

The Boleskine Bulletin



Issue No. 26
Spring 2004

COFFEE MORNINGS

The coffee mornings are starting again in the Foyers Tearooms and it is hoped to continue them throughout the year.

Everyone is welcome and we look forward to hearing your ideas on how to continue and develop the community and social aspects of the coffee mornings.

We hope to provide transport for those who need it. This can be arranged by phoning 486233.

We look forward to hearing from, and seeing you.

See *Foyers Shop* article.



The Return of the Taxi

Once upon a time there was a big bad Education Department.

One day without any warning the big bad Education Department took away the School taxi.

The children of Inverfarigaig were left to walk alone along the cold dark road to School every morning and every night.

The children decided to fight the big bad Education Department; after a lot of huffing and puffing from our friends in the community, the big bad Education Department gave in.

So the children would like to thank all those friends in the community for supporting us in our fight to get the taxi back.

THANK YOU ALL

Deer on Roads

Deer on the roads are a hazard that we're all well aware of and every now and again there is that one that decides to play dodgems with our car. Inevitably, some deer are killed and left lying at the roadside. Forest Enterprise will arrange for the removal of these animals if they are contacted at their district office in Fort Augustus on 01320 366322. They are currently undertaking their annual cull to keep deer numbers under control.

Yoga

Come and join our Yoga classes. Yoga is great for loosening up stiff joints - helping posture - toning muscles (especially those sagging tummy and bottom ones) and generally giving you those "feel good" vibes. All ages and abilities are welcome (we range from twenty somethings to one seventy something). We are so fortunate to have such a good teacher in our midst. Go on - give it a go! (See back page for



The Nativity Play performed by the South Loch Ness Nursery before the devastating frost-related flood damage closed the premises. It has now opened again and a sale of work is being planned for May in the Stratherrick Hall. Watch for notices.

Walks

Highland Council Ranger Service

Saturday 3rd April (6-30-8-30 am)
SUNRISE CELEBRATION, FARR

Get up with the Lark and go mammal spotting and listening to bird song at the Strathnairn Community Wood.
 Please dress warmly. To book 'phone 01463 724312.

Saturday 24th April (5-30-8-30 am)
SPRING IN YOUR STEP

Celebrate Spring at sunrise on this walk in the foothills around Duntelchaig.
 Bacon butties reward those who can get out of bed (veggie option available).
 Dress warmly and wear walking boots.
 Book as above.

Christmas Carol Service, Stratherrick Hall, 14th December 2003

Around 100 people came to the Carol Service which was held at the earlier time of 3 o'clock. This earlier start, together with reasonable weather on the day, meant that quite a number of families with young children were able to come and this in turn, helped make it a very happy family service.

Thanks to the choir and band and to everyone who helped with the readings and with the refreshments and decoration of the hall.

The Spring Songs of Praise will be held at Stratherrick Hall on Sunday 9th May, again at the earlier time of 3 pm.

We are always on the lookout for new choir members and musicians; so if you enjoy singing or play an instrument, please get in touch.

Eddie Moore Tel. 01456 486255

Senior Citizens' Dinners

Many thanks to all those who arranged the Stratherrick Senior Citizens' Dinner at Christmas and the later Foyers and Inverfarigaig Dinner in February. Both were held in the Craigdarroch House Hotel whose staff put on a much appreciated spread.

Broadband Internet Access

We need your help!

BT is currently investigating demand for Broadband and if 100 people in our area register their interest, they will upgrade the telephone exchange so that everyone who wishes to use the service can do so. Even if you do not use the Internet, it's still important to register. Registration is free and there is no obligation to take the service. If we don't make the effort to register, it's possible that we won't get any broadband service at all.

To register 'phone 0800 0272327 or log on to www.hie.co.uk/broadband

Alan Speight

Hall tea towels

Have you any Hall tea towels at home – probably after taking them away to wash? The stock is dwindling but it's likely they were just taken away accidentally.

Also the covers for the electrical sockets seem to "walk". Have you found one in your pocket?

Hall users would be very grateful if any missing items could be returned.

Ticks and Lyme Disease

Government statistics show that cases of Lyme Disease in Scotland have risen from two reported cases in 1992 to eighty-five last year. The Highlands has one of the highest rates of the disease in northern Europe.

The very common tick is the culprit using as hosts, hares, sheep, deer, grouse chicks, dogs and of course humans, where it gorges itself, drops off and mates and then lays as many as 3000 eggs in the mat layer of dead vegetation under forestry, rough grassland, bracken or heather.

Lyme Disease is a protozoal infection which can be transmitted from ticks to humans. 30 days after being bitten, flu-like symptoms are evident and a rash can appear at the site of the bite rather like the shape of a jigsaw piece which spreads. At this stage antibiotics can control the disease but untreated manifestations can become more severe such as Lyme arthritis usually affecting the knee and also an unusual skin condition, and more rarely, Lyme meningo encephalitis.

To avoid ticks, avoid brushing through

dense vegetation. Wear an effective insect repellent and light coloured clothes enabling the ticks to be noticed and removed. Tuck trouser legs into long socks.

To remove a tick, grip it with tweezers as close as possible to the skin and the tick's mouthparts and twist anti-clockwise whilst pulling gently.

The Foyers Medical Practice gives the comforting advice that if a tick is removed within twenty-four hours, there is less chance of infection.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

John Campbell (Chairman) Gorthleck 486 240
Fiona Kirkland (Secretary) Gorthleck 486 283
Tine Butterworth (Treasurer) Gorthleck 486 275
Angus Fraser Gorthleck 486 650
Kenny Fraser Gorthleck 486 220
Lesley MacGregor Foyers 486 404
H Grainger Inverfarigaig 486 ???
Sandy MacPherson Torness 01463 751213
Eileen Martin Gorthleck 486 661
Martyn Bateman Whitebridge 486 273

Minute of Meeting 16 December

Correspondence: It was agreed that the offer made by Innogy PLC for community benefit was too low. CC is awaiting a reply from the Highland Council. There have been no complaints from residents about traffic on the Killen road and damage to the side of the road has been repaired by A C Fraser for R J Macleod. North British Windpower - as per last minute, they are invited to the next CC meeting. Changes to the way health services are provided out of hours - discussion with Mrs MacGregor who told the CC that we could lose our own doctors during out of hours.

Community Right To Buy - it was agreed that 12 more copies should be ordered.

Treasurer: Ord. acc. £364.21; project acc. £712.60. Cheques were issued to South Loch Ness Nursery (£50.00); Foyers Primary School (£50.00); Stratherrick Primary School (£50.00); Stratherrick Hall (£96.00) for hire of rooms.

Planning: the CC agreed to go with the planning recommendation for Foyers Shop house application. House plan at Lower Knockchoilum - CC agreed in principle but consideration should be given to the type of house, ensuring that it complements the neighbours.

Policing: There has been a small spate of break-ins in the Foyers and Whitebridge areas. Three properties have been broken into and power tools stolen. The culprits have not yet been caught. It is the same group of people doing this. Anti-crime patrols have been set up.

Speeding through Gorthleck and Errogie - checks are to be carried out at peak times in the near future. A road safety day will be held at the Hall on a Saturday in early January between 10am and 12 noon. Cars will be checked for lights, tyres and brakes and a winter safety pack will be issued to each person. Publicity for this will be posters, roadside notices and MFR.

Roads and Transport: Lower Foyers - there is an urgent need for the road to be cleared of leaves. Surface water is causing a hazard there, especially when it freezes. The footbridge is highly dangerous. There have been complaints about the number of deer on the road. Forest Enterprise should be contacted regarding culling of the deer.

Community Project: The sub-committee will meet on Monday 12th January at Mrs Butterworth's at 7pm.

AOB: Neighbourhood watch - PC Hannah will get the list of names that were put forward at the inaugural meeting from PC D Carmichael and bring it to the next meeting. A fresh meeting is to be set up for Tuesday 30th March 2004 and the scheme will go forward from there.

Districts for CC members - Inverfarigaig/Mrs Grainger; Foyers/Mrs Butterworth and Mrs MacGregor; Whitebridge and Trinloist/Mrs Martin; Killiechoilum and Garrogie/Mr Bateman; Gorthleck/Mr Campbell and Mr A Fraser; Errogie/Mr K Fraser; Aberchalder/Mrs Kirkland; Torness/Mr MacPherson.

Foyers Shinty pitch - ongoing.

BT Lines - they are antiquated in this area. Internet is difficult to surf. It was agreed that Mrs MacGregor should compose a letter, which she will bring to the next meeting. The CC members will sign it and more signatures will be sought until we get 100. BT will then act and upgrade the facility. Drumnadrochit have just done this and received an upgrade.

Police Telephone Numbers

Foyers Police Station	01456 486222
Fort Augustus Police Station	01320 366222
Inverness Police Station	01463 715555
Crimestoppers Confidential Line	0800 555111

Stolen Signs

Did you take advantage of the free police winter car check? Who, what, where you may well ask? Roadside signs advertising the event "disappeared" so you might be excused for knowing nothing about it.

This has happened before. It's difficult enough advertising events in the area without having to suffer this kind of sabotage.

Minute of Meeting 3 February 2004

Correspondence: Terrestrial and Environmental Change conference - a request for the concluding papers should be made. Inverness Museum and Art Gallery - what's on. Highland Stroke Matters. Snow clearing and gritting schedule. UHI - change in constitution resulting in an opening for new members. Forestry Commission - Annual report and accounts. Loch Ness Partnership conference - Wednesday 4th February. Impact study on the effect of the Glendoe hydro scheme on Fort Augustus and Stratherrick area should be complete by mid-February. BEN - request for donation to meet running costs. Agreed to give £100.00.

Treasurer: Ord. acc. £772.60; project acc. £357.21. A cheque for £7.00 was raised for the photocopier money tin.

Planning: Highland Council refused the application for a house site at Foyers shop.

Policing: Attendance at the road safety day in early January was disappointing, possibly owing to lack of publicity.

Roads and Transport: Foyers Old Estate Bridge - the council have been to look at the bridge and have cleared some drains, although not sufficiently for the water to drain properly. Boulders were dug out and left at the roadside. Local people have cleared them away and dug more drainage. The fence along the sides of the bridge is either broken or non-existent. The CC agreed that Mrs Macrae should be contacted. Mr Forsyth, Foyers, has written to Highland Council requesting a 'statement of interest' to enable him to take forward his funding request for improvements to the bridge to Heritage Lottery.

Inverfarigaig Pass road - fallen rocks lying along stretches of this road need to be removed. The bridge at the bottom of the hill has been the site of at least two accidents in recent years, where cyclists have skidded on gravel, hit the bridge parapet and fallen into the burn below. The sides need to be heightened. A tree is ready to fall at any time. Deer Culling - is in progress in all areas by Forest Enterprise. Ditches - there is a real need for ditches in the whole area to be attended to, with specific concerns being raised about water on the roads at Dhuhallow, Errogie post box, Fenecreich and the Dores to Foyers road in general. Gritting - no sand pile has been deposited this year and the Trinloist and Pass roads have not been touched. The secretary was instructed to speak to Mr Fraser. Speeding - contractors building the hydro scheme at Garrogie, RJ Macleod vans in particular, have been speeding through the Strath. The secretary was instructed to write to request that the speed is reduced, particularly through the villages and past the schools.

Community Project: Meeting rescheduled to Monday 16th February, 7.00pm at Mrs Butterworth's.

Renewable Energy/Community Benefit: Glendoe Hydro scheme - the addendum is in circulation. Mr Neil MacKenzie has summarised some of the points:

1. Over 32,100 heavy lorry movements over 30 months, mainly to power station site. 724 are predicted to go to the Killen site over 24 months. This does not include the daily travelling of the contractors.
2. All roads could be used for access.
3. Safety on the B852 might be compromised in villages and by schools.
4. There will be no workers camps at Stronlairig, therefore there will be 230 workers travelling each day.
5. The B862 is expected to be damaged.
6. The spoil will possibly be dumped on site or moved by barge.
7. Rare birds are likely to be displaced.
8. Waterfalls will be lost in the Upper Tarff.

Mr Mackenzie will draft a letter and circulate to CC and BEN members for comment.

This is just one of many proposed and the cumulative impact must be considered.

Community benefit - Mr Sutherland drafted a letter to Mr Owen, Highland Opportunity, to request help with the cost of hiring a professional negotiator to work on behalf of the community. It was agreed that this could only benefit the community and that the letter should be sent.

AOB: Forest Enterprise - are undergoing a review of the land that they hold and are consulting the communities. It may have a large impact on individual communities and may open up possibilities of community ownership. There may be changes in planting policies in terms of commercial versus leisure/native trees. Mr Bateman and Mr Campbell will review the document. Forest Tracks - Mr Weild wrote to the CC to ask if they were aware of the problem of quad bikes, 4 X 4 vehicles and motorcyles using the forestry roads without permission. FE requests that if anyone sees such activities, they take note of details and inform FE. It was agreed to pass the letter to the Boleskine Bulletin for circulation. BT lines - Mrs MacGregor prepared forms for CC members to collect signatures to present to BT in a bid to get the lines upgraded. Inverfarigaig school transport - congratulations were given to Mrs Grainger in winning her battle to reinstate the school transport for children to Foyers school.

Next Meeting

Tuesday 24th February

Highland Councillor

Mrs Ella MacRae

01463 751203

ella.macrae.clr@highland.gov.uk

Christian Comment

In recent weeks and months a number of Inquiries have been held concerning the truth of reports ranging from international war to child abuse. We are also aware of local issues and family matters where there are two or more sides to the situation - and it is not easy to discern the truth of the matter.

The day before the Crucifixion and subsequent Resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah, a Court case was held when the Judge, the Roman Governor of Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate, asked the question "What is truth?" The answer was standing in front of them in the person of that same Jesus of Nazareth, who had previously said "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." (John 14. v 6)

As we prepare to celebrate once more the amazing events of that Holy Week almost 2000 years ago. it could be helpful to test our attitudes against those of Jesus, who also said "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." To know Jesus in ones own experience is to know the truth of a Happy Easter!

Martyn Bateman



CHURCH MEETINGS

Church of Scotland

Sunday: 10.00a.m. Boleskine, 11.30a.m. Dores. Rev. J. Buchan 01463 713114.

Episcopal Church

Sunday: 11.00a.m. Croachy. Rev. P. Mosley 01808 521397

Free Church

Sunday: 12 noon Farr, 6.00p.m. Errogie.
Mr. J. Campbell 01456 486240

Free Church (continuing)

Sunday: 10.30a.m. & 4.15p.m. Dores.
Wednesday: 7.30 p.m. Mr. D. Fraser 01456 486408

Free Presbyterian Church

Sunday: 12 noon Farr, Every 2nd Sunday:
7.00p.m. Gorthleck. Mr. E. Fraser 01456 486282

Roman Catholic Church

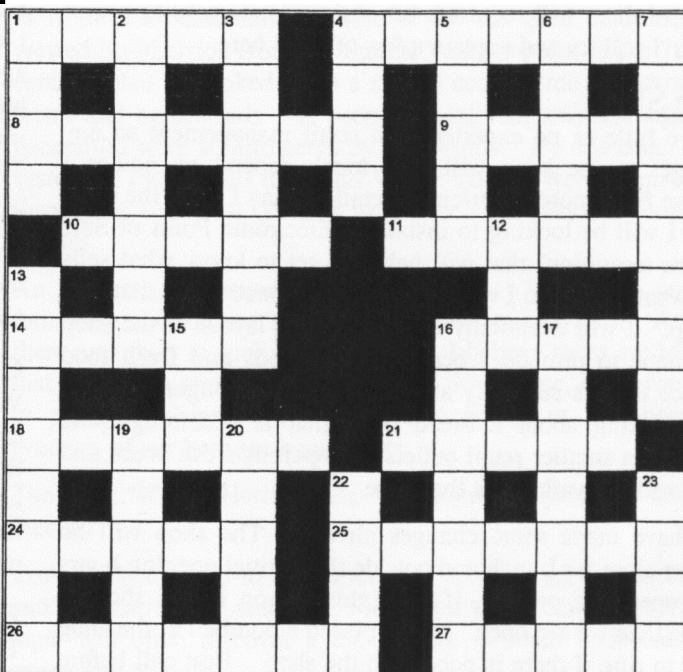
Sunday: 12 noon Whitebridge.
Rev. P. Bonnici 01456 486289

Inter-Denominational Bible Study

Rev. Martyn Bateman 01456 486273 (for details)

Across

- 1 On stage (5)
- 4 Agile monsters ability (7)
- 8 An extreme politician (7)
- 9 The artist's workmate is up for rent (5)
- 10 This Jane could not make cakes (5)
- 11 A cheat could try and change this worm's coat (6)
- 14 Get to grips with thyme (5)
- 16 Come out from the centres with what you see with (5)
- 18 Put in what comes out (6)
- 21 Goodbye from Spain (5)
- 24 Could these tines be part of the bigger picture (5)
- 25 End up reeling from his looks (7)
- 26 Quizzed about the bacon (7)
- 27 Hands on for a crust (5)



Down

- 1 This race could turn up in a field (4)
- 2 Throw this one back (7)
- 3 Was Grandma the chairperson (7)
- 4 The daft one has no room left (4)
- 5 Preparation makes for a happy seed bed (5)
- 6 The late news could make one feel happy (5)
- 7 Scots girl seeks drama in Brazil (8)
- 12 Heating engine going both ways (3)
- 13 Could the snake with one in the circle reach the top of the ladder (8)
- 15 Earthmovers of long ago (3)
- 16 Working class in the deep South (7)
- 17 Chemical the Princess made with a cow one day in March (7)
- 19 Say hello to Susan whilst eating in Japan (5)
- 20 Go back later to Africa for mammals (5)
- 22 Did this when stifled (4)
- 23 Five hundred could be old (4)

Foyers Stores and Tearoom

Agi, Colin (our son) and myself (Tim) would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the very warm welcome you have given us since our arrival here in January and the assistance and advice we have received from lots of you since we first decided to come and have a look at the Store and Tearoom in July last year. We are looking forward to our future here and already feel very much at home thanks to you. I am extremely delighted that Jim has decided to stay on and help us run the shop. He has been strongly recommended by everybody I have met. I am sure he will keep us on the right track.

We have lots of plans for the shop and tearoom but of course many of them will require a bit of time (and cash) to put in place. I will try and explain a few of them here.

The Shop

I have little or no experience in retail management so any changes to the store will very much depend on advice I receive from more experienced retailers than I. In the short term I will be looking to install an Electronic Point of Sale system (scanning) that will help me get to know what sells and what doesn't so I would ask your patience while that gets set up. I will eventually re-organise the layout of the shop and hope to provide a better chilled foods and fresh food service than is currently available. In the longer term we are thinking about a bread oven that is becoming quite popular in smaller retail outlets so hopefully fresh bread and rolls will be available at that time.

We have made some changes already. The shop will no longer close for Lunch and outside the normal opening hours will operate a policy - if the lights are on in the shop or house then we are open. I have placed a doorbell at the shop door to ring if there is nobody in the shop. Best call before you come though just to make sure we are in and we have what you want. The shop will also open on a Sunday from 12 to 2. I am aware that the service David from Chalky's provides on Sundays is very useful for a lot of you so we are going to

work together to try and keep that viable. Therefore the newspapers I sell on a Sunday will actually be Chalky's. David and I will review the service over the next few months to see how it is working and we will let you know if any changes have to be made.

Tearoom

The tearoom will open again on the 1st March under a new name 'The Waterfall Cafe'. Hopefully there will be some interior changes and we will be changing the type of service to counter as opposed to table service. Fiona who used to run the tearoom a few years ago will be helping us with this.

Community Coffee Morning

I would like to start the local community coffee morning again in the tearoom. I will close the tearoom to the general public for this time and will provide use of the facilities including heating and cleaning etc. This starts again on Thursday 25th March, 10 to 12.

Other Uses for Tearoom

If anybody wishes to use the tearoom in the evenings for meetings, clubs or societies please get in touch. There is no charge!

Crafts

Within the tearoom there will be a display section for local crafts and I would welcome anybody who already makes or is thinking of making crafts to make use of this space. We have hand made cards and photos already. The walls of the tearoom are also available to local artists to display their works.

External

The general external appearance of the building is pretty shabby so once the weather improves I will be re-harling the outside walls. The signs will be replaced and the woodwork repainted in green.

I want more seating outside and dependent on cash I would like to have timber decking with rails in place by the summer season. Coupled with this will be improved disabled access to the shop and tearoom. Next winter we will try and re-design the tearoom toilets to allow disabled access to them as well.

Post Office

I will try to be as flexible with the hours on the Post Office as possible with one exception. Every week we have to perform a balance for the PO and this occurs on a Wednesday, so we will have to be quite strict in not accepting further transactions after the PO shuts at 1300 on

Lines on the Falls of Fyers

Near Loch-Ness – written with a pencil on the spot - 5th September 1787

Among the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods:
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro a shapeless breach, his steam resounds,
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless Echo's ear, astonish'd, rends.
Dim-seen through rising mists and ceaseless show'rs
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, lours:
Still, thro the gap the struggling river toils,
And still, below, the horrid caldron boils -

Robert Burns, 1759 - 1796

New Shop Hours

Monday-Saturday 9am - 5.30pm

South Loch Ness Heritage Group

Talk given by Mr Hugh MacNally on 12th January.

The purpose of a Heritage group is to Research and Record all available details and history of its area, in a manner to involve and interest all the people of the area and to leave a Record of Knowledge and Truth for one's youngsters and succeeding generations.

We can do this by noting and recording all discernable objects and clues in our area which can be identified and related to past events. How far back we can go will depend on how far back we can identify and relate our knowledge, historical objects or natural features to tangible evidence of specific events in the past.

A list of clues and objects to be found in our area:

- Historic houses
- Family and Clan names
- Language and place names
- Industrial structures
- Old ruins
- Military and Drove Roads
- Bridges and Piers
- Churches and Schools
- Cemeteries
- Crannogs
- Hill Forts
- Ancient Settlements
- Ancient Yew Tree
- Natural Geographical Features

Some years ago, I noted an interesting Geological feature in this area and now seems an appropriate time to make this public, because it goes back a long long time, to the end of the last ice age in fact. But first let me tell you the story of Glen Roy in Lochaber, famed for its so called Parallel Roads, believed in mythology to be caused by the legendary Fingal and his warriors in the distant past, until in 1821, an eminent geologist, John MacCulloch, identified them as "water level bench marks", formed at the end of the last glacial period, approximately 12,000 years ago. Personally, I am not aware of any other Highland glen known to have this feature, but I do believe the feature I came across those years ago is a similar type of ice age water level mark. Only a single one, unfortunately, but it is about a half mile in length.

Should this be authenticated but not hitherto noted or recorded, then one up for layman observation. More importantly, an auspicious starting point for South Loch Ness heritage, if able to go back 12,000 years.

Around 8,000 years ago, woodlands, wildlife and people were becoming established in this, the Mesolithic age. These early inhabitants were gatherers and hunters, nomadic by necessity, but concentrated along estuaries and coastlines for

seasonal food supplies. It is not unreasonable to imagine some of these hunting people reaching into South Loch Ness territory around this time. They were already used to water travel, some of them having reached the Isle of Rhum and even further afield by this time.

By 6,000 years ago, these ancient people, or at least some of them, were tiring of the nomadic way of life and having evolved a basic form of agriculture, bartering and a form of specialisation and economics, they became territorially tied to farms and settlements in what became the Neolithic age. These people were presumably forerunners to the Picts, who in turn were ancestors to the Celts of Northern Scotland; certainly to some of them.

Is it then unreasonable to assume by the time Chuimien viewed Stratherrick from the Suidhe vantage point in the 7th century, that he looked upon a settled countryside of Pictish farms and homesteads. A people whose religious and legal necessities were administered by the Druids. By this time, a system of Pictish hill forts and Watch Towers were in place throughout the Great Glen, as were Druid Temples and Stone Circles.

An interesting question springs to mind. Was there any follow-up to Chuimien's first survey of the countryside? Are there any clues to such a possibility? I believe there are but that is another story for another day. Meantime, endeavour to prove or disprove any debateable points in this brief synopsis of our heritage beginnings.

The three "R's" of Heritage are :- 'Recognise', 'Research' and 'Record'.

Truth will stand up to any amount of scrutiny and research, and on matters of ambiguity, an open mind coupled with logic will often discover a lot. There is much to interest young and old.

Note. The Heritage Group covers the area from Whitebridge to Scaniport. All residents in the area are valid members. No membership fees are asked for but collections are taken at public events. Donations are welcomed, especially by the treasurer, Iain Brown, Old Post Office, Whitebridge.

The next meeting of the Group will be held in Dores Village Hall towards the end of May and it is hoped that we shall

Stratherrick Parents' and Toddlers' Playgroup

This playgroup now meets at Stratherrick Hall between 10.30am and 12.30pm every Wednesday. All are welcome for the Spring and Summer season in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Margie Bond, Secretary, Tel. 01456 486490

HOPE FOR THE OLD STONE BRIDGE

Aware that I am still a relative newcomer to the area and worse that I may be treading where angels fear to tread I hesitate to write. Perhaps in this case I may be forgiven ?

From my first steps over the Old Stone Bridge, in Lower Foyers, in September 1996, I was aware that I was crossing a beautiful piece of stonework in a marvellous setting. Surely this fine arched bridge was being repaired. Time went by. No signs of activity. More time went by. Nothing was happening. It was obvious that the stonework was deteriorating further weeds and even trees were growing vigorously, prising stones further apart. In winter the boardwalk iced over and could be highly dangerous. Woollen gloves – and possibly hands - snagged on the wire ends of the temporary wire fence. Year followed year. Still nothing was happening. Was the bridge to fall down from neglect ? If it collapsed it would never be rebuilt what to do?

New Year's resolution for 2004 was simpleDO SOMETHING ABOUT THE BRIDGE !!

Might Lottery funding be a possibility ? First approach brought hopeful news.... the very helpful prospectus for grants through the Heritage Lottery Fund, stated that a grant of up to £1,000,000, might be available - subject to a range of specific conditions, covered by forty-seven questions – the first step being to contact the Local Authority.

My letter to the Director of TEC Services, Highland Council, covered a number of important points, including the sorry state of the bridge, its intrinsic and historic value, its continuing importance to all of the people of Lower Foyers as the main link and shortest route between their homes, the Medical Centre, the shop, the Post Office, visiting neighbours, the graveyard and especially the 'bus terminus – a vital stop for school pupils as well as O.A.P.'s travelling by 'bus. Next, my letter stressed the attractiveness of the bridge in its setting in the gorge, surrounded by superb specimen trees – not only important to locals but also to many tourists from all over the world. Attention was drawn to the fact that tourism is becoming increasingly important in the area, boosted by the local authority and nearby developments; that many visitors follow the various routes leading over the bridge and that its neglected state did absolutely nothing for the image of this otherwise very beautiful part of Loch Ness-side. I concluded by asking for a statement of interest, in principle only, so that the matter might be taken forward to a more formal stage, involving other interested parties, including the Community Council.

On 17th February, an official letter arrived 'to confirm that the Council in principle would be interested in any bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for improving the Foyers old bridge'. It also appears possible that the Council's Conservation Architect may be interested in the proposal. Good start. !!

Next step - the Heritage Fund suggests that a committee be formed to prepare a case for funding in detail.

I look forward to contacting various knowledgeable local people, including older inhabitants, to seek their help. Meantime, any expression of interest from anyone would be most welcome. Please contact John or Ann Forsyth on 01456 486481, or drop a line to us at The Turning Point, Lower Foyers, Inverness, IV2 6YB. Watch this space for further developments. Thank you.

Additional information on The Old Stone Bridge, Lower Foyers – from "Listed Buildings in the Highland Region".

Title: LOWER FOYERS BRIDGE. Category B Listed Building. Dated 1862. George McKay, Engineer. High single span tooled rubble bridge crossing Lower Foyers gorge. Tooled ashlar segmental arch ring, pulvinated string course and parapet cope. Parapet fitted with modern safety fence. Datestone with crest in centre of north face above arch. Approximate span 70 ft.. Datestone initialled AMW, CFW,EFW for Fountaine Walker, owners of Foyers House (now demolished) by 1862. Also inscribed with crest, motto "Clarior e Tenebris" and "George McKay, Engineer. John Hendrie, Contractor". (Photograph taken 28 April 1987 shows safety fence in place. Datestone now missing, at least in part – 24/2/04 JF/AF)

Night falls over the stone-
The day is cold and done
Its embers vanishing
Behind Meall Fuar-mhonaidh
And the writing disappears
Slowly
In the waning light, the
Beech trees rustle
Softly in a quiet breeze,
The September avenue
Awash with leaves

And there they lie
Sleeping, mother
And daughter
Who held hearth and home
Together - from all these
Miles away I
Whisper dreaming of their
Lives both bright
And gay
And the love they
Both are keeping.

*Written by Suzanne Scott in memory of
her mother and grandmother both in*

FOYERS SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

Weather Watch

The recent severe weather reminded us that there is some interesting folklore on the subject. Here are a few examples from Scotland and elsewhere...

Moss dry, sunny sky—Moss wet, rain you'll get!

Don't cast your cloot till May is oot!

Wind from the West, no need for a vest!

If the Moon's on her back, tighten your thack!

When bees stay close to the hive, rain is close by.

Mist on the hills brings water to Mills. Mist in the hollows—fine weather follows.

Rings round the Moon, wet weather soon.

Do YOU have any weather sayings—particularly old Scottish ones? If so, we would love to hear them to add to our collection!

New Face for Foyers School

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Ann Forsyth of Foyers as our new Classroom Assistant and wish her every success and lots of pleasure in her new, part-time post with us.

STANDING ROOM ONLY FOR...



The cast of Foyers School's production of 'Snow White and the Woodland People'

It was standing room only for Foyers School's postponed 'Christmas' Concert on 11th February. Members of the audience came from as far away as Inverness and Fort Augustus and packed the hall.

Our customized version of this old fairy tale featured Snow White and seven redundant forestry workers in the Forests of Foyers. It was accompanied by refreshments and community singing.

Senior girls Hannah Grainger and Hannah Burgess played the fiddle and Luke Burgess plucked up his courage and sang a splendid solo. Our sincere thanks to everyone for their support—again!

SNACK SHOCK.....! BY HANNAH BURGESS

We conducted a survey of the snacks eaten by the children in the school. For three days we collected the wrappers from the snacks we had eaten. We found the following:

7 crisp packets
6 juice cartons
13 sweet wrappers
9 fruit bar wrappers
1 yoghurt pot

Think! Do these seem really healthy to you? How much sugar, salt, fat and calories are in some of these popular snacks.....?

Continued overpage...

Foyers School Supplement

A Blast from the Past.....

Pupils at Foyers School had a glimpse of the past and of far-off places when they spent a morning playing music on the kind of instruments used here long ago—and still used in some parts of the world.

The exhibition was mounted by Mr Bob Pegg of Strathpeffer, an expert in ancient and exotic music and musical instruments.

On display were miniature wind instruments made from perforated shells; gigantic ox-horn trumpets; African finger-drums made from old tin cans and scrap wood, and reconstructions of long-lost medieval musical instruments.

The children were enthralled—especially as they all had opportunities to try them out.

Left: Emily Grainger, aged 8 enjoys the dulcet tones of an ox-horn trumpet—the most popular instrument of the morning!



A musical tale...by Daniel Macdonald

Long ago in Orkney, a fisherman set off in a rowing boat. His only daughter became terrified when the grey mist came down.

The clever daughter picked up a winkle shell from the shore and whistled through the little hole. Her father heard and whistled back. They whistled in turn to each other. The faithful daughter guided him back

to the shore in this way. When they reached home they were so relieved that they had a celebration!

This is just one of the stories Bob Pegg told us.

SNACK SHOCK CONT'D..

AS PART OF PROJECT ON BEING HEALTHY WE ARE TRYING TO EAT MORE FRUIT AND HEALTHY FOOD—AND FEWER SWEETS AND UNHEALTHY SNACKS!

FOR 25P AT THE SCHOOL CANTEEN ALL PUPILS CAN BUY A PORTION OF FRUIT, SOME BROWN BREAD TOAST AND MILK OR FRUIT JUICE.

HOPEFULLY, IN A FEW YEARS, IF IT WORKS OUT, SCHOOL MEALS AND SNACKS WILL BE A LOT HEALTHIER. AFTER THAT, CHILDREN WILL BE HEALTHIER AND FEWER WILL BECOME OBESE OR UNFIT...AND HOPEFULLY, WE WILL ALL HAVE A **HEALTHIER FUTURE!!!**

IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE POLICY, ALL HIGHLAND SCHOOLS ARE TO BECOME 'HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS'.

PARENTS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THIS. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THEIR SUPPORT!

Boleskine Environmental Network Supplement



A taste of things to come?



Construction work on the River Fechlin hydro scheme at Garrogie is well underway. In the new rush for renewable energy schemes this is the first to be developed in Stratherrick. The pipe line between the dam and the power station will cross the river three times. A road is also being built along the banks of the River Fechlin. Considerable damage to the riverbank and to the old birch and their associated habitats (bats, otters etc) is being caused by the excavation work.

Photos - An accident in February involved 3 vehicles working on the hydro scheme. The crane, sent to recover the other 2 vehicles, came off the public road between Whitebridge and Garrogie. The incident caused damage to the road surface and a diesel spill. The driver was lucky to escape from the cab.

Worried about traffic?

The community council and B.E.N. have sent a joint letter to the Scottish Executive in response to the **Glendoe hydro** scheme. Although Scottish & Southern Energy submitted a planning application in 2003 the Executive required a further addendum to be submitted (mainly to clarify traffic pressure, incomplete bird surveys and the removal of spoil). Points raised by the community in their letter included concerns about traffic. The letter strongly recommended that the Loch Killin access route proposed by the company should be abandoned and that all construction traffic should access the hills via Glendoe thus taking pressure off the B862 and at the same time protecting the Killin corridor. If the Loch Killin road is upgraded by Scottish & Southern Energy it will make the access for the other developments on the Garrogie estate more viable..... can the cumulative impact on our hills, rivers and roads be justified?read more on the latest news over page..... *To keep in touch with the planning applications as they come in - Join B.E.N.'s email list. odonovan_jane@hotmail.com*



Latest on the Renewable Energy Schemes.

Garrogie: A new plan has been revealed for 42 wind turbines on the hills above Stronelairg. The developer wishes to access the site through Killin Estate and has apparently offered a sweetener of building 7 of the turbines on Killin land in order to secure the preferred access route. Whether the offer of a lucrative rental from the turbines was successful is unknown as the planning application has not yet been submitted.

Meanwhile, Dell estate have withdrawn their application for a wind farm on the hills above Whitebridge. It is believed that, along with local objections, there also could be a conflict between the turbines and grouse! However, the proposal may be re-submitted at a different site.

The Farigaig River hydro proposal is attracting some concern from outside the area. The Scottish Canoe Association are increasingly worried that Scotland's white-water rivers are being destroyed. The loss of the River Fechlin for extreme canoeing has been a shattering blow (for many years the Fechlin has been regarded as one of the ultimate canoe challenges). B.E.N. has raised worries over damage to the woodland in the Farigaig gorge which is a Special Area of Conservation (a EU designation - one of the best examples of this type of woodland in Europe) and habitat for otter and red squirrel. Anyone worried about the Farigaig should write to Malcolm Weild at the Forestry Commission in Fort Augustus.

Public consultation on the **Dunmaglas** wind farm began in March with leaflets and displays in the village halls. The development, proposed by R.E.S. (Renewable Energy Systems), is for 36 turbines on the hills between Strathnairn and Stratherrick. The proposal will be submitted to the Scot. Exec. in May. If approved, work will start in 2007.

On **Corriegarth** estate the third wind farm proposal for Stratherrick involves 40 turbines on the hills above Loch Mhor. A planning application is still to be submitted.



One for sorrow?

The Magpie occurs throughout Europe from the Mediterranean to beyond the Arctic Circle. Its distribution shows it cannot thrive in high mountains, such as the Alps, Apennines and northern Norway, neither has it been able to colonise most Mediterranean islands. It is also, largely, absent from the north and west Highlands.

On 14th February a magpie was spotted in Errozie and heard again a few days later. This is an unusual sighting - I've seen the odd magpie around Aviemore and on the Black Isle but none in Stratherrick. They have not always been so rare in the Highlands, breeding regularly, north to Wester Ross and Sutherland, but during the 19th century they were decimated by gamekeepers. Because of their habit of eating young birds and eggs during the breeding season many may feel that magpies are a bird we can do without...

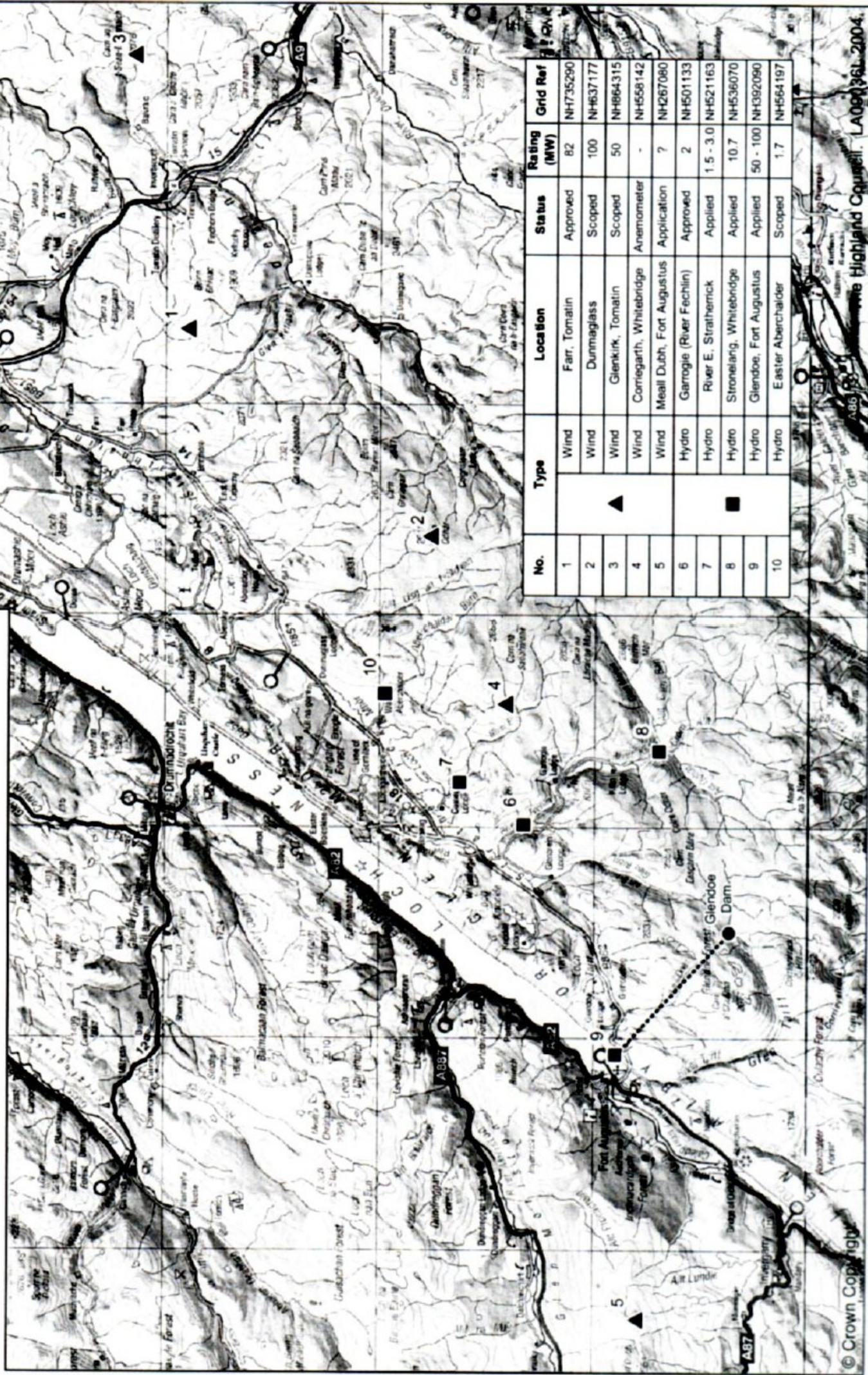
A week later we had another unusual sight - a pair of Mute Swans on Loch Mhor. Mute Swans are not uncommon at lowland and coastal sites but are rarer at higher altitudes. It is usually the Whooper Swan which is seen on upland lochs - a group of 5 fed in the shallows at the western end of Loch Mhor at New Year. Most Whoopers arrive in the Highlands in October from their breeding grounds in Iceland, often announcing their arrival with the loud trumpeting call which gives them their name.

John Parrott - tel 486426

Fires on the Hills

Muirburn is a practice of controlling heather to promote the growth of young shoots by burning for the benefit of grouse and sheep. It has been part of upland management for several hundred years. In Scotland muirburn is permitted between 1st October and 15th April (below 450m). This is extended to 30th April for land above 450m (1500ft). Last year throughout the Highlands local fire services spent considerable time and resources fighting out-of-control muirburns. There is a warning that conditions are very dry again this year.

RENEWABLE ENERGY INTEREST SOUTH EAST OF THE GREAT GLEN AS AT JANUARY 2004



Shinty – Boleskine win Interim League

Following on from their successful 2002-2003 season when they won the North Div 3, ensuring promotion to North Div 2, the Boleskine team convincingly won the North Interim League Div 5, dropping only one point throughout the season and finishing the league seven points ahead of their nearest rivals Glenurquhart. The contesting clubs were Kinraig, Glenurquhart, Strathglass, Inverness and Boleskine. As the Shinty playing season is to change from the winter months to over the summer months, commencing in March 2004 for a two year trial, the Interim League was a fillup for shinty to be played between September and early December, to avoid having no shinty games for eight months during the change-over period.

Alongside the adult fixtures, there was an under 14 league of six teams: Boleskine, Glengarry, Strathglass, Inverness & Kinlochshiel. These games were played on the Saturday prior to the senior game and proved valuable experience for the juvenile players who finished a commendable equal second in the league.

Shinty training for Secondary school age has been going on over the winter

months at Farr Hall on Thursday night at 7:00. In the new season 2004 we will be entering an U14 team in the League and associated cups and an U16 in any available six-a-side competitions. The first competition will be an U14 five-a-side tournament at Fort William on 14th February.

The Primary school age group U12 have been receiving First Shinty coaching in Stratherrick Hall, Gorthleck on a Monday night at 7pm over the winter period. On Sat 26th January at the Inverness sports centre, Boleskine entered an U12 team in the Inverness Coaching district's six-a-side competition. The team consisting of younger players with only one Primary seven pupil involved, acquitted themselves very well, drawing two games before losing to the tournament runners up Kirkhill. Their next competition will be a six-a-side at Dingwall on 21st February.

The Boleskine Camanachd Club web site (<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/shinty/>) has now been updated and latest news of what is happening at your local Shinty Club will appear here, also we hope to include more pages in the Yesterdays' Heroes section in the near future.

The new Shinty season will begin on Saturday 6th March, to date there are no fixtures available, but if you go to the Boleskine web site, Fixtures and Results page, a fixture list will appear here when available and also results of games played throughout the season.

Photograph

League Div 5 Shield. Photo courtesy of Phil Downie Photography.

Back row L-R Joey Smith, Peter Macdonald, Neil Fraser, Dickie Mackenzie, Allan Summer, Keith Nicolson, Alister Chisholm, Gus Fraser, James Smith, Graham Black, Ewan Macdonald, Bob Black.

Front row L-R Scott Ferguson, Duncan Mackenzie, Davie Gillies, Kevin Stewart, Mike Pirrie, Lewis Smith.

Rod Munro, Steve Munro, Garry MacIennan & John Cameron also played for the team during the interim season.

Alister Chisholm 01463715713



David Mackenzie (1912 - 2003)



Dave died suddenly and peacefully in Perth on Christmas Day 2003.

Dave was born in 1912 at North Uist where his father was a police sergeant. He spent his childhood and teenage years there before moving to Strathpeffer. He came to Foyers in 1938 to work for the British Aluminium Company and it was in Foyers that he met his wife Annie. They married in 1940 and would have been together 64 years last January.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Dave enlisted in the Army joining the Cameron Highlanders which became part of the 51st Highland Division and then the 8th Army under the command of Field Marshal Montgomery. He took part in the North African campaign where he fought at the battles of El Alamein and Mareth Line. At Mareth Line, he was badly wounded by shrapnel. In June 1944 Dave took part in the Allied invasion of Normandy, landing on the beaches from boats.

He gained six Campaign medals before being discharged from the Army in 1945 when he returned to Foyers to work again for British Aluminium. Dave and Annie had three children - Annette and David and Iain who tragically drowned 30 years ago.

Amongst his hobbies were Ballroom dancing (at which he won many trophies), gardening, natural history and ornithology. He was a lifelong supporter of Aberdeen Football Club and enjoyed all sports. Dave took a keen interest in politics, always on the side of the underdog.

He was very proud of and got great enjoyment from his grandchildren and great-grandchildren who survive him,

The Fraser Yew - a Sequel to its Survival

An article in the Autumn 2003 issue of The Bulletin gave an interesting account of this ancient tree and ended with the following assumption regarding its survival:-

"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."

Perhaps another event should be factored into its continued survival as part of the Scottish National Heritage. Some 30 years or so ago it was in danger of being colonized by the Americans. An approach was made to the estate owner by the Clan Fraser Association of California, USA, with a proposal to acquire the Tree and one acre of surrounding land for subsequent presentation to the then Lord Lovat Fraser on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Thereafter, it would likely become the object of organized pilgrimages to the site by the American Frasers.

A vision of future hot dog and soft drink stands on Beinn a' Bhacaidh, and the likely free trade in souvenir yew emblems, was a contributing factor in the owner/custodian's decision to decline the offer and preserve the Tree as part of our own national heritage.

The Fraser Yew is one of only 12 noteworthy trees in the Highlands named by the Forestry Commission in a recent publication entitled "100 Heritage Trees of Scotland". At a ceremony in Edinburgh last year an award was made to all individual owner/custodians of those trees. Local communities should also share the credit for their contribution, past and future, to the preservation and survival of such natural treasures.

The Caledonian Canal Ceilidh Trail is planning to be back on the road and water this Summer.

This follows the success of the past 2 years and the positive feed-back from visitors, locals and venues alike. It has also been an excellent experience for the talented young musicians.

The proposed dates for the trail are 19th July to 14th August. This is still dependant on funding. We are fairly confident that British Waterways, Scotland will be the main sponsor.

I am looking forward to bringing the Ceilidh Trail Band back to Stratherrick Public Hall. The turnout was amazing last year with 64 people enjoying the ceilidh. I hope as many will come back again this year.

Margo MacLennan

Memo for the Day

"Even if you are on the right track, if you just sit there you will get run over!"

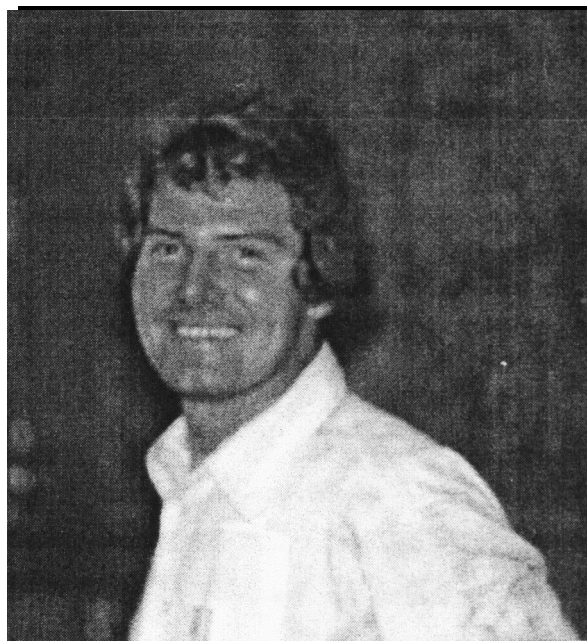
Brian Hall deceased

Glasgow born Brian Hall, has died after a long fight against Huntington's Disease, aged 59.

Brian was an accomplished marine, electrical and diesel engineer who came to Foyers when he was employed by Boving & Co. Ltd., London. He helped to install the turbines in the new Foyers Power Station and he and Elspeth lived in a caravan on the site where they later built their house (at Gray's Park, Lower Foyers). Brian worked for Bovings in Oregon USA, Poland, Ghana, Sudan and Indonesia - Elspeth and the children accompanied him to America and Ghana.

Whilst in Indonesia, Brian took up running, raising money for local villages. When his illness forced him to give up work and come home, he continued to keep fit by jogging around the Foyers area much encouraged by local children shouting friendly greetings. Unfortunately his condition deteriorated until walking was all he could manage and one occasion when he fell, he was helped by the children. Their kindness and general concern was much appreciated by Brian's family.

He is survived by his wife Elspeth, son Alan, daughter Karen and his



Out and About

We are sad to report the deaths of:

Brian Hall
David Mackenzie
Kenny Macpherson

We send our sincere sympathies to Elspeth, Anne and Joan together with their families.

Marjorie Cameron of Glenlia Farm has recently been in hospital as also has Ian Macaskill of West Drummond. We wish them well.

We are delighted to report the birth of a baby girl, Katie, on 30th January to Davie and Dulcie Drummond of Whitebridge, a sister for Phoebe. Congratulations to themand also to Morag and Ali Cameron, Glenlia Farm on the birth of their son Andrew on the 8th March.

Welcome to Tim and Agi McCormack and their young son Colin, who have recently taken over the Shop and Post Office at Foyers. Tim has written a piece for this issue with more information and we wish them every success in their venture.

Late news from the Inverness Festival - Laurie Chattington won a 1st for Solo Boys P6 & 7 plus the Hebridean Song for Boys P6 & 7. Well done, Laurie, we're all proud of you.

Christian Aid Week 9th - 15th May 2004

Thank you to all who have supported Christian Aid in the past year - please continue to be generous during this week as envelopes are taken from home to home. If you would like to help in delivering envelopes, please contact Martyn Bateman on 01456 486273.

The Spring Concert at Stratherrick Hall marks the beginning of this week.

Letters

The Loch Ness Monster seems to make a tantalising appearance on occasion. By all accounts quite a few people in the area have seen it. These sightings would make an interesting article for the next BB. Please contact Buddy MacDougall, Coach House, Foyers, Tel. 01456 486366.

P.S. My late husband, Stewart and I were sure we saw something (through binoculars) back in the 70's from Foyers Hotel.

The name of our house is 'Lalandia'. This was my choice, having seen a rusty old ship with this name in Goteberg harbour, Sweden.

It seemed very straightforward instead of a complicated Gaelic name. Imagine the dismay over the years to find:-

Le Landia, Leslandia, Lyndia, Laslandia, Lalndia, Lalidia, but the best yet is: LAPLANDIA - very appropriate for our climate!

Margaret Campbell

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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.

CRUSE 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:

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

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Events at Stratherrick Hall

Toddlers Group - Wednesdays 10.30 - 12.30

Yoga classes - Tuesdays 2.00 - 3.30

Thursdays 7.00 - 8.30 Tel. Sylvia on 486434

Country Dancing - Wednesdays 7.30 - 9.30 finishes end of April

Sunday 9th May 3pm -

Spring Songs of Praise

Saturday 19th June -

Stratherrick PTA - Sale of Work

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.errogie.supanet.com and click on Stratherrick
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