934	---	---
Inverfarigaig	---	0941	---	---
Errozie	0937	---	1540	1525
Torness	0947	---	1550	1535
Abersky	0952d	---	1554	---
Dunmaglass	0947d	---	1559	---
Farr Shop	---	---	16.19	---
Dores	0957	0958	---	1545
Inverness	1012	1014	1634	1600
Raigmore	1022r	1022r	---	---

	SD	SH	MWF	TTh
Raigmore	---	---	1410r	1410r
Inverness	0810	0830	1420	1420
Dores	---	0845	1435	1435
Farr Shop	0825	---	---	---
Dunmaglass	0845	---	1445d	---
Abersky	0850	---	1450d	---
Torness	0855	0900	1445	---
Errozie	0905	0910	1455	1459
Inverfarigaig	---	---	---	1452
Low Foyers	---	---	---	1459
Upper Foyers	---	---	---	1503
Strath. Sch.	0910	---	---	---
Gorthleck	0920	0920	1501	1514

What's On

at
Stratherrick Hall



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Thursday p.m.

Errozie, Gorthleck, Whitebridge

Mobile Toy Library

Inverfarigaig/Foyers/Gorthleck, Torness

Contact Helen Anton 01463 716886