

The Boleskine Bulletin



Issue No. 33
Winter 2006

GOLDEN WEDDING CELEBRATION

Married on 24th August 1955, Ewen and Ella Fraser of Gorthleck Mains recently celebrated their Golden Wedding with family and friends at the Beaufort Hotel, Inverness.

Fifty years of marriage is quite an achievement and their four children, spouses and grandchildren were there to wish them well. It was made even more special as both best man and bridesmaid, as well as the four ushers, were present. Not only that but Ewen's seven brothers and sisters, and Ella's two brothers were also there. In fact of the 53 who enjoyed the occasion at the Beaufort Hotel, 26 of them had been at the Columba Hotel in 1955!



Stratherrick School's Garden Success

Last month Stratherrick School won 1st place in the Horticultural Schools Competition. Stratherrick won first place out of eight Schools in the competition. The judges were impressed by how much we knew and how well our garden was kept. The judges liked both our wildlife garden and our organic garden. Our bird and bat boxes that we made and put up around the school also impressed them. We went to collect the prize at Inverness Floral Hall. The prize was a £50 gardening voucher and a shield plus a certificate.

Annie Butterworth P7 and Fraser McPherson P6

Next Issue

Please note that the closing date for material for the next issue (which may be the last) is earlier than usual – see back page. This is due to holidays.

Police

I hope this newsletter finds everyone on the beat in good health.

With regards to crime, we continue to live in one of the safest regions of the United Kingdom which is due, in no small part, to the vigilance of all members of the community and I wish to thank you all for your continued support.

Yet again, the main area of concern for our friends and neighbours throughout the beat is speeding vehicles, with Dores and Gorthleck areas being particularly affected. I would urge all drivers to strictly observe any speed limits in the region and now Winter is upon us, to drive with extra care on all roads with particular care being taken on the more rural stretches.

I have been noticing more and more litter at the roadside verges which it would appear is being thrown from passing vehicles including cans, empty crisp packets, fast food packaging and the like. Should anyone witness this and manage to note the registration number of the vehicle concerned, I would be more than happy to follow the information up and speak to the people involved. We need to 'nip this in the bud'.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members of the community a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

*John Rimmer
PC 130
Foyers*

Foyers Youth Group

A youth group in Foyers has now been started and our thanks to John & Lorraine Bowen for offering us the temporary use of the Outreach Centre in Elmbank, Lower Foyers.

Initially the club will meet every Thursday evening from 6.30 pm to 9.00 pm. At present the catchment area for inclusion is Foyers Primary School District and the age range is roughly 8 to 18 years although exceptions will be allowed if necessary and more convenient to parents.

It is hoped that apart from entertainment, the club will offer extra curricular learning activities as well as community assistance projects.

We would welcome any adult who would care to offer their services as supervisors as three are required for each evening. If you are interested, please contact me at the shop on 486233.

We would also welcome any donations, monetary or in kind such as soft furnishings etc.



Our Dangerous Country Roads

Everyone in our area is talking about close shaves to do with increasingly fast traffic and huge lorries on both the B862 Stratherrick road and the B852 Foyers to Dores road.

Because of increased transport to construction sites such as Scottish Water's sewage schemes and to Foyers Power Station where a huge refurbishment is under way; cars, vans and lorries (enormous long-wheel based ones some even pulling trailers) are using our single-track roads with their tight bends. Some drivers think they are still on a motorway and don't reduce their speed.

Will it all get worse when eventually the Glendoe Hydro Scheme gets going? We all give a collective shudder at the thought.

Buddy MacDougall

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

Helen Grainger Inverfarigaig 486 231 Sandy MacPherson Torness 01463 751213

Eileen Martin Gorthleck 486 661 Martyn Bateman Whitebridge 486 273

Minute of Meeting 26 July

The Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust was set up to manage, invest and disperse community benefit funds from renewable energy companies with projects in our community council area.

A director and secretary were required, Mr J W Campbell and Mrs F Kirkland were nominated to stand initially.

Highland Opportunity Ltd (HOL) have taken on the role of negotiators with the energy companies on our behalf. The first project to come on line was the River Fechlin hydro project at Garrogie. HOL negotiated a lump sum of £22,000 from RWE Npower and this has been deposited in the Community Trust account. A similar sum is expected from the River E project.

It is now time to make the Trust a community undertaking and for it to become independent of the CC if it is to have charitable status. The secretary was instructed to speak to Mr Eason about pros and cons of being a charity, would it restrict activities of the trust? Mr Bateman felt that Trustees should be all the elected CC members. However, there was strong feeling against this, that the Trust has to be autonomous and seen to be completely separate from the CC. It was put to a vote and agreed that there should be 7 members/Trustees of the company, to be responsible for management of the funds. Two places will be representatives from the CC, the other 5 from the community.

A draft set of criteria for membership/Trustees was determined. Members/Trustees shall: have no criminal record; have been full time resident in the CC catchment area for a minimum of 8 years; have keen interest in the benefit and welfare of the community; be at least 18 years of age; serve for a maximum period of 3 years, when new members will be elected; attend at least 80% of the meetings or forfeit the position.

A constitution needs to be drawn up and points to be included are: names of recipients/beneficiaries are to be kept confidential but accounts under general headings are to be open to public scrutiny; updates are to be put in the BB; Trustees are eligible for reasonable expenses as agreed upon by the other Trustees.

There will be an informal information sharing evening on Monday 24 Oct 2005, 7.00pm in Stratherrick Public Hall.

Nomination and application forms will be distributed with December issue of the BB. List of nominees will be published in Mar/Apr BB along with voting forms.

Minute of Meeting 23 August

Mr Dai Alexander (Highland Small Communities Housing Trust)

The land at South Muirnich (and Inverfarigaig) was bought by the Trust a few years ago and has been held in a land bank. The land could then be sold to a charitable housing association to build houses for affordable renting (e.g. Dores and Inverarnie) or individuals could be helped to buy plots for building with 'rural home ownership grants' Half of the site has been sold to Albyn Housing Trust and the other half kept for development through the Housing Trust. Scottish Water have held up plans because of the delay in a waste water treatment plant but this is now underway so Albyn are expected to start developments. It was agreed that they should be invited to talk to the CC especially to discuss the local letting initiative. HSCHT will carry out a housing needs survey in the Autumn to help best decide what they will do with their half of the land. Mr Bradwell informed the CC that the community facility outlined in the plans had been objected to by the Hall Committee and so dropped, as they felt that the community could not sustain two facilities, (although they could have been for very different uses).

Correspondence: Appendix. Also: British Waterways - report and invitation to AGM. Loch Ness marathon - update and details of road closures. HOL , David Owen - confirmation that the Glendoe project will be going ahead. Preparatory work will begin late 2005 with main construction starting in spring 2006. SSE have come back to HOL with a revised offer for CB. Loch Ness Partnership - nomination of representative from community for board of directors. It was unanimously agreed that Mr P MacGregor should be put forward again. Mr MacGregor informed CC a lot of work has been done this year getting the project up and running, but things are now moving. There are plans for a Loch Ness Trail and a representative is being sent to China for a conference for communities that are 'around lakes'. A request had been made to send details of minutes/agendas to the LNP and this was agreed. They will be displayed on Nesslink website and agreed to also publish in BB.

Treasurer: Ord. Acc: £743.37. Deposits: grant £914.67, photocopier £4.50. Cheques issued: Loch Ness Partnership £10.00, Boleskine Bulletin £225.00. Project Acc: £1335.43. Deposits: SNH £2000.00. Cheques issued: Munro and Noble £763.75, HIS £118.74, Contractors £1060.21 and £1598.00, Highland Lilliums £325.12.

Planning: Positioning of the new sewerage works in Foyers.

Fire Brigade: Paperwork for the community fire safety checks is expected soon, so those who have requested checks to their households will have them carried out in the near future.

Roads and Road Signs: The CC were alerted to the fact that children on the way home from school were having to stand as far as Torness or Errogie. Mrs Martin has spoken to the Education Department and Rapsons, and it has been agreed that the duplicate bus will have to travel as far as necessary to ensure that all children are seated. Also noted that the bus driver takes the vehicle home to Invergarry. Concerns were raised that in winter months this could mean the bus would not make it over the Suidhe and therefore children would not get to school. The speed at which the bus is driven was also of concern. Secretary instructed to write to the Education Department.

Road signs at Errogie are badly discoloured. Aberchalder road - branches badly overhang the road.

Community Project: The CED funding is processed and money has been received from SNH. The hall committee are concerned about future maintenance of the hall carpark and access to the amenity area. They wish a lease to be drawn up for the access across and estimate £300-500 for solicitors fees. No money is available for this so fundraising will be required. Planting days are Sat 17 and 24 September, 2.00pm. All welcome to help with planting and landscaping of the field.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit: Secretary spoke to Mr Eason (Munro and Noble) about the pros and cons of charitable status. He felt it would be more beneficial to be a charity but advised that we employ an accountant who will give more advice. Agreed to ask Mr John Fraser to take on the task. Mr Eason will send out new Articles of Memorandum to be agreed. The informal information sharing evening for people interested in becoming a member/Trustee will be held on Monday 24th October 7.00pm, alongside the normal CC meeting in the hall.

AOB: Forthcoming meetings: Tue 27 Sept, 7.30pm (SP Hall); Mon 24 Oct, 7.00pm (SP Hall); Tue 22 Nov, 7.30pm (Waterfall Café); Tue 13 Dec, 7.30pm (SP Hall).

Minute of Meeting 27 September

Mr Barry Couchman (Construction Manager, Hochtief)

Hochtief have been awarded the construction contract to build the Glendoe Hydro Scheme. They anticipate starting access roads to the tunnels, dams and camp (which is near airfield in Fort Augustus) in the near future (November). Planning applications still need to be submitted and method statements to be worked upon for the main construction. The initial work will allow the main construction to start in the spring.

All spoils extracted from tunnels etc will be re-used for roads and dams, so that no materials will be brought in. There will be a burrow area, initially near the Glendoe driveway and will still tunnel from Loch Ness, which will take about 7-8 months. Blasting will be kept to sociable hours and noise will be localised for a short period of time. Once the tunnel is started, there will be little awareness of drilling and blasting.

Hochtief are speaking to c. 10 sub-contractors, most from within the local area. There will also be a large workforce of speciality tradesmen, sought from all over Europe. The camp will house 200- 400 employees. It is proposed that Hochtief will hold a joint meeting with Fort Augustus to discuss proposals and the camp in particular. Separate planning for the camp will be submitted in late October.

A transport plan is being put together in conjunction with HC. A statement of enforcement will be in place to try to prevent white van traffic using local roads. All traffic should use the A82. There will be a crossing point at Glendoe for extraction material to be moved to the dam. Traffic lights will be in operation and wheel washing facilities. A Liaison Officer will be employed but it has not been decided how to format the group to allow it to work most efficiently.

Treasurer: Ord. Acc: £753.62. Deposit £10.25 from photocopier. Project acc: £2677.92. INE cheque received £1342.49.

Fire Brigade: Recruits are still required, preferably people who work locally as it is daytime cover that is needed most.

Roads and Road Signs: Corner between Foyers House and Boleskine Cemetery has lost its crash barrier. Footbridge at Lower Foyers has holes. Secretary instructed to notify HC Roads department. There is a 'worst case scenario' trial run of a long vehicle travelling from A9 to Dunmaglass to ascertain where the 'pinch' points along the road are in preparation for the construction of the Dunmaglass wind farm - anticipated to be during the week of 7 November, notices in local press.

Community Project: A group met to plant trees, shrubs and bulbs. Thank you to all who helped.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit: Mr John Fraser (MacKenzie Kerr Accountants)

Mr Fraser outlined benefits of charitable status, namely tax exemption which would be a min.19% corporation tax. He advised we should apply as soon as possible. Proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Mrs Kirkland, that MacKenzie Kerr be employed as the Trust's accountants.

AOB: Whitebridge School Bus - Mrs Catherine Chattington is very concerned about the school bus. At present, both the buses go to Torness in the morning: one from Whitebridge, and the Farr school bus that comes from Inverness, via Torness, Dunmaglass and Farr. Mrs Chattington suggested it would be better to take the bus through Abersky. At night only the Farr bus goes to Torness (which is not the service bus), meaning that there is no service between Torness and Whitebridge. Mr K Fraser questioned whether this service had ever been, or was likely to be, required because if the bus doesn't need to go to Torness then the children living further up the Strath (who already have a long bus journey) get home 20 minutes earlier. The CC agreed that this was preferential. Mrs Chattington also told the CC that the bus sent for her son was not always suitable for someone with mobility difficulties. Secretary instructed to speak to Mrs Macrae regarding the situation. No reply

had been received from HC regarding the CC's previous concerns. Highland Small Communities Housing Trust - questionnaire was sent out to all CC members. Agreed that it was very comprehensive and would give a good insight into the housing needs. Secretary was instructed to contact HSCHT to ask for a similar questionnaire to be used in Stratherrick and Foyers.

Minute of Meeting 24 October

Information sharing about Community Benefit Trust

Purpose of the Trust will be to manage the money from renewable energy companies. It will be a separate entity from the CC. At meeting on 30 Nov 2004, ideas for the use of the money were requested. With these in mind, aims of the Trust have been drawn up and are available for comment within 7 days. CC will give approval at the next meeting and they will be forwarded to Munro and Noble, acting on the Trust's behalf. Interim Director is Mr Campbell and the Secretary is Mrs Kirkland. The Trust will require 5 members of the community and 2 CC representatives. Nomination forms will be distributed with the next BB. Names will be published in the April BB along with voting forms if necessary.

The Fechlin scheme has already given a lump sum of £22,000 and a similar amount is expected from the River E scheme. Negotiations with SSE are still taking place for Glendoe scheme and with Fort Augustus as to the percentage Stratherrick and Foyers will receive. Other schemes are at the planning stage. MacKenzie and Kerr accountants have been engaged.

Falls of Foyers: Ms Sonia Wayman (HC Planning and Development). Consultants were employed to develop a management plan for the falls area. They looked at landscape, recreation and ecology. They presented CC with a summary of the plan, which has been prioritised. They are starting to take some of the ideas forward and are applying for grants. Extra car parking was a high priority. but Ms Wayman said space was limited. Potential sites are at Lower Foyers, opposite the hall and extending the lay by above the shop. Concern was raised that the terrain can cause heath problems and it was suggested that signage could indicate that people walk to the bottom of the hill and be picked up there. Also what to do, who to call in an emergency. Metal fencing will be replaced but not immediately as it serves the purpose at present. Suggested SSE be approached about the lack of water in the falls. It was agreed that they would, but also the reasons could be explained in the interpretation boards and that there would be other attractions in the woods.

Floodlighting - 75% of people asked were in favour of floodlighting, although more as an event than all the time. HC would not be able to take this forward. There is a public tender website should anyone wish to tender for work starting in the next few months. Any comments to Sonia Wayman on 01463 712544.

Correspondence: Appendix. Also PRIN - Housing and Health conference 29 October; Eden Court Theatre - appeal for people to buy seats in new theatre; An Arainneachd; MSPs/ Scottish Parliament - information on their work; Dunmaglass wind farm - joint meeting on community benefit in Farr Hall on Monday 31 Oct; RES - trial run of the worst case scenario using a retractable trailer to find the pinch points on Daviot/Dunmaglass road in anticipation of transporting wind turbines, Friday 11 Nov, 11am; H Stanley - copy of letter sent to M Sutherland, Loch Ness Marathon, congratulating him on the well run event; HSCHT - questionnaires to be sent out in February.

Planning: Mr Munro-Loch Ness Lodges; **Mrs E Macrae took no part in the discussions. Mr Munro has applied for planning permission to build a house on land owned by him below the main road. Originally, he was living in one of the lodges but his partners Langdale Leisure PLC only agreed to the venture if this one was rented. Currently the Munro's are living in Inverness, which is inconvenient for servicing lodges, hence their application. No objections from CC. Mr Munro was questioned on state of the trees on his land. He said there are plans to cut them down in the spring and for replanting with broadleaves.

Fire Brigade: Planning for new station has not gone through yet. Mr Kirkland asked Mrs Macrae to chase, as temperatures are dropping and the engine is filled with water. It has been suggested that it should be emptied as it sits outside at present. Obviously, this is not ideal.

Roads and Road Signs: Cattlegrid at Torness - it has been tightened, but this has made it worse. It requires filling at either side; White lines at Ceo Glais - still not done, to be chased up; Bins at Errogie and Ceo Glais - request replacements; Water on road at Drummond, Whitebridge - it can not be seen if travelling towards Fort Augustus; Water on road between Dores and Foyers. The need for a road man was raised again. A request was made that CC approach D&E coaches requesting that an elderly lady be taken up a track to her house on the way back from Inverness with her shopping. The secretary will write to D&E.

Community Project: The fences need to be finished.

AOB: Foyers Footbridge - it is being looked at. School Buses - still no reply from HC. The matter was discussed with Mrs Macrae. The re-routing through Abersky was raised previously with Rapsons but after investigation they decided it was not suitable. Fireworks - will be at Whitebridge Hotel. Mr Houston asked if CC willing to make a donation and agreed to give £400.00. Foyers Church - forthcoming sale. Mr McCormack and Mr Bateman have had discussions regarding a community buy-out for use as a community hall. CC agreed it was a good idea. Mr Bateman has already alerted the Church of Scotland.

Next meeting Tue 22 November 2005, The Waterfall Café, Foyers.

**Highland Councillor
Mrs. Ella Macrae
01463 751 203**

Christian Comment

In some cities and towns South of the Border it is reported that local councils have forbidden the singing of Christmas Carols in public places and the display of Nativity scenes depicting the baby Jesus at Bethlehem, with the attendant figures of Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds and the Wise Men. The reason for this is to avoid giving offence to people of other faiths or of no faith. I wonder if any thought is being given to offending the one Almighty God who so loved the World that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life, as we read in John's Gospel Chapter 3 at verse 16.

Our World needs to know that this planet was visited by our Creator in a unique way just over 2000 years ago in the person of Jesus Christ, to show mankind a lifestyle that would enable us to live in harmony with God, with His creation and with each other - that is to 'love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves'.

We must surely take every opportunity to share this Good News that brings light into what otherwise seems a very dark world of human suffering and terrorism. This Gospel gives substance to our familiar greeting "Happy Christmas".

Martyn Bateman

Out and About

Fred Lansley, Gorthleck, died on Monday, 19th September. Our kindest thoughts and sympathy go out to his widow, Peggy.

Bob Howard, Inverfarigaig, (ex Head Forester with the Forestry Commission) died on Friday, 14th October. Deepest sympathy to his widow, Elizabeth and his daughters, Susan and Jane.

Congratulations on the birth of Ruaridh Chattington to proud parents Paul and Lauren and brother Paul and sister Mia.

Congratulations to Fiona and Graeme Ambrose of Evergreen Bed and Breakfast, Inverfarigaig, on reaching the finals of the Tourism and Environment Category at the Scottish Thistle Awards and being runner up in the Green Highlands Category at the Highland Tourism Awards.

Congratulations to Ewen and Ella Fraser on their Golden wedding Anniversary (see front page).

Dr. Margaret Conway has not been too well recently and we send her our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

A warm welcome to all those who have moved into the area since the last publication

CHURCH MEETINGS

Church of Scotland

Sunday: 10 am Boleskine, 11-30 am Dore.

Rev. J. Buchan 01463 713114.

Episcopal Church

Sunday: 11 am Croachy.

Rev. Peter Mosley 01805 521397.

Free Church

Sunday: 12 noon Farr, 6 pm Errochie.

Mr. J. Campbell 01456 486240

Free Church (continuing)

Sunday: 10-30 am & 4-15 pm Dore. Wednesday: 7-30 pm.

Mr. D. Fraser 01456 486408.

Free Presbyterian Church

Sunday: 12 noon Farr, every 2nd Sunday: 7 pm Gorthleck.

Mr. E. Fraser 01456 486282.

Roman Catholic Church

Sunday: 12 noon Whitebridge.

Rev. P. Bonnici 01320 366451.

Inter-Denominational Bible Study

Rev. Martyn Bateman 01456 486273

Foyers Church

'USE IT OR LOSE IT' so the saying goes and it looks as though the community is about to lose the church in Foyers. The church and manse were built in 1906 by the Church of Scotland to serve the expanding community working for the aluminium factory, and the British Aluminium Company subscribed a portion of the cost. It is sad to think that the church should be celebrating its centenary next year.

The church hall was built in 1914 and was used extensively by the community for all types of activities.

It seems such a shame that Foyers, the largest community in the parish of Boleskine, will lose its Church of Scotland connections. The Roman Catholic church near Foyers school was closed years ago.

Is there any way of retaining the church building for use as a community hall rather than losing it for ever? Plans are afoot, if there is any interest, for a Community Buyout.

Boleskine Environmental Network

Newsletter December 2005

2005 had been an active year for the group the Chairman of B.E.N., Alex Sutherland, reported at a recent A.G.M. B.E.N. had sponsored the Foyers School "A Year in the Life of Loch Bran". (The final exhibition put together by the school had been displayed in the Town House where the Provost was said to have been impressed!) Following on from this B.E.N. is sponsoring an environmental project in Stratherrick School; while the ongoing biological recording and the composting projects reflect the diversity of interests within the group.

If anyone would like to start a project and think that BEN could help get in touch with the secretary - Jane O'Donovan 486355

COMPOST BINS
Buy one for Christmas
£5 from B.EN.

Ring:
01463 751 387 (Torness)
486 774 (Erroglie)
486 434 (Foyers)
(watch how it gobbles up the waste)

More from B.E.N..... and Yes, What a load of old rubbish!

At a recent Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) open meeting on waste management issues it was disclosed that 73% of fly-tipped waste in Scotland is 'household' waste and that clearing up fly-tipped waste costs us all via the Council Tax.

It's against the law to Fly-tip and that includes garden waste.

It can be a health hazard, harm wildlife, damage watercourses and the underlying soil.

If it doesn't compost, here are some useful ideas.

- A charity called 'New Start' (01463 711234) collect and re-distribute household goods.
- Blythswood Depot, Alness and other charity shops take textiles for the recycling industry, not just clothes for resale.
- Highland Council operate a 'bulky uplift' service of household goods (sofas, fridges etc). Highland Council, Bulky uplift (01349 868527)
- The Recycling Centre at Henderson Road in Inverness has recently increased its capacity. Garden waste can be taken here.
- Currys/ Dixons are accepting household batteries at their stores for recycling.

Composting and recycling are easy and help to cut down waste. The increasing use of energy by all of us, domestic and industrial, and the lack of a strategy for energy conservation means that we will need energy from a variety of sources which might include nuclear power. The government is likely to recommend nuclear power as well as wind farms and other renewables.

Biological Recording Group - autumn days

In October Ern Emmett, a mycologist, spent the day with us searching for fungi in the Farigaig forest. We found far more than we had expected, most were beneath our feet, either on rotting wood or in the leaf litter but some were above our heads on the tree trunks, both living and dead. The "Aspen Bracket", *Phellinus tremulae*, is a parasite on living aspen and is only to be found there. Fungi can have weird and wonderful names (as well as those Latin ones!!) - We found the "Terracotta Hedgehog", the "Deceiver", the "Deer Shield", the "Charcoal

Burner" and the "Jelly Tooth"!! Our collection was taken back to the hall for more detailed examination, some under the microscope to see the infinitesimally small hyphae and fruiting bodies. Spore samples were taken to determine the, sometimes distinctive, colour of the spores.

There was much to learn to even begin to understand the fungi world. We all realised that the subject is vast and would require to be taken a little at a time!!

The following month we enjoyed the magic of "Microcosmos", a film shown by Ken Brown. It took us deep into the world of the small - normally a world we walk by or over,



without taking the time to stop and really SEE what is beneath our feet. The film was full of life's dramas, in dramatic close up, with battles for survival and scenes of pure beauty, interspersed with moments of comedy. It culminated in the most exquisite show of perfect symmetry, beauty and elegance as an unknown creature rose, slowly and gracefully, from the waters surface, assessing its own potential motion with tentative movements. We were held spellbound. As it cleared the surface tension of the water, its identity was clear. To everyone's surprise, it was ----- a mosquito!! Adorned with gossamer wings, it stood, perfectly poised, as a dancer, to venture forth into its new world.

(Watch BBC1 Wednesday "Life in the Undergrowth" 9.pm)

If you would like to join the group phone Rosemary 486631 or Jane 486355

(Photos Rosemary Holt; - a butterfly tutorial with Tom Prescott in July at the Shinty pitch Foyers.)



Foyers School
Supplement

CHRISTMAS
EDITION 2005

The Moth Man



Following the highly successful series of field trips organised by the Boleskine Environmental Network, Foyers School invited moth and butterfly expert, Tom Prescott, to spend a day with us. He brought along a moth trap which we set up the night before his visit. The following day we found that a large variety of moths had been attracted by the light of the trap. Tom described and identified the different species and told the children about their life cycles and habitats. This was reinforced by a visit to Loch Bran, where he showed the children the best places to find both butterflies and moths. We will now add moth and butterfly identification to our three-monthly visits to Loch Bran - the project that refuses to die!

Another New Face for Foyers School

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Nicola Crews as our new teacher for the infant class, following a healthy increase in the school roll. Mrs Crews, who lives in Inverness, is a probationary teacher, fresh from Aberdeen University. She will be with us for at least a year and we wish her every success and lots of pleasure in her new post with us.

Foyers Primary, like other schools in the Highlands, is working to become an 'Eco School' where everyone tries to do what they can to look after the environment. We have set up an Eco School Committee which includes all the older children together with Mrs Fred Donald and Katy Martin, Highland Council Countryside Ranger. We drew up an Eco-code for everyone to live by as best they can:

Run or hike, take a bike. If it's not too far
don't take the car.

Turn off the light, you don't need it bright.
Save electricity for tomorrow.

If you walk up the school hill
you pay less on your petrol bill.

Save some trees, recycle all these:
Paper, envelopes, cards or local news.
Don't throw them away in the waste bin
Get a recycling box to put them in.

Re-use bags, don't throw them out.

Use old wood pallets to make a compost bin
To put all the peel, skin and scrapings in.

Use old foil tins and jangly things
to scare birds away from your seedlings.

Use lolly sticks to mark their names,
Plastic bottles as tiny greenhouse frames.
Old clothes to make a great Scarecrow.

RECYCLING is the way to go!

We've got a solution to stop pollution
Say no to cars unless it's too far.

And that's our resolution.
Don't drop your litter on the floor
We won't accept it any more!!!!

Foyers School Infants plant a Marie Curie 'Field of Hope' outside the school gate



The infant class at Foyers School has adopted the Marie Curie Trust as their charity of the year. As well as planting a 'Field of Hope' they will raise money by asking local people to sponsor daffodils which they are also growing in pots around the school.

The African Connection...

Foyers School is having 'hands on' experience of geography through a project that links us with a school in Africa. We became involved with the small state, The Gambia, because Barnaby Bear, who belongs to P1 and P2, went there on holiday with Mrs Crews' neighbour. We wrote to the children in St Therese's School and two wrote back to us. Embrima, who is 8 years old and his sister, Jainaba, who is 12 told us: 'the school is big with 50 students in each class. Outside our school are fruit stalls and shops. We have to walk a long way to school every day and also to get water from the well.' Jainaba also wanted to know what a loch was!

We are going to write back to them to tell them more about ourselves and our school - and about our lochs.

Gambia is a very poor country and everyone in St Therese's School is short of basic things like pencils and paper. We plan to make up back packs with jotters, pencils, sharpeners and rubbers and send them to Embrima and Jainaba so that they can share them with the other children.

Foyers School Christmas Concert

King Arthur and All That

Foyers School's Annual Christmas Concert

will be held in the School hall at

7.00 p.m. on Friday, 16th December

Admission £1.00. Refreshments included

All proceeds to school funds—please support us!



Stratherrick's Great Grounds Galore Project

This year Stratherrick Primary are working hard to gain their Eco Schools Green Flag. We are busy making lots of changes to our school grounds.

Part of the project involves making a greenhouse out of 2 litre, clear plastic bottles. With the spare bottles we hope to make bird feeders and windmills. Could you help us to get more bottles - we still need another 300.

Another part of the project is to clear some bushes at the back of the football pitch to put in a pond. People are coming out to tell us about what wildlife we can attract to the pond. We hope to make some frog and toad houses.

One of our big projects is to build a willow fort with space for an outdoor classroom. We have already cleared the bushes and some of the willow has arrived. We should have it built by the end of November.

We grow fruit and veg for the kitchen and next year we hope to grow enough to give some to the community. This year we are going to re-design the wildlife garden and hope to plant new plants to attract insects and birds.

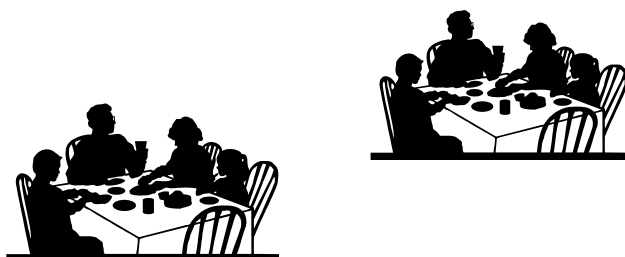
We are lucky to be one of the ten schools to get through to the finals of the Beechgrove Garden competition. Frieda Morrison visited the school in October. Frieda asked us what changes we are going to make to the school grounds. Our interview will be broadcast on the Christmas Day Programme on Radio Scotland. Tune in to hear our interview.

We would like to say thank you to some people for making our project possible. Firstly we would like to give thanks to SCOTTISH NATIONAL HERITAGE and AWARDS FOR ALL for helping to fund our project. We would also like to thank BOLESKINE ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK for all their support. Lastly, a huge thanks goes to Mrs Parrott and Miss Weir who help us with our garden every week.



THANKS

Sincere thanks to all the people involved in the production and distribution of the Boleskine Bulletin. Many people are involved who give of their time selflessly including those who type up articles, page set, proof read, keep the accounts, staple and those who make sure a BB goes to every household in our area. The feedback is that the Bulletin is greatly enjoyed and is now recognised as a vehicle to convey thanks and to report on activities in the



The Pensioners' Lunch

....returns on Thursday 15th December 2-00 pm at the Craigdarroch Hotel.

Please contact J. W. Campbell 486240 for details.

Proposed Community Purchase of Foyers Church

It is likely that in the near future the Church of Scotland will offer for sale Foyers Church as well as the Church Hall and Manse. Quite a few people I spoke to in the shop thought it would be a shame to lose this building given its historical significance to the village and I therefore started a small petition to see if there was sufficient interest to purchase the building on behalf of the community. There appears to be enough signatures to take this forward and John Campbell, Lorraine Bowen, Martyn Bateman and myself had a meeting to look at the various alternatives open to us in order to purchase the building from Church of Scotland.

The building is in relatively good shape with some damp. I feel it would make a good venue once a week for the Youth Group and could be used for concerts, ceilidhs, local public meetings as well as private functions. Of course it could still be used for religious services as well. While we might raise sufficient funding to purchase the building we need to be able to show a business plan that will generate sufficient funds to cover running and maintenance costs.

Once purchased a management committee would need to administer the running of the building.

A small not for profit company would have to be formed with at least 20 members drawn from the local community (the local community has to be defined by registered voters in the Foyers area) in order to proceed with the Right to Buy and we will now proceed in trying to set this up. The Church of Scotland and the Land Reform Unit at the Scottish Executive then need to be informed that we intend to proceed with our Right to Buy and if approved by the Land Reform Unit then we are given 6 months to raise sufficient funds in order to meet the costs associated with purchasing the building. During this time the Church will not be allowed to sell it on. The valuation of the building will be confirmed independently by the Land Reform Unit. The Church of Scotland have yet to advertise a price for the Church but my estimation would be less than £60,000 and probably an additional £40,000 would be required to provide toilets, seating and generally meeting health and safety requirements for a public hall.

I am sure that grants and loans would be available to cover a lot of this cost but we would still have to raise a considerable amount of money locally to meet any shortfall in public funding. Before we proceed however detailed costs and quotes will have to be established.

While there are many positive things associated with

buying the Church there are also a few negatives. Purchasing this building for community use at this stage will probably prevent the community seeking a publicly funded purpose built hall in the near and medium term future. The Church may not be ideal in every respect for the activities normally associated with a community hall - indoor sports for instance and as an old building the maintenance costs could be considerably higher than a new building. Parking remains a problem as well. Purchasing a building like this, while it might be said it was a good idea at the time, takes time to manage and run properly and interest in doing so can wax and wane. We really need to know that there are those amongst us who will commit to assisting in the long run.

While the initial support/response as measured by our petition in the shop has been good we would like to hear from more of you. So if you could please let me know either by letter, phone or dropping in at the shop for a chat I will be able to get a better idea if this is what is wanted for the village and we will progress it from there.

Finally, the Right to Buy is not necessarily required. It would be in our best interests to negotiate a private deal with the Church. However, either way, we will not proceed without a ballot of some sort taking place that will be sent to every registered voter within the local community and there are strict guidelines as to how the result of this ballot is used to determine that the amount of local support is high enough to carry on with the project.

Tim McCormack, Foyers Stores

Acknowledgement

Elva, Gillian and Katrine McLaren wish to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy extended to them following the death of Angus. Also a special thank you to those who attended his funeral service.

Elva is wishing all their many friends in Foyers a Happy Christmas and a healthy 2006 as she is not sending cards this year.

The Falls

He has grown
A mossy beard
Brown tufts
And long green leaves
To tell his age is old
He wears it proud
And high above
A crown of trees.

Spindly white fingers
Point to the sky
Their roots in despair
Cling to the bare stone
On his steep slope
Perhaps they will wear out
Or prosper once again
As season tells them to.

Life is the same to him
Day in day out
To him time has no measure
And the incessant waters flow
Fling themselves down his flanks
White as snow
A roaring gush
That wets his shaven face
And feeds the mossy growth.
Then down below
They hurry on
Meander through the rock
And rush out of sight
To unite
With the deep loch.

Anja Kasseckert,

Berlin



Foyers &
2005

Exploring Greece in the Footsteps of St. Paul

The BBC Radio Worship Team organised a Pilgrimage to Greece in September. I was a member of the 80 strong choir. We rehearsed, sang, walked, climbed and travelled by coach, many miles, through spectacular scenery, from North to South Greece.

We stayed at Kavalla, a beautiful port in northern Greece. It was called Neapolis, when Paul landed there from Troy. From there, we explored the extensive ruins of the ancient city of Philippi. This was the leading city of the Roman Province, and had parts of the Roman road, where we walked. We recorded a service in the lovely Greek Orthodox Church, beside the river, where Lydia was baptised - the first recorded baptism in Europe.

The next stop was Thessalonika, which is now a bustling city, the second largest in Greece. Through beautiful countryside, we viewed wide valleys, steep hills, fields of cotton, vineyards and olive trees in abundance. A dramatic drive up a mountain, on a winding, narrow road, took us to an Orthodox Monastery run by NUNS (monks were there in the past!). A wonderful buffet lunch was provided (no charge!) of bread, honey, yoghurt, cheese, wine and salads, all provided and prepared by the nuns. They keep cows, sheep, goats and bees. We were encouraged to buy from their shop, the products of their hard work.

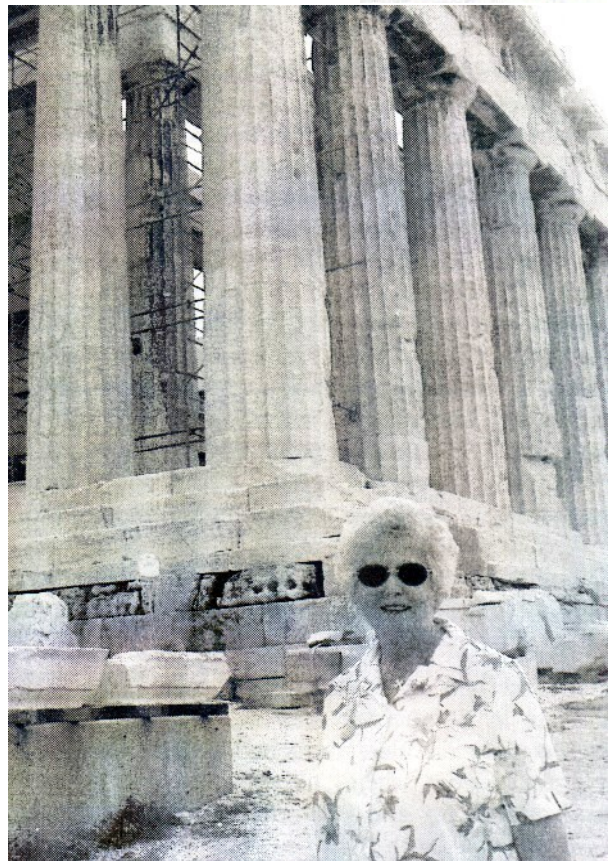
Visiting and viewing the extraordinary Meteora monasteries, perched high on the gigantic rocks and grey stalagmites, was a memorable experience. There are now many steps to climb to the top. How the monks got there,

initially, is a mystery. Only five are now inhabited, out of the original twenty-four.

We climbed the lower slopes of Mount Parnassus, to visit the classical site of Delphi, where many pilgrims consulted the Oracle on important matters. We sang in the Amphitheatre where the acoustics are marvellous. We walked round the vast site of ancient Corinth. The ruins are spread with wide marble walk-ways and the remains of a beautiful fountain. This had been a bustling city, but nowadays, it is a lovely, sleepy village with a few shops and an Orthodox Church.

Finally, we arrived in Athens, which has a vast population. This was the cradle of civilisation and democracy. Visiting the Acropolis, the foremost site of classical Greece, and climbing up to the magnificent Parthenon, with many marble columns, was a wonderful way to complete our pilgrimage.

Margaret Campbell



A COLD SNAP IN THE STRATH

Though for the last few years we have not suffered a sustained prolonged snowfall or a lengthy period of low temperature either, it is easy to get irritated if the roads are not open and black by mid-morning so we can get about our business. But think back to what would have happened before mechanisation; since the late nineteen thirties we have had tractors with very basic static snowploughs attached to open the roads. Prior to that it was small snowploughs pulled by horses, useful in small falls but with the greater falls of snow, the time honoured method of clearing the snow by shovel was used.

In wintry weather gangs of local volunteers would open the roads of snow by clearing paths wide enough for people and horse transport to get about the area. It was not unheard of then to open the road over the Suidhe to Fort Augustus after it had been blocked for a long period.

The winter of 1894-95 was probably the worst one over the last one hundred odd years, it was well documented that the Beaully Firth froze over and the town of Inverness was isolated by rail travel on several occasions from the rest of the country. The weather followed a pattern of a slight thaw then followed by more snow, and the frosts were severe and continuous apart from the thaw periods. In the beginning the Caledonian Canal was being kept open by the daily steamers breaking up the film of ice on it each day, but by the fifteenth of Feb it was frozen over and passengers had to be conveyed from Dochgarroch to Inverness in brakes & horse drawn buses.

A couple of days previously it was reported in the local newspaper of 38 degrees of frost in and around Inverness. As far as newspaper accounts of the Boleskine area I can find only one mention, which records: - "most of the roads have been all along and are still blocked and today (8 Feb) the snow lies on level ground from one to two feet deep with no appearance of change. The merchants have had greatest difficulty in securing the necessary provisions for their customers and in some cases the goods have had to be carried by able bodied men. Farmers and crofters find it no easy task to secure food for their stock. Blizzards have been in plenty and the one experienced on 6th Feb will not be soon forgotten. The cold has been intense some days as much as twenty degrees of frost being recorded and it is not an unusual thing to rise in the morning to find in ones bedroom the thermometer standing at seven degrees below zero. Children have been unable to attend school and only a few of the strongest have ventured to church – some Sundays none at all".

Though no one exists with first hand knowledge of conditions in Stratherrick area during this period, it is remembered by the older residents of the Strath by stories they heard from their forbears. My own personal remembrance is my grand uncle telling me that they took a

toff across Loch Garth from Garthbeg in a sledge and they took great delight in capsizing the sledge several times, resulting in the overweight gentleman being sent sprawling onto the ice.

My father mentioned that goods for Dunmaglass estate were delivered by steamer to Inverfarigiag pier just before New Year. It was the end of March before they could manage down to pick them up with horse and cart because of road conditions. His father, as a youth working at Dunmaglass could not return home to Lochgarthside for over a month due to adverse weather. Also, possibly during the same winter, working with a horse and sledge, there was a depth of six feet of snow with the top crust frozen beneath them on the road.

We are indebted to William Trail, schoolmaster of Boleskine, for possibly the only account of how severe the weather was locally through his entries in the school log book of Boleskine. The log books for Whitebridge Roman Catholic School and Aldourie only mention the storm in passing.

No log books of the other local schools have survived. Stratherrick (Errogie), Knockchoilum, Dunmaglass and Bochruben have been lost for this period.

The weather up until the storm was very mild for the time of year as entry of 7th Dec stated. Christmas day, which fell on a Tuesday, was a school holiday, but on the following Friday, 28th Dec, the weather was stormy with high winds and rain. The children who came to school from a great distance were absent. A lot of children from Errogie area were attending Boleskine School due to the headmaster at Stratherrick School Mr Smart, having typhoid fever. Over the year there were about thirty one in total, some from as far away as Oldtown.

On Saturday the severe snowstorm began and continued all day Sunday with hurricane winds resulting in the roads all being blocked. No children at school on Monday 31 Dec. The next day being New Years day was the start of holidays till the end of the week. On Monday the 7th Jan Mr Trail reports that "the storm renewed yesterday with high winds, main roads impassable and took two hours to make paths to school and round about house, over three feet of snow and drifts nearly six feet in places, no child turned up for school". The following day the log book recorded fifteen degrees of frost from previous night; same amount of snow, one boy came but sent him home as the snow covered him to shoulders. For the rest of that week no children were in school, the roads were still blocked, but Monday's mail managed to get through to the schoolhouse on Wednesday.

The following week weather remained stormy, road between Gorthlick and Chapel house still blocked. Only six turned up for school this week. Monday, three girls from Glenlia and on the Tuesday two Bethune's and a Goldie



The Horse snow plough is outside Laracks approx 1927. The man in the front is William Macintosh (The Baker) Lyne of Gorthleck, whilst the rear holding the reins is Ewen Fraser of Laracks .

ventured to school, kept them an hour, found them somewhat forgetful, complaining of cold feet.

The week commencing 21st Jan roads only partially open and in certain places a mass of ice, a very few present on Monday only, snow storm continued off and on for the rest of week".

On the 28th Jan the teacher recorded "a violent storm of wind and snow yesterday, roads have never been opened up and now worse, this forenoon we have fifteen degrees of frost, half a dozen boys and two girls present, one boy fainted with cold dismissed them after twelve, the whole trembling under the severe frost, did not mark register as some came in late and it was doubtful how long they would remain". The rest of the week the weather was similar, roads on level from six to fifteen inches covered with snow and wreaths from four to six feet deep, no children attended school during this period.

As we moved into February the bad weather seemed to intensify, it snowed every day the first week. The only day children attended was on Wednesday the 6th, when despite 12 degrees of frost two girls and six boys were there for the morning, dismissed them at twelve o'clock, they were all shivering. By three o'clock there was a perfect hurricane, impossible to see two yards in front of you, by the next day all roads were blocked again and twenty degrees of frost that morning.

Week commencing the 11th Feb no scholars attended this week, twenty degrees of frost in Monday morning roads impassable. On Tuesday Mr Trail writes "met yesterday Mr Goldie was glad I sent home his children on the 6th, was just starting to come for them as he thought from his barometer that there was to be a storm. A fire in school all yesterday again and yet all the ink in the inkwells are frozen".

The Inverness Courier reported similar occurrences of ink wells freezing in offices within the town during this period. In Thursday and Fridays entries he writes "wind rose on Wednesday at 5pm snow began to drift and continued with more or less severity till noon next day; roads again worse, drifts around schoolhouse about ten feet deep, no post for last two days; none present. Two of our neighbours had to be dug out of their houses, the snow almost reaching to the top of their chimneys".

Next week notwithstanding eighteen degrees of frost on Monday, three came from Glenlia, snow is not so deep there, mention of ink in school being one mass of ice. No more children came rest of week, the log book records "that roads in front of school to cross were completely blocked and on route to Gorthlick on business found roads blocked from side to side fully six feet of snow not here and there but quite level mass, difficult to walk over, some places snow breaks under your feet and you are apt to fall".

By the following week a thaw had set in making it difficult to walk over the blocked roads "as snow is deep from dyke to dyke and again soft. Over the week almost half the scholars were present at some point, through those from the outlying areas have not attended since December due to the storm. The week commencing 4th March more snow and drift over weekend only a few children on Monday but by the end of week the percentage of school attending was sixty three, in spite of roads still not good between Gorthlick and Errogie. The report at the end of week ending 15th March records that snow was rapidly disappearing from the front of the school, the following Friday mention is made of the roads now being open.

With the milder weather setting in the people of the district began their spring activities which in turn would have an effect on the school roll, due to children being kept at home

Mussady

South Loch Ness Heritage Group

We had a really successful evening in September for our AGM which was followed, by popular request, with a presentation by Alistair Chisholm of his father's memoirs. It was much enjoyed by everyone, particularly as we had managed to get our sound sorted out and it was much easier to hear!

The Group had a stand at Dores Gala, which also attracted a lot of interest, particularly in the many photographs of old Dores. We hope to be present at the event next year.

We have now set up our Website - www.southlochnessheritage.co.uk - and are most anxious to have items of interest for this. If any readers have knowledge of their own area, artefacts of interest, memories of the old mills, croft cottages or inhabitants of former days, we would be delighted to receive it. If you just want to talk about what could be used, please contact our Chairman, Iain Cameron (01463 751202) or Graeme Ambrose (486457).

We are still trying very hard to push the Highland Council and Historic Scotland to sort out ways and means of

providing funding to restore the Wade Bridge at Whitebridge, and now we have been working at this for over 2 years, we do begin to see that our persistence is producing small returns. We will keep you posted.

We are also involved in a full survey and record of the graves in the Boleskine Burial Ground; anyone interested in news or helping, please contact Frank Ellam (486691).

Sadly, and with great regret, we have had to accept the retirement of one of our Founder Members, Hugh MacNally. His knowledge, work and support of the Group has been enormous and he will be greatly missed although I am sure he will still be able to offer guidance when needed.

We have an Open evening at Dores Village Hall on 5 December at 7.30pm. Our speaker is Mr Norman Newton and his talk is entitled 'Loch Ness Roads and Places', which promises to be very interesting. Following that on 6th March 2006, in the Hall at Gorthleck, we have arranged a talk from Mr Pentecost-Ingram of the Highlands

Historical Search Society which should particularly cover their discoveries around our area. It is very much hoped that readers will be interested and able to come, although it is rather a while ahead.

Please continue to search your cupboards and drawers for old photographs of our area, which we can often restore and will take great care of and return to the owner.

We are in the process of arranging a reprint of 'A Country called Stratherrick' by Alan Lawson. This much coveted book which has been out of print for a considerable while, should be available for sale from the Group early next year. We are expecting a great demand for copies, so if you would like to have your name entered to reserve a copy, please contact the Group Secretary, Jean Marshall (456758) or JEM@CARE4FREE.NET It is an absolute 'must have' if you have any interest in our area.

Anyone who is domiciled in Stratherrick, Strathdores and the South

Double Bill at Stratherrick Hall

The month of November brought double theatre riches to Stratherrick Hall, with outstanding performances of two equally gripping and well-written productions.

Eden Court In Exile brought "The Haunters" to the Hall on a wild and windy night, ideal conditions for a gothic horror story which both thrilled the senses and chilled the blood. Set in the gas-lit, fog-filled streets of Victorian London this terrific two-man show took us from a lawyer's office via a London charabanc to a dark, brooding house which held an even darker secret. A minimalist stage set was progressed through all these settings by brilliant lighting and sound effects, with wonderful performances by Pat Abernethy and Dave Marsden who built up the suspense throughout their performance until we reached the horrifying truth about the Doctor's violent death. Even the area's major power cut midway through the second half only added to the increasing sense of foreboding – in true professional style the two actors continued unfazed, with the sound of the gale outside adding to the brooding atmosphere. For those who love horror this was a spine-chilling evening that both entertained and unnerved like no other.

In a different vein but equally powerful was "Watching Bluebottles" from Right Lines Productions. London-based Ron Emslie played the old hall caretaker preparing for one last bash – his own retirement party. From the moment of his entry through the hall front door the audience was held spellbound as the caretaker went about his routine of chair-stacking and sweeping up. Stomping around the Hall, occasionally disappearing into the kitchen or toilets, gradually he reminisced about hall and village life, from the deeply humorous to the poignant and extremely moving events that are all part of any and every community. The nostalgic and sad reminiscences of the life and death of his little girl Ceilidh were beautifully counterbalanced by a truly fantastic skateboard scene. Sometimes hitting amusingly 'close-to-home', this was a very well-crafted script from writers who know the foibles of small communities, and the powerful one-man performance from Ron Emslie captivated the audience right up till he closed up the Hall for the last time. All in all a wonderful piece of modern theatre – poignant, powerful and full of compassion.

Hugh Nicol

WANTED

for Boleskine Bulletin

Editor who requires to have a computer for receiving emails with attachments, typing articles and using page setting software (provided by BB). Editorship assistance available.

Treasurer for keeping simple accounts and collecting advertising revenues.

Anybody interested in either of the above please contact Martyn Bateman on 01456 486273

If either of these positions remains unfilled by 31st March 2006, there will be no option but to CEASE FURTHER PUBLICATION.

Hall Mania

Over the past few months we have heard of proposals for two new village halls – a church conversion at Foyers and a possible new building as part of the community housing project in Gorthleck.

Don't we already have a hall owned, since 1934, by all the residents of the area and sited, after public consultation, in Gorthleck? This year it cost £3,600 to keep this Hall open. Major costs were: electricity £984, insurance £866 and maintenance £1,265. Cleaning, Performing Rights payments and an annual inspection of the fire equipment make up the remainder.

This must be covered by income to which the Highland Council contributes £800. The remainder comes from the community: regular weekly groups contributing most with the rest coming from private functions, public meetings, etc. Concerts and plays attract audiences of between 20 and 30 and hence lose money despite support from Scottish Arts. It would be fair to say that our weekly groups struggle to attract sufficient regular participants to keep their weekly charge low enough and still pay the hall hire charge. Why not have dances/ceilidhs/parties, etc. you may ask? "Who will organise it?" is the reply. In any case numbers at such events have fallen so they, too, are not viable.

If you want to contribute to the community by running a village hall or organising new activities **why not come and help at the existing hall**. It is already built, it has an entertainments licence and procedures to satisfy various regulations including child protection. The bills are paid, someone re-painted it, cleaned it, tested the fire alarm, cut the grass, unblocked the drains, changed a light bulb and mended the heaters. It has an adequate car park. **Any** further contribution that **you** make will not be diluted in doing the mundane but essential jobs listed above.

So, here are some issues to consider before creating any more halls:

Never mind names on petitions, are enough people going to pay money to enter a new hall?

Why is the current hall used by only a small percentage of the community? It was recently upgraded/insulated/fireproofed/re-equipped at a cost of £155,000 and events have been of professional quality.

Who will run your halls? It's a struggle to find enough active volunteers to get the jobs done – anyone can just go to committee meetings.

Are you going to find new customers? If we only manage to share the existing users we will end up with inadequate income at each hall which will result in us having NO halls.

Wouldn't that be a tragedy after all these years?

Highland Council Rangers Spring Guided Walks 2006

Saturday 28th January - 'For Auld Lang Syne'.

At Reelig Glen, near Inverness (Bookings only)

Phone 01463 724312. 2 - 4 pm - 2miles/3km.

Hear some of Burns finest poetry whilst walking through some dramatic countryside. With something to eat on the way and plenty of scope for participation, why not bring along your favourite poem too.

Sunday 12th February - 'Love is in the Air Valentine Walk'.

Abriachan (Bookings only). Phone as above.

2 - 4 pm - 2miles/3km

Prepare for Valentine's Day and find out how people used plants and animals to forecast their prospects of love and happiness over the centuries.

Saturday 4th March - 'See in the Dawn at Foyers'.

Bookings only. Phone as above.

5.30 - 8.00am. 5miles/8km

Dress warmly. Walking boots required. No dogs. Sunrise is a special time of day when night-time animals meet the daytime animals and the countryside wakes up.

Wednesday 12th April - 'Culloden History Tour'.

Bookings only. Phone as above.

2 - 4pm. 2.5miles/4km

Visit places of historical interest in the Culloden area - The Cloutie Well, Prisoner's Stone and Doocot finishing with tea and biscuits at the Culloden House Hotel (£1.50 charge).

Saturday 22nd April - 'Meall Fuar Mhonaidh'.

Bookings only. Phone as above.

10am - 3pm. 6miles/9km

A good level of fitness is required. Walk up to 696m. weather permitting. No dogs. Bring walking boots, waterproof clothing and lunch.

Learn how to use a map and compass.



The photo is of William Trail, teacher at Boleskine School near Drumtemple Church (presently occupied by John Sinclair). He was teacher from 1885 untill about 1920. Originally from Fife-shire he was reputed to be a strict but very capable teacher, so much so that any unruly pupils from the other local schools were sent to Boleskine for guidance.

Aberdeen University Talk

The next talk, entitled "NESSIE – SOURCES AND SPECULATION" by Norman Newton, will be in the Hall at Gorthleck on Tuesday 21st February 2006 at 7-30 pm.

South Loch Ness Tourist Group

2005 has been another busy year for the SLNTG and we held our AGM at the end of November at Craigdarroch House Hotel, courtesy of Andrew and Belinda Munro. We enjoyed a great night catching up with members, both old and new. After a busy summer season we were able to look back on what we had achieved in 2005.

Two of the main objectives of the group had been completed earlier in the year. Firstly, the redevelopment of the website – www.lochnesswelcome.co.uk has been very successful but further information is still required on history, heritage, walks, environment and wildlife. The Group would welcome contributions from anyone who has an interest or knowledge in any of these areas.

Secondly, the printing of a new leaflet showing the key areas of interest on the South side has been very well received and due to the popularity, we are about to request a reprint. If anyone has an outlet for these leaflets, please let us know and we will be happy to provide a supply for you.

Increased membership and sponsorship was another of the key objectives and we are pleased to report that membership still continues to rise steadily. The group now has over 50 members from within the South Loch Ness area and beyond – an excellent increase since November 2003 when membership stood at less than 30. We are still looking for new members so any business in the area which is not currently a member of the SLNTG is invited to take out membership and get a listing on our excellent website.

Another of the objectives for 2005 was further development of our green/eco tourism potential. We are fortunate to live in a wonderful unspoilt environment but we need to ensure that it is maintained so that future visitors and local people alike can continue to enjoy the area. The group is keen to encourage more members to "go green" and we have developed a check list of "10 Tips for Going Green" which may also be of interest to everyone in the area. These include, for example, tips on recycling, how to make energy savings and encouraging wildlife into your garden. If you would like a copy of our 10 Tips, please get in touch with me at the number below.

After a busy year in 2005 we are looking forward to 2006 and another successful year for the Group.

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY NEWS

HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS ARE NOW UNDER WAY AND A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF RESIDENTS HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN THIS FREE HOME SAFETY CHECK.

IS YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR WORKING ? OUR MOTTO IS:

ONCE A WEEK TEST THE BEEP.

WITH THE FESTIVE SEASON SHORTLY UPON US PLEASE DO TAKE CARE WITH CANDLES AND DO NOT OVERLOAD SOCKETS WITH XMAS TREE LIGHTS, ETC.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A HOME FIRE SAFETY VISIT PLEASE CALL THE NUMBER BELOW OR COME ALONG TO THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE 4th TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH WHERE A MEMBER OF THE LOCAL FIRE CREW WILL BE ON HAND TO OFFER ADVICE OR ARRANGE A HOME VISIT.

FROM YOUR LOCAL FIRE CREW – HAVE A SAFE AND MERRY XMAS.

CALL 486283 SUB OFFICER NEIL KIRKLAND

01463 227000 ADO GRAEME ROBERTSON

Bus Times

WHITEBRIDGE-INVERNESS

	Mon-Sat
Whitebridge	07-35 12-30
Gorthleck	07-45 12-40
Errogie	07-49 12-44
Torness	07-58 12-53B
Inverness Acad	08-40 13-25
Inverness Bus	08-50 13-35

	Mon-Fri	Sat
Inverness Bus	10-30 15-15 17-10	
Inverness Acad	10-40 15-35 17-20	
Torness	16-17B	
Errogie	11-21 16-16 18-01	
Gorthleck	11-25 16-20 18-05	
Whitebridge	11-35 16-30 18-15	

B-via Torness when reqd.

FOYERS-INVERNESS

	Mon-Fri	Sat
Up. Foyers	0755 1310 1623 0900 1320	
L. Foyers	0800 1315 — 0905 1325	
Inverness	0853 1400 1710 0950 1410	

Inverness	1215 1515 1743 1230 1743
L. Foyers	1300 1605 1828 1315 1828
Up. Foyers	1305 1610 1833 1320 1833

D&E GORTHLECK-INVERNESS

	MWF	T Th	SD	SH
Gorthleck	0932	0920	1514	1515
L. Foyers	—	0934	—	—
Errogie	0937	—	1540	1525
Torness	0947	—	1550	1535
Farr shop	—	—	1619	—
Dores	0957	0958	—	1545
Inverness	1014	1014	1634	1600

	SD	SH	MWF	T Th
Inverness	0800	0830	1420	1420
Dores	—	0845	1435	1435
Farr shop	0825	—	—	—
Torness	0855	0900	1445	—
Errogie	0905	0910	1455	1459
L. Foyers	—	—	—	1459
Gorthleck	0920	0920	1501	1514

SD-Schooldays, SH-holidays,
Above schedules are abbreviated
There is also the Post Bus

Loch Ness Marathon



Morag Cameron, Jackie Cameron and Fiona Kirkland, in a moment of madness, decided to participate in this year's Loch Ness Marathon. After months of training (a big thank you to our families for the many hours of baby sitting), the day arrived. Full of trepidation, we stood at the back of the hundreds of runners just hopeful that we would make it to the end. WE DID! and we raised some money in the process. Thank you to all those who have given so generously. So far we have collected nearly £1000 for the Highland Hospice, kuk sool Won, the Telford Centre and play equipment for Gorthleck. A wonderful day was had by all. The support along the way was amazing and the sense of achievement was immense.

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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

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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.

Tine Butterworth

The JP for the area is J. W. Campbell. Tel. 486240.

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Thursdays 7.00 - 8.30pm ring Sylvia on 486434

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including primary school choir

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School Christmas Show

Tuesday 21st February 7-30pm - Nessie - Sources and
Speculation

To book the Hall 'phone Judith Borup on 01456 486464

See the notice board outside the hall for other local events.

See also local website <http://www.scottish-cottages.co.uk/hall.htm> and click on
Stratherrick Public Hall

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