

The Boleskine Bulletin



Issue No. 24
Autumn 2003

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Are you dissatisfied with the present members of the Community Council and feel they are not doing their job?

The election of the new Stratherrick & Foyers Community Council will be held some time this Autumn. If you feel you can do a better job and want to stand for election, each nominee must be on the Electoral Roll and must be supported by two people who also are on the Electoral Roll.

There will be no election if there are not enough nominees and the same members will stand on the Council for the next three years. Foyers and Inverfarigaig in particular need more nominees to represent their area.

Details of the election procedure will be displayed on the notice boards in due course

Miss Kilby who lives in Glenlia with her beloved companion 'Fraser Pusscat' and is the oldest lady in our community (93 later this year) is an example to us all in helping others. She is a prolific knitter and as can be seen in the accompanying photograph with some examples, knits toys for the Blythswood Christmas shoe boxes and for

other organisations including the Red Cross. She also knits beautiful blankets for Blythswood.

Stratherrick Senior Citizens Dinner 2003

It's early to be thinking about Christmas activities but as this is the last BB before the Dinner, plans must be made and lists prepared so that those entitled to attend may be invited in due course.

If anyone has reached the age of 65 this year or if you know of any pensioner who has moved into the area and would like to attend the function, please contact Mrs. R. Fortune, 'Phoenix', Errogie - Tel. (01456) 486663.



The Fraser Yew

As any Fraser knows, the ancient monarch of the Fraser still lives. From this, the greatest yew tree of the North, the forefathers of the Frasers took wood for their bows and sprigs for the yew badge of their bonnets. On the western slope of Beinn a' Bhacaidh about 200 yards from the southern shore of Loch Ness and 600 feet up the precipitous slope of the 'hill of hindrance' the old yew tree stands astride a rocky seep.

Its great multiple trunks have fastened securely into the wet stone of the mountain for a thousand years. It has seen Frasers of Stratherrick make their way from Loch Knockie along the trail to select the right boughs for their bows. It has seen young men sent to

collect a plaid full of yew sprig for the expected appearance of the Chief on the periodic inspection tours or in more sombre times, for gathering to march off to support Bonnie Dundee or for that matter, Bonnie Prince Charlie.

It was from this tree that the Stratherrick Frasers gathered their badges the day before marching off with the Master of Lovat to reinforce Prince Charlie and the hungry remnants of his Highland host at Culloden.

The rugged terrain of Beinn a' Bhacaidh, the remoteness of the tree and probably the luck of the Frasers have conjured to protect the tree to this day.

For Our Younger Readers

The BB would like to wish all the very best to those youngsters moving on to other schools. We hope that their time there will be happy and worthwhile.

To those who have now left their schooldays behind and are about to start College or University, we send our best wishes. It will be a new experience for those leaving home for the first time and we hope some of you may write to the BB telling us your news.

Plastic Litter Danger

Any plastic litter left lying around, i.e. bottles, marking ribbons for rides, etc., **please collect** and place in proper litter bins, thus reducing the risk to wildlife of a lingering death.

Dores and Boleskine Church

As from 1st September 2003 and until further notice, the Rev. John Buchan will be the part-time locum Minister in the Parish. Rev. Buchan was formerly the Minister at Strathpeffer, Ross-shire and is now retired and living in Inverness.

We welcome Mr. Buchan to the Parish and he can be contacted by telephone on 01463 713114.

*Donald Macaskill,
Session Clerk*



Church of St. Paul

We welcome Rev. Peter & Mrs Sheelagh Mosley to the Church of St. Paul (Episcopalian) at Croachy in Straithnairn

where Peter was commissioned by the Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness on Saturday, July 26th.

LOCAL POLICE CHANGES

In August, Constable Torquil MacLeod left us to take up a new post in Stromness. He had been in the Stratherrick area since November 1998 coming to us from Lochinver. Jackie, his Wife is expecting their second child at the end of September.

Welcome to the new Police Constable, Lewis Hannah, an Invernessian whose last post was as Community Beat Officer in Dalreigh.

Hopefully at the next meeting of the Community Council, he will be giving advice on starting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for the community.

Lewis Hannah PC 939

Tel. 07985 742072

or at Foyers:

Tuesdays & Wednesdays.....1600hrs to 0000hrs

Thursdays to Sundays inc.....1800hrs to 0200hrs

Would you like to join our Choir?

Our Songs of Harvest Praise will be held on Sunday, 26th October in Stratherrick Public Hall at 7.30 pm. and we are keen to recruit new choir members and musicians.

So if you enjoy singing or if you play guitar, recorder, clarsach or any other instrument, you'd be made very welcome!

Please contact Eddie Moore on (01456) 486255.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

John Campbell (Chairman)
Fiona Kirkland (Secretary)
Tine Butterworth (Treasurer)
Angus Fraser
Kenny Fraser

Gorthleck 486 240
Gorthleck 486 283
Gorthleck 486 275
Gorthleck 486 650
Gorthleck 486 220

Elizabeth MacDougal
Liam MacNally
Sandy MacPherson
Eileen Martin
Martyn Bateman

Foyers 486 366
Gorthleck 486 605
Torness 01463 751213
Gorthleck 486 661
Whitebridge 486 273

Minute of Meeting 25 June

Correspondence: CHES News; Northern Constabulary/
Roads Strategy 2002-2006; Innogy/Harnessing the Power of
Water; SMP - sports equipment

Treasurer: Ord. acc. £62.52; project acc. £822.60. Grant
cheque not yet received.

Planning: Erection of 2 houses at Borgorstan, Torness -
planners no objections. Dell Estate - 2 house sites at Cnoc-
An-t-Sionnaich, Whitebridge and 1 at Killiechoilum.
Whitebridge. Objection to Killiechoilum site owing to open
position, no screening, possible flooding. CC felt better sites
could be found for all 3 but not against Dell Estate building.
Secretary to write to planning department.

Policing: Neighbourhood Watch - Secretary instructed to
write to PC Duncan Carmicheal, Crime Prevention Dept.,
inviting him to August meeting to find out more about the
scheme.

Roads and Transport: Inverfarigaig School transport - Mr
Murray, Education Manager, confirmed route to be re-
examined early next session. Children in question on bus
until further notice.

Dunmaglass school children - Mr Logan, Senior Engineer,
Policy, Standards and Safety, wrote to CC about decision
not to redirect the school bus to drop off children at
Dunmaglass road end.

Community Project: Subcommittee members met FE
engineer at Vennel to discuss ideas for the site.
Mr and Mrs Dickson and Mrs Marshall concerned that site
would be unsupervised and may attract 'undesirables', not
using it for intended purposes. Agreed to inform Vennel
residents of any plans.

Renewable Energy/Community Benefit:
Meeting with BEN Renewable Energy Subgroup - 2 July
2003 Developments: Innogy applied for consent for same
water in the Stronlaig area. Only one scheme will operate.
SSE applied for water rights. No consent until planning
passed.

SSE expect 150 million units electricity, 60% from
Stronlaig area, versus 30 million from Innogy.
Social and Economic Survey: Mr Stewardson, Fort
Augustus CC Chairman, proposed independent consultants
employed (through INE) to survey impact of SSE scheme on
tourism, housing, transport, environment, schools, medical
facilities etc. Ideally, SSE to contribute to cost: they will not
commit funding but will provide information to consultant.

S&FCC written to Mr E. Dodd, HIE, requesting assistance
(e.g. professional negotiator/legal advice). They
recommended an agreed standard for all CC's.

Mr Claridge, Highland Council, said 8 HC Area Managers
assisting CC's at present. He agreed basic information to be
available to communities and has spoken to Mr Dodd.

Assistance requested from Highland Opportunities. Model
agreements possible.

Community Benefit: SSE open to all suggestions. Funds
available for capital works in community or as cash input.
Thought Glen Doe landowners will talk to community about
their involvement.

Mr Claridge stressed aspects to be agreed: 1. Planning
conditions (to minimise impact); 2. Planning gain; 3.
Community benefit. 2 and 3 not be confused.

Transport: Survey to be completed soon. One access from
Fort Augustus, to reduce impact on Stratherrick, considered
but would mean longer road into 'wild' land and estates
were not happy with linkage. Most traffic will enter from
Glen Doe side.

Mr H MacNally wrote Scottish Executive objecting to Glen
Doe Scheme (loss habitat/bird nesting sites).

AOB: Loch Ness Marathon - Mr Sutherland's reply stresses
success of 2002 marathon and agreed runners should not be
able to loiter at Mr Fraser's house. Secretary to arrange
meeting to discuss start line.

Foyers Graveyard - seat replaced. Part of old seat still there.
Stumps at entrance could be hazard. Deer still eat
unprotected flowers. Secretary to write to Mr Fridge, TEC
services.

South Loch Ness Heritage Association - First met 1 July.
Mr MacNally requested start-up donation. £50.00 given and
loan option. Loch Tarff lay-by - Mr R Murchison gave CC
Council's proposal and will update.

Highland Councillor

Mrs Ella MacRae

01456 751 203

ella.macrae.clr@highland.gov.uk

Minute of Meeting 26 August

Correspondence: Community Website workshop – Mr Eric Law has set up an Errogie Webpage. Mr Bateman to ascertain whether he would be interested in increasing size of the site and attending the workshop. NHS – Care Without Barriers/consultation document. British Waterways – AGM in Edinburgh on 4 September. Albyn Housing – AGM notification and newsletter

Treasurer: Ord. acc. £975.58; project acc. £772.60. £19.82 to Canon, £50.00 to Heritage Group. Grant cheque £892.93 deposited (acknowledgement plus copy of 2002/3 accounts sent to Mr C. Claridge). £3600 received from INE. £3600 paid to Forestry Commission in respect of lay-by improvements. Photos of work done requested by Ms A Beck, FE, to send to Fiona Daschofsky, INE.

Planning: Foyers Stores - Outline planning permission for a dwelling house. Felt more consideration should be given to best use of land. With increased visitors to the Falls this year, placing a house there now could stifle any future development of site. Dell estates – ongoing

Policing: P.C. Macleod has transferred away from the area. P.C. Lewis Hannah is the new Community Policeman from 20 August. Moving into Police Station house, Foyers, in near future.

Roads and Transport: Letter received from HC stating work to cattle grid at Leadclune had been carried out but similar work not suitable to rectify problems with the grid at Abersky.

Secretary to ask if trimming of trees/bushes at roadsides is scheduled soon. Visibility is generally reduced but particularly bad from Whitebridge to Killen, at Dell road end and bad corner in Errogie. Sign in ditch after an accident. Still concern that the ditch at Fairyburn poses a hazard.

Mrs MacRae said Foyers signage is being looked at in conjunction with Safer Routes to School. She has requested traffic speed through Gorthleck is monitored with a view to reducing the speed limit.

Weight limit on Breineag Bridge reduced. Matter with Traffic Commissioner and Scottish Executive. Since the beginning of the new term, two buses have been going to Torness. The service bus picks up fare-paying passengers and the extra bus picks up some children. About 10 minutes is added to the service bus journey. It was questioned why the second bus could not pick up all passengers from Torness. Secretary to write to Mr Summers at HC. Concern that the extra bus uses Dores Hill, which could be a problem in winter as priority is given to clearing the Strathnairn road.

Renewable Energy/Community Benefit: Subgroup received a letter giving examples of how community benefit could be used for house insulation. To be discussed at next subgroup meeting.

BEN objected to Stronlaing scheme, concentrating on increase in traffic and disturbance of 'wilderness' areas. Mr Bateman commented it would be better if Stronlaing scheme went ahead (over Glen Doe) as it would have less environmental impact.

CC concerned at number of schemes proposed for the area: 4 hydro schemes with planners and wind farms being considered. Could be wind turbines all down the Strath if all proposed schemes agreed, with detrimental visual impact/affecting tourism. Construction traffic would affect tourists/locals and cause disturbance to residents at roadside. Secretary to write to HC stressing cumulative effect of schemes must be looked at and a line drawn.

AOB: Loch Ness Marathon – at meeting with Mr Sutherland, changes to marathon start agreed and more police/marshalls. Further meeting with him will take place to clarify details.

Foyers graveyard – Mr Fridge, HC, assured Mrs MacRae stumps will be removed. Grasscutters seen leaving gates open. Mrs MacRae will pass this on.

Loch Tarff lay-by – CC requested to apply for funding to match HC budget. Agreed, providing CC not liable for upkeep. Mrs MacRae will find out more.

next meeting:
Tuesday 23rd September

Boleskine Environmental Network

secretary
tel: 01456 486355
email:
odonovan_jane@hotmail.com



'An evening of chat and discussion'.

B.E.N.'s A.G.M.

Exchange information about wildlife
Any environmental concerns?

Please come along, join in and meet
up with like minded folk.

Friday 14th November
Craigdarroch Hotel
7.30 pm

The end of summer.....

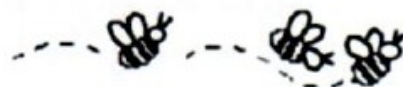
heralded by hundreds of house martins and swallows swooping and swallowing masses of insects as they prepare for their long journey south (....did you know they double their weight before leaving?....). With them are two fledglings that wouldn't have made it without a little human intervention....In late June, a nest containing three barely feathered house martins fell from the eaves of an Errogie house. With the help of neighbours, a ladder, shelf, mud, straw, spit and lots of perseverance, the dilapidated nest was finally replaced and little birds reinstated. At first it looked as if the parents would abandon this strange new home but by dusk they were back and feeding the youngsters. Two successfully fledged in July and a second brood is on the way....

CJ Wildbird Foods, The Rea, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4UR tel: 0800 731 2820 make house martin 'nests' which can be securely attached to the eaves of your house and which house martins seem to love!

What a waspish year it has been!

Most of us regard wasps as little more than an irritating nuisance. What do they actually do besides inflict painful stings? Early on in the season, the queen wasp lays eggs in a beautifully constructed paper nest (lots of them about to see this year). These develop into larvae requiring food in the form of caterpillars, flies, insects and all manner of other garden pests which the worker wasps gather for them. (So even the pesky wasp can be of benefit!). In return, the larvae secrete a sticky sweet substance on which the worker wasps feed. It is only after the larvae have grown and are no longer secreting, that the worker wasps become a nuisance. Deprived of their sweet diet, they set about raiding our kitchens and jam pots to satisfy their hunger....If you have an invasion of wasps, you might like to try making this environmentally friendly wasp trap:

250ml (9fl oz) water
4 tsps honey
dash vinegar
dark coloured bottle with narrow neck



Heat the water and dissolve the honey. Allow to cool, then add the vinegar and pour solution into the bottle using a funnel. Stand trap in room where wasps are gathering.

The 'energy rush' continues in the hills

Two applications for windfarm monitoring masts have been submitted prior to possible wind farms on Corriegarth and Dell estates. This will mean seven energy schemes proposed for Stratherrick (see map over) and, along with the two existing ones, will make this area one of the most densely exploited areas for renewable energy in Britain.

B.E.N. continues to lobby for an overall strategy on green energy schemes in the Highlands. As yet another development in the hills above Stratherrick seeks approval from the Scottish Executive there is growing concern among our local Highland Councillors. Margaret Davidson

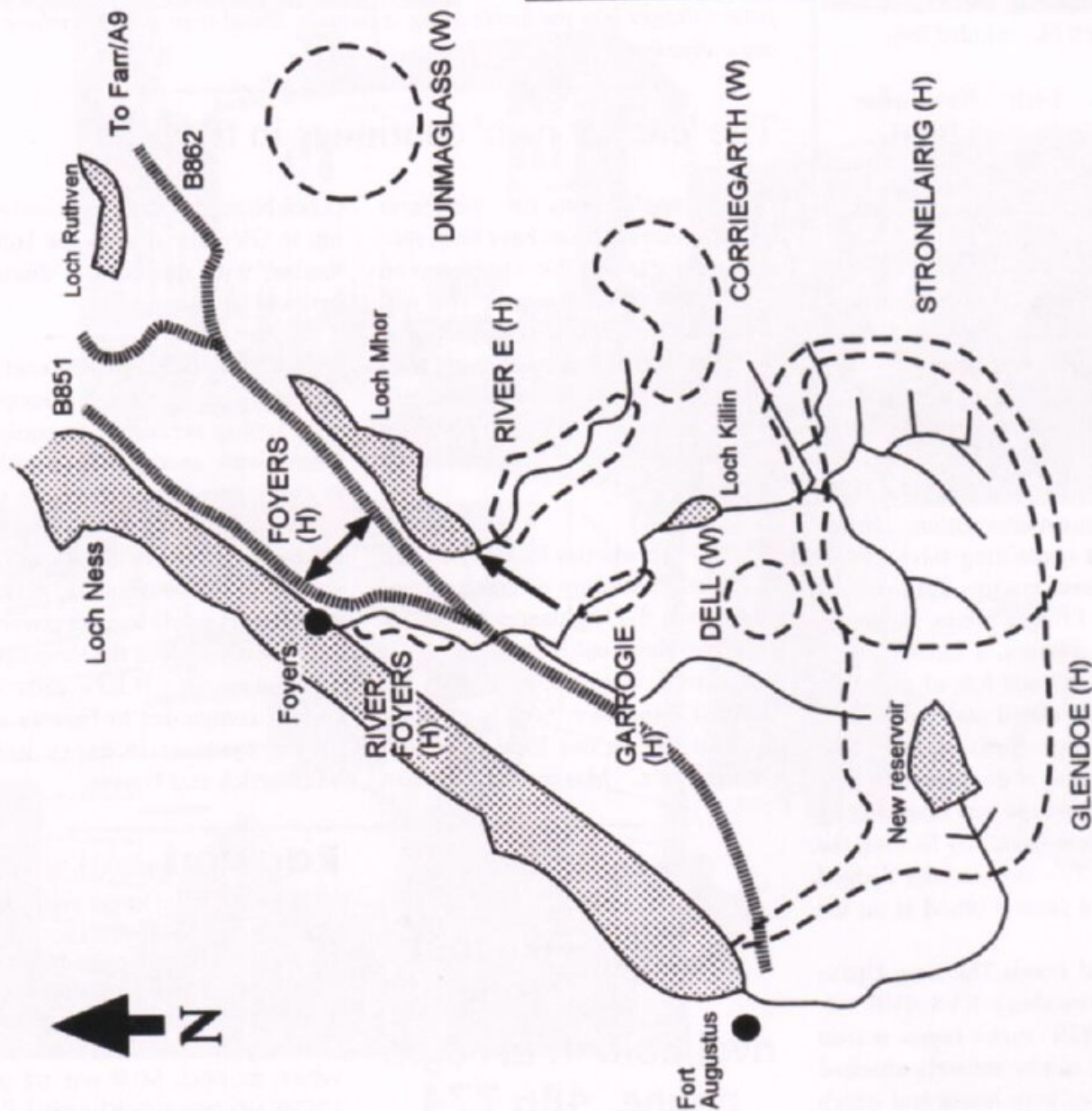
(Loch NessWest) has organised a meeting in Glenmoriston on the 16th September, with speakers, to discuss the national situation.

Letters to the Scottish Executive ask for the government to develop energy saving measures, to equip local homes with energy saving appliances in every area where there are renewable energy schemes. This would be a far more efficient means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Ad hoc developments solely to meet government targets only benefit the developer and the land owner. B.E.N. calls for the energy companies to finance energy saving systems in every home in Stratherrick and Foyers.



**Compost
Bins:
available in Errogie
phone 486 774**

Ragwort - 2003 has been a bad year for this large yellow plant. Dangerous to domestic livestock and spreading easily from seed, this invasive plant grows along the roadside, and on overgrazed or waste ground. It comes up easily when pulled. So, if we all pulled some up we could keep it from overrunning our area.



Renewable Energy Schemes in Stratherrick

KEY



Area of scheme

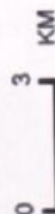
H = Hydro-electric scheme

W = Wind farm



Foyers pump storage
scheme

(River Foyers and Foyers pump storage are
existing schemes; the other 7 are proposed
schemes. Map excludes new access roads,
pipelines, dams, power stations & electricity
lines)



CHRISTIAN COMMENT

Stratherrick Hall was filled with people for a talk about the Neighbourhood Watch Crime Prevention Scheme. Why is it that in our nation we have to take care to lock up our possessions so carefully? Why do we have so many problems in relationships between people? What has changed over the years?

At this time when many Christian folk will be giving thanks to God for this year's Harvest, we all recognise the truth that we "reap what we sow". The Apostle Paul used this illustration when he wrote about human behaviour (Galatians 6 vs 7 - 10).

If we neglect the Ten Commandments of God that were given to help us to live together as a happy community, then we all suffer the consequences. May we encourage one another to return to those standards of Christian faith that used to be accepted by the majority of our neighbours.

Martyn Bateman

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

AIDS HELPLINE: Freephone 0800 567123. Open 24 hours.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (AA): Open 24 hours, confidential service, charged at local rate.

Tel. 08457 697555 Scottish Service Office. For information on meetings, etc. Tel. 01412 262214.

ALCOHOL COUNSELLING (INVERNESS): Tel. 01463 220995 Free, confidential, one-to-one counselling for anyone 16 years and over who is worried about their own or someone else's drinking.

BROOK HIGHLAND: 77, Church Street, Inverness. Tel. 01463 242434. Sexual Health Advisory Service for young people under 25 years old. Contraception, pregnancy testing, infection testing and counselling available.

CHILDLINE: Tel. 0800 1111. Free, confidential advice for children and young people 24 hours a day.

CHILDLINE SCOTLAND (BULLYING): Tel. 0800 441111. Free advice: Mon. to Fri. 3.30p.m. - 9.30p.m.

CITIZENS ADVICE (Inverness): Tel. 01463 235 345.

CRUISE BEREAVEMENT CARE: Tel. 01463 713741.

DEPRESSION ALLIANCE: Tel. 0131 467305. Mon. to Fri. 10.00a.m. to 3.00p.m. Offers information and support for those with depression, their family and friends.

DRUGLINE SCOTLAND: Tel. 0800 776600. Free 24 hour confidential advice on drugs.

FAMILY MEDIATION HIGHLAND: Tel. 01463 712100.

HIGHLAND COUNCIL: Tel. 0345 002005. Emergency number for homelessness and repairs after 5.00p.m.

HELP THE AGED: Tel. 01315 516331. Seniorline: Tel. 0808 800 6565.

KIDSCAPE BULLYING HELPLINE FOR PARENTS:

Out and About

Many congratulations to Margaret and Donald Mackintosh who have just celebrated their Golden Wedding.

Also, congratulations to Margaret and John Campbell who recently celebrated their Ruby Wedding.

After hip operations it is good to see Vicky Parker and Hannah Chisholm both making good progress and getting about again.

Lawrence Craven is also, we're glad to say, recovering from a serious and unexpected operation. We wish him and his family well.

It is with regret that we learn of the retirement in October of Miss Valerie Weir, Headteacher of Stratherrick Primary School. A dedicated teacher who encourages her students, she will be sadly missed by all. However, we understand that she will continue to live in Stratherrick and we wish her a happy retirement.

Welcome to all newcomers to the area. Please get in touch with us for any contributions you would like to offer the BB.

Tel. 01717 303300. Mon. to Fri. 10.00a.m. to 4.00p.m.

MARRIAGE COUNSELLING (HIGHLAND): Tel. 01463 712888 for appointment. Professional individual and couple counselling for those in intimate relationships. Strictly confidential service.

PARENTLINE: Tel. 0345 567800. Helpline for parents under stress. Mon. to Sat. 10.00a.m. to 4.00p.m. Answer phone service outside office hours.

RAPE AND ABUSE LINE: Free, confidential, listening support.

Call free on 08088 000123, every evening 7.00p.m. to 10.00p.m. This line is answered by women.

Call free on 08088 000122, Mon. and Wed. 7.00p.m. to 10.00p.m. This line is answered by men.

REACH OUT HIGHLAND: 34, Waterloo Place, Inverness. Tel. 01463 711585. Confidential information on sexual health. HIV counselling and testing.

SAMARITANS: 66, Tomnahurich Street, Inverness. Tel. 01463 713456. Also Tel. 0345 909090, charged at local rate. All branches offer 24 hour service.

SEXUAL HEALTH: Highland Sexual Health, outpatients Raigmore Hospital - Tel. 01463 704202. All ages - free - confidential - no appointment necessary. Contraception including emergency, pregnancy testing, diagnosis/treatment of infections and HIV, postal condom service.

SOCIAL WORK HOTLINE: Tel. 08457 697284. Calls charged at local rate. 24 hour service.

VICTIM SUPPORT: Tel. 01463 710806

WOMEN'S AID, INVERNESS: Tel. 01463 220719. Offers information, support and temporary accommodation for abused women and their children.

Compiled by Tine Butterworth

Hydro scheme not so 'green' as it appears

I wish to take issue with the erroneous and arrogant statements from Hydro Developers who seek to devalue the true worth of the Monadhliath Mountains to the nation.

Statements such as ... "the Monadhliaths are the least valuable of the mountain ranges in Scotland, they do not have the landscape value of the Torridons or the Grampians", from Ray Hunter, Renewable Energy Systems; and from Mike Seaton... "the land is little used recreationally", "...no designated areas will be affected"... Scottish and Southern Energy.

Well, I have news for them, with their blinkered tunnel vision. The inestimable value of the "less travelled Monadhliaths" is, in a large part due to this fact of having less human intrusion than other tourist orientated mountain landscapes. Because of this, their value as national sanctuaries and reservoirs for a great variety of wildlife (much of it endangered or vanishing elsewhere) far exceeds that of any Hydro Scheme which infringes upon, inhibits or destroys such an asset.

The equation is simple. There are scores of potentially "Green" renewable energy schemes on the political agenda which do not require miles of roads, aqueducts, tunnels or large dams. Today, small is beautiful, because, with a little forethought in planning, our unique and precious remaining wilderness habitats can absorb and readjust to these.

Not so with the Glen Doe Hydro Scheme with its massive one kilometre long dam which would destroy the remote Sheallach flats on the high Monadhliath plateau, an important and irreplaceable wildlife area.

Speculators all too often regard Highland landscapes as "barren". They cannot or choose not to perceive what such a landscape may contain.

There can be little justification for any "green"(?) energy proposal which ignores the fundamental rationale for going green in the first place.

Hugh MacNally



During August, Loch Bran was visited by "fishermen". Empty and broken beer bottles and rubbish was the result of their fishing!!! A fire had been lit and live trees had been cut down and left to waste - why do people continue to deposit their rubbish in the countryside and do not understand that live wood does not burn?

Jane O'Donovan - Gorthleck.

After an absence of about twenty years, a pair of swans built their nest on the island at the mouth of the Foyers river this spring. The male hung around patiently for weeks while the female sat on her eggs and eventually two cygnets were hatched. The parent swans swam proudly around Foyers Bay with their two downy babies swimming alongside - for four days, and then appeared alone, and subsequently left. A merganser was also noticed, once, with her brood of four in the vicinity of the tail-race. Several pairs of mallard duck were seen in the river Foyers and around the tail-race but not one duckling.

Are the predators the many hooded crows one sees around with their screeching hungry young? Or are they foxes? Or are the culprits wild mink which are reported to be in the area? Whatever they are, the services of an efficient gamekeeper would be very welcome.

Buddy MacDougall

Moby Dick

at the Hall on Friday 21st November at 8-00 pm.

Very loosely taken from an idea by Herman Melville and suitable for audiences from 8 to 80, 'Moby Dick' is an hilarious swashbuckling spoof of the seafaring saga. It features high seas adventure with deep, dark undercurrents as Captain Ahab and his cantankerous crew seek revenge on the great white whale. But does it really exist? And will they actually eat the cabin boy when the sea gets rough and the hard tack gets tough? Prepare to have your main-brace spliced, your timbers shivered and your swash completely buckled by this theatrical spectacular!



For further information or to book tickets call Hugh Nicol on 01456 486350.

South Loch Ness

Heritage Group

Some of you will already be aware that a Group was set up earlier this summer with the following objectives:

- To research, promote and safeguard the heritage of the South Loch Ness Area.
- In particular, to create an archive of the Area, and to collate material for publication, exhibition, education or other agreed purpose.
(quoted from the constitution adopted at a Public Meeting on July 1st)

The Committee that was set up in July feels that these objectives have never been more important, or, with the technology now available, so attainable. Our area is rich with history, and the natural history is second to none within Scotland. To some degree, both are under threat.

The Area

There are similar Groups in Strathnairn and in Fort Augustus – we hope to fill in the gap by covering Stratherrick and the south side of Loch Ness, extending through Dores to Scaniport and Cullaird.

Intentions

It is early days yet, but the following ideas have met with general approval, and may be taken forward where possible.

- Create "rolling" mini-exhibitions in public places, such as schools, pubs and halls, to stimulate interest and discussion regarding history or natural history. These can be as simple as two or three photographs or artefacts, but can be changed regularly. It is felt that schools are particularly important.
- Organise the usual occasional meetings or exhibitions, with speakers and/or themes according to demand.
- Create a web site which will give access to the information gathered both to locals and to people all round the world. This web site should be interactive, allowing people with basic internet facilities to post comments and start discussions.
- Compile an archive of photographs and documentation. Much of this type of material exists in peoples' homes, but it is disappearing fast.
- Investigate the possibility of re-printing Alan Lawson's fascinating book – "A Country Called Stratherrick", which has been unavailable for some time now.
- Create leaflets on specific themes, churches, bridges, wells, hydro schemes etc., to encourage people to get out on the ground and look at them.
- Find out from the Highland Council Archive Dept. what material they already possess which is relevant to this area, so that people know what there is to be seen there.

Your input to the functioning of this Group is essential. This is not a definitive list of objectives, and even these will require contributions from as many people as possible. The committee has a coordinating role, but limited time to spare, and there is so much that individuals can do. We hope that people will be inspired to carry out their own little projects – anything from noting down their own or other peoples' recollections to serious research into any aspect of the community which interests them.

What we can do

Technology has emerged in the past decade which makes it affordable not only to take, archive and duplicate photographs on a large scale, but also to copy and restore old photographs. We appreciate that people treasure their old photographs and are nervous about letting other people handle them, let alone borrow them. However, we feel that much can be done to the benefit of both the owners and the public.

- We can provide copies of unique photographs, allowing the owners to be less anxious about the originals.
- These copies can be enhanced, sometimes to a dramatic extent, allowing detail to be seen which has faded from the original. Creases and other damage can often be repaired.
- With the international scope of the web site, we hope emigrants from the area will come up with photographs, or other information, that previously there was no hope of seeing back in this community.

Grant Applications

Many people now have computers, scanners and digital cameras, but we are preparing grant applications to fund the purchase of good quality equipment specifically for the Group. This will include display boards, a digital projector, and storage devices.

Funding

Whilst grant funding should be available for equipment and start-up costs, it is anticipated that there will be substantial running costs, for hall hire, printing and copying etc. It was agreed at the public meeting that there should be a £10 membership fee, or £15 for a household membership, but it seems likely that there will have to be other forms of fund-raising. ***Donations would be very gratefully received, particularly at this start-up stage – we feel that an increased awareness of our heritage will be of significant social benefit across the full spectrum of society.***

Next Meeting

There will be a meeting on October 20th, at 7.30pm, in Stratherrick Hall. We hope to have a speaker, possibly from a similar group nearby. Because we are still feeling our way, the format of the rest of the meeting is undecided, but we certainly hope that many of you will come along full of ideas for the future. Participation is so important.

We also hope that you can bring along photos, documents or artefacts which you think may be of interest. These can be discussed informally at appropriate times during the meeting, or, if you would like to make more of a presentation to the meeting, please speak to any of the committee members listed below to ensure that time is made available. Remember that "heritage" does not have to be old. There are things going on today which will be of interest and significance in the future.

Contacts

Iain Cameron – 01463 751251
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Boleskine Camanachd Club

Interim League fixtures 2003

The Interim league will commence on 6th September and run till 20th December 2003. By 23rd November we should have completed our fixtures – the remaining four Saturdays are for re-scheduled games. There will be an U14 league run in conjunction with the senior fixtures.

Alister J Chisholm
01463 715713

Date	Senior LD5	V	2-30 throw up	Referee	U14 LD3	V	12-30 throw up
6 Sept	FREE				Glengarry		Boleskine
13 Sept	Strathglass		Boleskine	D. Freshwater	Strathglas		Boleskine
20 Sept	Marine Harvest Championship		Inverness				
27 Sept	Inverness		Boleskine	G. Irvine	Inverness		Boleskine
4 Oct	Boleskine		Kincraig	T.B.A.	Boleskine		Kinlochshiel
11 Oct	Boleskine		Glenurquhart	D. Freshwater	Boleskine		Glengarry
18 Oct	FREE				FREE		
25 Oct	Shinty/Hurling International		Inverness				
1 Nov	Boleskine		Strathglas	W. Anderson	Boleskine		Strathglas
8 Nov	Boleskine		Inverness	N. Ferguson	Boleskine		Inverness
15 Nov	Kincraig		Boleskine	M. Cameron	FREE		
22 Nov	Glenurquhart		Boleskine	D. MacRae	Kinlochshiel		Boleskine
29 Nov	FREE				FREE		

After an absence of several years the annual "old crocks" shinty challenge match between the present team and the veterans was revived taking place at Smith Park, Farr on 23rd August as part of the Farr Gala. Watched by a large and enthusiastic crowd the teams played for the Brian Stoddart / Donnie Magruer Cup, introduced in the eighties as a memorial to Brian and Donnie who were stalwarts of Boleskine and sadly died within a week of each other. For the first time in years former players like Charlie Kennedy, Kenny Ross, Andrew Fraser and Eddie Smith pulled the black and yellow hoops of Boleskine over their heads and strode on to the park. It was a chance for them to renew some old acquaintances and for the younger players to see in action players whom they had heard about in many a conversation.

The game finished 6-1 to the present team but considering this was the squad which had reached the "Sutherland Cup" final and won the North Division Three league title, it was no disgrace to the old crocks. Although billed as a "friendly", the match was very competitive with both teams showing total commitment. On a hot evening and a dry fast pitch, it was always going to be hard for veterans whose fitness could be described as less than 100%. However, the skills which had enabled them to win every honour in their day were still there in abundance. Indeed when you see the passion and determination that these older players still display, it is not hard to understand how the teams of the sixties and seventies were so successful. If the present team can adopt a similar attitude then there is no reason why they too cannot enjoy the same level of success.

After the match, the cup was presented to the present team captain, Davy Gillies, by Christine Shaw, a sister of Brian Stoddart and medals were presented to both teams by Maxi Smith. Man of the match for the veterans was Peter Slogie and for the 2003 team, Stevie Munro.

The occasion was a great success and it is hoped that it will once again become an annual event.

Senior Team

After the disappointment of losing to Newtonmore in the final of the Sutherland Cup in May, the team rallied and clinched the North Division Three title after a close run in with Inverness. The second to last game of the league programme, against Inverness was crucial Boleskine going 2-0 down to come back to run out 6-4 winners in a fiercely contested and exciting game. A win the following week against Lochaber saw Boleskine winning the league by two points. The new season starts on 13th September and is an interim season linking the old winter programme with the new summer shinty arrangements for 2004. Although we are moving up a league, we have strengthened the squad with new players and hopefully we can at least hold our own in Division 2.

Juniors

The under 14 and under 12's had a number of games during the summer against local clubs. The kids have enjoyed competing and definitely gained from the experience. Inverness butcher Duncan Fraser has sponsored the under 14's with a new strip and also donated a challenge shield which

(Continued on page 10)

HEROES OF THE GARDEN

When you read this heading, you may think, oh yes, this has to be the tiny ladybirds munching away at all the greenfly on your roses, or perhaps the blackies or thrushes risking attack on their lives from the resident cat while foraging for leather jackets or worms. Or maybe it's the person who battles their way through traffic queues to get to the garden centres to buy a nice potted primula or a dozen pansies to put in a tub. You couldn't be more wrong, for the heroes I want to tell you about existed from around the 16th - 17th century onwards. They were the plant hunters, without whose great bravery and courage, we would not have the wonderful plants that we take for granted in our garden today.

There are too many to write about all of them but a brief account of some of them may be of interest.

Sir Joseph Banks born in 1743, sent to Harrow when he was 9, and then on to Eton where he was seen as a bit of a simpleton. He eventually became interested in plants, teaching himself botany. As heir to a rich Lincolnshire estate he had money to hire a brilliant man, Israel Lyons, who taught him botany and natural history. Banks travelled to Newfoundland and Labrador in 1766 which at that time couldn't be more primitive by any standards. But he proved to be a fine collector. He then became the leader of the scientific team aboard HMS Endeavour with Captain Cook who was the first to circumnavigate the world. Although he did not introduce anything of any great importance to Britain, he did see the need for plant hunting to be organised. Back in Britain he became good friends with King George III and also became the unofficial director of Kew Gardens. This gave him the chance to appoint the first professional plant hunter, Francis Masson.

As mentioned above, Francis Masson was the first

collector to be sent out by Kew Gardens. An Aberdonian, he had a great working knowledge of botany and was aboard the Endeavour on its first botanical expedition in 1772 to the Cape. He collected nearly half of all Pelargonium species found in Britain today. He was also responsible for collecting gladiolus, ixia, kniphofia, the arum lily and the gorgeous bird of paradise flower. After only three years into his work he had added over 40 species to the Kew collection. All this he achieved by trekking through unexplored territory, facing hostile tribes, poisonous snakes and wild animals. His last expedition took him to Canada where he died two days before Christmas, 1805.

Another great Scot, this time famous for his introduction of trees to Britain was David Douglas. Aged just 11, he was garden boy to the Earl of Mansfield and went to work at the Glasgow Botanical Gardens. After being sent to America by the R.H.S. in 1825 returning with two new oaks and the plum Washington, he was soon sent back again. One trip took him to the Columbia River, lasted eight months and returned with 800 species. He also gave us the tree lupin, clarkia, cornus Alba and a host of conifers, one of the most common grown around here being the Douglas fir. He is most famous for bringing home the flowering currant, which the R.H.S. felt, would alone justify the expense of the expedition. He died in 1834 whilst collecting plants in Hawaii.

There are many more plant hunters and plants collected, but perhaps it lets us know that without these brave people our gardens would not be what they are today. So the next time you go to the supermarket or garden centre and pick up that common house plant or perennial remember someone risked their life to bring it to you.

Davie Matheson

"More and more I am coming to the conclusion that rain is a far more important consideration to a gardener than sun and that one of the lesser advantages that a gardener gains in life is his thorough enjoyment of a rainy day."

Margaret Waterfield 1907

"All really grim gardeners possess a keen sense of humor."

W.C.Sellar 1898 - 1951

Wetter is Better

Given the recent dry spell we have experienced over the last 2 - 3 months, some advice on how and when to water could be helpful. Giving the garden a water every night for a few minutes does not really help. The little amount of water going into the dry ground only penetrates a short distance thus causing the small root hairs to turn up towards the moisture. In the heat of the day they are likely to shrivel up and wither. What the plants need is a good soak for at least half an hour once a week. To make this easier, divide the garden into seven different sections and water each one in turn for a good half hour.

Davie Matheson



(Continued from page 9)

was played for between Boleskine and Kingussie with Boleskine winning the trophy in its first year. The under 14's will compete in the interim season with their fixtures

mirroring that of the senior team and their games starting at 12-30. The junior players and their parents have shown great enthusiasm during these games and this is very encouraging indeed.

Women on the Verge.....

Comedy, drama, and a perceptive analysis of people's expectations of women drivers were all to the fore in Rona Martin's latest play for Fiona Knowles, "Women On The Verge Of A T-Junction". Having seen her perform in "Stick Granny On The Roof-Rack", the Stratherrick Hall audience knew what to expect from Fiona Knowles and they were certainly not disappointed.

Playing all four characters, including the Aberdeenshire policewoman whose mere looks reduced the audience to helpless laughter, Fiona humorously and poignantly developed all the characters from a position of blaming themselves for the three-car pile-up at the T-junction to where all three had gained self-confidence and feelings of self-worth. Effortlessly switching from character to character, Fiona kept the audience sympathising with each one whilst providing an extremely humorous slant on women's insecurities. Great fun - great entertainment - and a very perceptive view on life. We look forward to the next offering from this talented duo.

Hugh Nicol

A Forest of Dreams

Step

into the forest

all is not as it seems

Aspen leaves tremble for fears left untold

Birch bark turns white e'en before it grows old

Hazel trees flourish for squirrels to plunder

Leave Rowan untouched in case you should wonder

The Pine tree yearns to touch the blue sky

The Oak reigns supreme as the years roll on by.

Every tree is special

in a forest

of dreams.

anon

Also.....at the Hall

Bob Hall's Boogie Woogie Show - A great blues pianist accompanied by great blues singer and bass guitarist, his partner, **Hilary Blythe** inevitably gave us.....well.....a great evening!

Duncan Chisholm, fresh from his Eden Court performance with Wolfstone, and accompanied by **Iain MacFarlane** and **Marc Clement**, not surprisingly drew a large crowd to the Hall. As traditional Highland music goes, they must be among the best and we were enthralled and delighted.

With their improved advertising campaign for this year, the **Ceilidh Trail** brought the size of audience they deserve. Many were tourists, including a party from the Foyers Hotel. The band of talented young musicians presented a varied programme including solo performances. Guest appearances included a virtuoso performance by our own **Hugh MacNally** on mouth-organ. Almost everybody was easily persuaded to get up and have a dance or few - even those of us who can be reluctant at times!

Dave Bradwell/Jill

Parent & Toddler Group Seek New Members

The Stratherrick & Foyers Parent and Toddler Group meet every Wednesday at Stratherrick Hall between 10.30am and 11.30am. We offer a space to meet, chat, share ideas and have a cup of tea in an informal atmosphere whilst our children play and paint away the morning with the toys, games and paint provided. We make decisions collectively to suit our needs. We are asking for people to register their interest in joining by 'phoning Margie Bond on (01456)

486490. We'd like to know who would like to come along in the next year so we can plan ahead and maybe extend the hours we meet. We especially offer a warm welcome to new arrivals in the area. Why not drop in and check us out on a Wednesday morning.

Margie Bond, Secretary SFPTG



Photographs of the Post Office at South Muirnich, Gorthleck at the bottom of the farm lane. The date is thought to be around 1950.

(Left) Margaret Urquhart, the Postmistress.

(Far left) Margaret with Alistair MacDougal. They eventually married.

Alistair's parents originally had the Post Office in the adjacent cottage (and acted as Registrar). Alistair took over the Post Office at the age of about 14 and it was moved into the hut (built by Robin and Tom Fraser). Later Margaret took it on. Willie Urquhart and Donnie MacIntosh were the posties. Finally Sadie Chisholm became Postmistress and it moved to her house. The old hut found further use on South Muirnich Farm.

(Bottom left) Margaret and Janet Smith.

(Bottom right) Margaret and one of the Cooper girls - probably Wilma - from no 6, Loch Mhor Cottages.

Photos and information kindly supplied by Anne Urquhart.

Old photos loaned to the BB can be scanned and returned quickly, unharmed.

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Events at Stratherrick Hall

Toddlers Group - Wednesdays 10.30 - 11.30

Yoga classes - Tuesdays 2.00 - 3.30

Thursdays 7.00 - 8.30 Tel. Sylvia on 486434

Bowls Tuesdays 7.30 - 9.30 Tel. 486377 for Oct. start date

Country Dancing - Wednesdays 7.30 - 9.30 All welcome

Monday 20th October 7.30 - **Heritage Group.** See flyer

Sunday 26th October 7.30 - **Songs of Harvest Praise.**

Aberdeen University Talks

Tuesday, 4th November 7.30 - 'Hugh Millar' - Martin Gostwick

Tuesday, 2nd December 7.30 - 'Auroras' - Ken Taylor

Friday 21st November at 8.00 pm - Family play - **Moby Dick.** See article

To book the Hall 'phone Judith Borup on 01456 486464

We keep the notice board outside the hall up to date with other local events.

See also local website www.erroglie.supanet.com and click on Stratherrick
Public Hall

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