



THE IRAQ WAR

Serving Soldier from Stratherrick is there

Euan Duncan is at the moment serving with 4 Para and is attached to the Royal Scots Regiment in Iraq. He is stationed near Basra and went out on October 23rd. Euan had a brief spell of leave home in the middle of January, which he spent between Glasgow and Errogie. He has now returned to RAF Brize Norton, where he is completing a parachute jumps course before returning to Iraq for another 3 months.

Euan is a former pupil of Stratherrick Primary School and Inverness Royal Academy and has an Honours Degree in Politics from Strathclyde University. He is the elder son of John and Mairi Duncan, Errogie.



POLICE

In this edition, I would just like to remind residents that we are approaching the time of year when travelling 'salesmen' appear, attempting to sell goods from the back of transit vans. As I have said previously, the goods, on the whole, are being legitimately offered for sale but it is definitely a case of buyer beware. Sometimes the goods that are purchased are not as described and should there be a problem with the item, your chances of getting your money back are virtually nil.

On a similar note, I would ask all members of the community to be mindful of the difficulties which may be encountered when employing people to carry out work after a 'cold call' and have no apparent contact details, i.e. only a mobile telephone number to contact them. Any genuine workman will supply a written quote with a name, address and telephone number and not offer 'special offers' if the work is carried out immediately.

It is important that we all keep an eye on the more vulnerable members of our community and report anything you consider suspicious to the police..

The area remains one of the safest places to live and visit in the United Kingdom and I thank all members of the community for your continuing support and help in maintaining this fact.

*John Rimmer,
PC 130*

Father Paul Bonnici

Stratherrick recently lost one of its best loved characters when Father Paul Bonnici moved to Shetland.

Father Paul joined the Benedictine Order at Fort Augustus Abbey as a young monk from Malta. Later, he became a priest and, as an ordained monk, took over the duties of Father Andrew McKillop, also from the Abbey. His area covered the Roman Catholic Churches of Cannick, Fort Augustus and Stratherrick. His workload, as can be imagined, was colossal. Always available, day and night, he carried out his priestly duties with a loving devotion that only a truly holy person could give. He was much loved and well-respected by all persuasions.

Father Paul was also a very talented journalist, with regular articles in the 'Catholic Observer' and the London based 'Catholic Times'. He recently completed a spell at the Vatican Media Office in Rome. His talents extended to broadcasting, with his religious programmes in the Highlands and beyond.

Father Paul visited schools of many denominations throughout the area. His ecumenical role was invaluable.

By sheer determination he completed the restoration of the church at Cannick and turned the derelict byre into a fine church hall.

He will be sadly missed; the people of Shetland are very fortunate.

The Fisherman's Prayer

God grant that I may live to fish
Until my dying day
And when it comes to my last cast
I then most humbly pray,
When in the Lord's safe landing
net
I'm peacefully asleep

Santa's Visit

Thank you to the
Craigdarroch House
Hotel for showing Santa
around the village and
giving out sweeties on
the way to all the good
little boys and girls.

Foyers Church

Discussions are continuing about the use
of Foyers Church as a Community Hall.

Progress?

Anyone who thinks that wind factories
are environmentally friendly should
Google 'Cefn Croes Photo Gallery', to see
chilling pictures showing how many miles
of unspoiled Welsh countryside were
disfigured to create the largest industrial
site in Britain - all to 'save' annually less
than a quarter of the CO2 emissions from
a single jumbo jet.

Boleskine Environmental Network

Newsletter March 2006

The 'wee' Weasel

"The day dawned crisp and bright and though cold, it was perfect for wildlife watching - calm and dry. The sun and the walking soon warmed us through and we were deep in concentration. Steve Austin, local wildlife photographer and mammal recorder from Inverness, took us round Loch Bran, Foyers woodlands, the river Fechlin and beyond to look for signs of mammals. We found plenty! Squirrels, otters, pine marten, deer of all sorts, rabbits and rodents but the main aim of the day was to show us what to watch out for when on our everyday walks so that we can take part in the recording of wildlife. It was amazing what evidence is there before you, once you have your "eye" in.

Even though the day had been absorbing and informative, it was crowned by the sudden appearance of a weasel, while we were looking for otter spraints on the riverbank. It darted out of its hole and dashed down to us, standing by the waters edge, weaved its way between our feet, this way and that, before zooming off along the bank and disappearing down another hole.

Not content with that, we spotted five black grouse perched in a birch tree, sunning themselves in the afternoon sun. How privileged we felt. Several of us had never seen one before. Without exception, everyone thought it a wonderful day."

Rosemary Holt

N.B. (Scotland has 66% of the British population of Black Grouse but they are declining rapidly due to over-grazing and too many exotic conifer trees having been planted on their traditional breeding areas. They favour open woodlands and grassy and heathery hills to live in).

To take part in mammal surveying, get in touch, we have a stock of mammal recording forms. Details required are simple: date, place, how many of which species and notes on the habitat and their activity. All information gathered is returned to Inverness museum and then on to the Highland Recording Group and the Mammal Trust.

See next page for two exciting events to be held this spring open to anyone in the area.

For more information about the wildlife recording project and to get the mammal forms phone:

Rosemary Holt -Tel/Fax: 486631 or Jane O'Donovan Tel: 486355

BURNING ENERGY QUESTION

B.E.N., along with the community council, submitted a joint objection to the proposed Beauly to Denny electricity transmission line. A total of about 18,000 responses were sent to the Scottish Executive. B.E.N. felt that there was an overwhelming case for a public local inquiry to consider issues such as the cumulative impact of new connections to the grid, alternatives such as sub-sea cables, the impact on landscape, wild land and tourism, the costs of transmission to markets in the south and the complete lack of any national energy strategy. The UK, Scottish and Highland record on energy efficiency is very poor and there are still inadequate measures in place to introduce energy conservation.

B.E.N. also commented on Highland Council's Renewable Energy Strategy. While it is commendable that the Council has produced such a strategy it was too limited in its scope. The Strategy placed greatest emphasis on export-scale land based wind developments, is encouraging a concentration of developments in areas of least resistance such as Stratherrick and the Monadhliaths and has committed the Council to support the development of an infrastructure for transporting electricity to the south. This is a very short-term approach and

Would you like to learn more about the Red Squirrel?

Local expert Suzanne Barr from Abriachan will be taking us on a journey to discover the signs and habits of this beautiful animal.

Saturday 18th March

Stratherrick Public Hall.

10.30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Everyone welcome,
Bring walking boots,
warm clothes, and a packed lunch.



"The public has been asked to report sightings of both red and grey squirrels, as part of a five year Squirrel Survey funded by SNH. Information on the distribution in Scotland is now urgent as the first evidence of squirrel pox virus in Scotland has been identified in the Borders. Grey squirrels act as a host to the spread of this disease, fatal to native red squirrels. Red squirrels can be displaced by the disease-resistant grey squirrel as has already happened in most of the rest of the U.K. We live in one of 127 priority red squirrel woodland areas that at present have no greys."

Bats in the trees; Bats in the loft; Bats all around.....

Friday 28th April

Stratherrick Public Hall

7.15 p.m. – 10.30 p.m.

Strong shoes & warm clothes

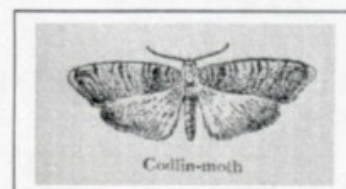
Inverness bat expert Steve Austin and his wife will be giving a talk followed by a walk. They will have bat detectors with them so that we will be able to hear the amazing sounds that the different species of bats make during their flights at twilight.

the kind of classic "boom and bust" scenario that has plagued developments in the Highlands for generations. The Strategy failed to take full account of local power consumption and energy conservation and should be encouraging energy production closest to the point of consumption.

These talks are part of B.E.N.'s wildlife recoding project funded under the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan. Everyone is welcome and admission is FREE.

Interested in Moths?

(A favourite food of bats!)



Keep aside the evening of 27th July and the morning of the 28th July. Tom Prescott of Butterfly Conservation will be here again but this time looking at the huge numbers of moths that we have about us in mid summer.

FOR SALE:

Compost bins £5

Phone Deborah in evening
01463 751387 (Torness);
Sylvia 486 434 (Foyers);
Heather 486 774 (Erroglie).

To contact B.E.N.

Chairman: Alex Sutherland
01456 486711
Secretary: Jane O'Donovan
odonovan_jane@hotmail.com



Prime Minister and First Minister meet Foyers School V.I.P's.

Prime Minister Tony Blair and Scotland's First Minister, Jack McConnell arrived by helicopter to meet pupils from Foyers and Kilchuimen Primary Schools. They were there on 24th February to open the refurbished Loch Ness power station at Foyers.



Scottish and Southern Electricity marked the occasion by presenting Foyers School with a cheque for £2,000 to spend on environmental projects. Kilchuimen Primary received a small wind turbine to generate power for the school.

Return to Loch Bran...

As a sequel to our highly successful project, *A Year in the Life of Loch Bran*, the Partnership for Rural Inverness and Nairn is providing grant aid for 2 interpretive boards to explain the biological diversity of the loch to visitors. They will feature samples of the children's work and will be erected at the parking area adjacent to the loch. This project is also supported by the Boleskine Environmental Network (BEN), SNH and Forest Enterprise. RIGHT: Katy Martin, Senior Highland Council Ranger, discusses the layout of the boards with pupils.



Fit for a Queen

Another celebrated visitor was Queen Victoria! Well, not really—student teacher Lynne Hunter dressed up as part of the school's Victorian history project. Lynne is with us for 9 weeks until 24th March. A final year student at Strathclyde University/Jordan Hill, Lynne has demonstrated superior acting potential as well as inspiring the children by bringing history alive for them.



Further Adventures of Barnaby Bear

Pupils of primary 1 and 2 bid *au revoir* to Barnaby bear who had just recently returned from the Gambia, West Africa, and is now on his way to Seattle, USA with retired classroom assistant, Mrs Fred Donald. Barnaby is the travelling mascot in their geography project.



Birds Through a Window

On the 2nd December 2005 we put some bird feeders on the outside of one of our classroom windows. We are recording the different types of birds that come to the feeders. So far the most common bird has been the chaffinch. We have a very greedy one that we have called, 'Chubby Chaffinch' because he just sits and eats and eats and doesn't mind if we get close to him. We have also seen a lot of Blue and Great Tits and a few Robins. We had a surprise in February when a Pied Wagtail visited the feeder as we don't usually see these birds until the middle of March. We plan to feed and record the birds for whole year so that we can compare the different birds throughout the seasons.

Emily Grainger Matthew Simpson



Summer Exhibition 2006

Summer 2006 marks the centenary of Foyers School. We will celebrate it with an exhibition of images and texts reflecting life in the school and the community. The children will prepare recipes of the period for an open day to which everyone is cordially invited.

Members of this community have always been most generous in supporting our occasional appeals for old photographs and personal recollections of times-gone-by. Once again, we are appealing for you support in this respect. We are particularly interested in photographs and personal accounts of what it was like to be a pupil here during the past century. Of course, all photographs will be copied for the exhibition and returned to their owners without delay. Please contact Mrs. Brown on 486 612/424 or send material to the school if you can help.

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 22 November 2005

Correspondence: RES - re Community Benefit package offer, consult with Mr D Owen, HOL for clarification. Highland Renewable Energy Strategy document - consultation period until 13 Jan 2006. R&R Urquhart - acting on behalf of Coignafearn, Glenmazeran and Aberarder Estates, copy of letter to Scottish Executive (SE) seeking their 'dismissal' of the RES application. Canon - information on products for sale. CC Forum - role of the community councillor, a meeting on 13 Dec. Scottish Community Foundation - thank you letter to community for their support and work on the day of the marathon and details about new grants initiative specifically for Highlands and Inverness. Mrs Grainger will find out more. Highland Council - Fuel Poverty Strategy, information leaflet. Highland Council - Housing in the Countryside document. Secretary instructed to request a copy for each CC member for discussion at the next meeting. Foyers & Stratherrick Primary Schools and South Loch Ness Nursery - donations request for Christmas activities. Finances do not allow the CC to meet these requests. Mr Campbell will approach Mr Alastair Paterson, Donations Sub Group, Highland Council with intention of making a request for funds on behalf of all.

Treasurer: Project Acc: £2840.31. Deposit of £161.37 from Christmas Party group, the funds remaining from last year. Ord. Acc: £352.98. Cheque for £400.00 paid to Mr Houston for fireworks.

Planning: Two sites at West Drummond, Whitebridge - there is local objection to positioning of one of the houses, and new access onto a fast bit of road for the other. CC agreed it would be better if the existing access were used and was concerned at the concentration of houses in that area. Secretary will write to HC Planning Dept. House at Glenlia Foyers - discussed the right of access but it was felt that the Planning department would take that into consideration.

Roads and Road Signs: Mrs MacRae updated the CC on what work has been done: Foyers to Dores -ditches are being dug. Torness cattle grid is being looked at. White lines at Ceo Glais missed off this years program but will be done next year. Water at Drummond being investigated and will be planned into program of work. Foyers footbridge is repaired. Crash barrier at Boleskine graveyard, replaced. Further concerns to be brought to the attention of roads department: Errogie corner - road starting to break up, so traffic moving into the middle of the road (potential accidents); Inverfarigaig pass - Ross lorries using it, two together at times, and weight limit on bridge was questioned but apparently no limit. Mrs Macrae to investigate; Manhole cover opposite Crannach, Gorthleck rattles terribly as traffic passes over; Bushes above junction of B851 and B862 towards Dunmaglass badly need cutting back.

Community Project: Trees all planted, a few bulbs still to be put in. Fencing completed.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit: SSE open meeting at Lovat Arms, Fort Augustus 30 Nov, 7.30pm - update on work to start soon and opportunity to ask questions about project.

AOB: Foyers Church - after a meeting between Mr McCormack, Mr Campbell, Mr M Bateman and Mrs L Bowen to discuss options, a letter was written to SE to indicate an interest in the 'right to buy' the church. This is a complicated process, so direct negotiation with the seller may be a better option. The Right to Buy scheme requires a company to be set up before applying a RTB. Pieces of land not on the market are identified as being of interest to the community, the SE notified and if the plot is to be sold then it stalls the process for 6 months to give the community time to gather funds. The church will be on the market soon, so it is not clear whether the community have got in soon enough for RTB. There is some structural damage as well as dampness. Not only would the selling price and running costs have to be covered but funds would also be needed for toilets, heating, disabled access, structural work and to meet legal requirements. However, grants can be sought for up to 94% of selling price and restoration costs, meaning that local fundraising would only need to raise c. £10,000. Mr McCormack is meeting with SE in the coming week to clarify the situation. A local ballot will be required of the local population to assess whether the community wish to buy the church. The CC should consider setting up a trust company for future RTBs. Twenty members are required. Fireworks - thanks were given to Mr Houston for the spectacular display. Boleskine Bulletin - one of the co-editors is 'retiring' so they are looking for a new volunteer. OAP's Christmas party - no one has replaced Rose Fortune to organise the party. Mr Campbell, Mrs Grainger, Mr Houston and Mr Bateman agreed to take it forward, but it will have to be a separate entity from the CC so that funds are kept separate. Mr Campbell will speak to the Craighdarroch Hotel.

Dates for 2006 meetings: 24 Jan (Gorthleck), 28 Feb (Foyers), 8 Mar (Gorthleck), 25 April (Foyers), 23 May

Highland Councillor – Mrs. Ella Macrae 01463 751 203
Ella.macrae@highland.gov.uk

(Gorthleck), 27 Jun (Gorthleck), 22 Aug (Gorthleck).

Minute of Meeting 9 January 2006

Correspondence: Association of Scottish Community Councils – newsletter. Common Good Land in Scotland – Review. Highlands and Islands Fire Brigade - Integrated Risk management, draft action plan. Joint letter from BEN and SFCC objecting to the Beaully/Denny transmission line and a call for a public enquiry. Highland Wellbeing Alliance - CD Rom - Local Community Planning in Practice. Lifescan Scottish Community Foundation, grant application form.

Treasurer: Ord. Acc: £353.00, Project Acc: £3322.99.

Planning: Outline planning consent sought for erecting 1.5 storey house at croft 23 Lochgarthside, Gorthleck. Erection of single storey, detached timber frame private dwelling and garage at West Drummond, White bridge. Secretary to obtain copy of plans for discussion at next meeting.

Roads and Road Signs: Bushes above the B851 and B862 junction- some have been cut, but not those that were identified so work may not be complete. Check next meeting. Pot hole on Abersky road going towards the Ruthven Bridge. Whitebridge Bus - driver contacted Secretary, very concerned by the comments made at August meeting. She did not feel that her speed was excessive, as she was very aware of the hazards of narrow and winding road. Problems raised by Mrs Chattington she understood had been resolved. Children all have allocated seats with belts although many do not use them. She said that the behaviour of some of the children was unacceptable (swearing, spitting, running up and down the aisle, dropping litter and trying to start fires by lighting the spray from aerosols). She has spoken to Rapsons and the school about it without results but will try again.

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit: New planning application for Dunmaglass Wind Farm being lodged in February. Will ultimately only go ahead if the new transmission line is granted approval. There was a meeting between the three CCs affected and RES. The preferred benefit would be annual revenue payments, split between the three CCs. The percentage cut was not agreed upon. Highland Renewable Energy Strategy - comments to be made by Friday 13 January. Nomination forms - only 2 received. People may need encouragement to put forms forward.

AOB: Foyers Church - Mr Bateman will contact each person who signed the form in the shop to determine level of interest. Mr Bateman to meet with Mr Keith Gibson, Highland Planning Dept. He is hoping Mr Gibson will agree to a change of use of the building, for community use. Christmas school donations - Mr Campbell approached Mr A. Paterson, Highland Council, and received a donation of £300.00. Based on role-call of the schools it was split as; Stratherrick - £150.00, Foyers - £100.00 and the nursery - £50.00. Senior Citizens Lunch - Mr Campbell thanked the sub-committee for their help in organizing a very successful lunch at Craigdarroch Hotel. 37 people attended.

Minute of Meeting 24 January

Correspondence: Highland Council - Community Council Training day - Secretary to contact those not at meeting. Maggie's Highland – information/contact address. 2001 Census - data relating to Stratherrick and Foyers. Northern Safety Camera Partnerships - information on use of cameras to detect speeding drivers

Treasurer: Ord. Acc: £299.57. £27.54 deposited from photocopier. £81.00 paid out for hall charges.

Project Acc: £3323.21. There is about £35.00 remaining from the senior citizens Christmas lunch. Mr Campbell requested that a separate account be set up and the balance carried forward.

Planning: The original plan for a house at Lochgarthside was withdrawn and re-submitted after the house was repositioned. New plans to be requested. Mr Brian Macgregor, Bogbain Farm - letter inviting support in objecting to a proposed development near the existing farmhouse.

Policing: There have been a few cases of petty thieving in Foyers. People are encouraged to keep a look-out for anything suspicious.

Roads and Road Signs: Inverfarigaig pass - the ditches, especially between Alt Na Goire and Errogie, are now growing 'a forest'. Water is flowing across bottom of the Alt Na Goire road. Secretary will write to the roads department. 'Twenty's Plenty' schemes outside schools - Secretary to consult Mrs Macrae to find out if and when it will happen locally.

Water and Sewerage: Rumoured that Scottish Water will not be connecting any new houses to the water mains. Secretary instructed to contact Mrs Macrae and Scottish Water to find out situation.

Community Project: Meeting at Mr Campbell's on Thursday 2 February, 6.30pm

Renewable Energy and Community Benefit: Meeting held with members of Fort Augustus CC to discuss Glendoe Scheme. Points raised were how the consultation had been dealt with, setting up of community trusts and negotiation of community benefit. A meeting with Mr Seaton, SSE, and both CCs arranged for 25 Jan to discuss what, if any, strings would be attached to the lump sum payment. A further meeting was arranged for 8 Feb to decide on percentage split of CB between the two CCs.

S&F community Trust Ltd - A letter was received from Munro and Noble detailing the reasons for not including extra clauses in Articles and Memorandum of Association, stipulating the ways in which the money may be put to use. It was agreed to take the advice and not make any further changes and ask that Munro and Noble continue with the application for Charitable status.

Willie Batchen

Willie Batchen died on Christmas Eve in hospital at Invergordon at the age of 86. He was a well-known figure in Foyers where he was born and lived all his life until recently when he went to live with his daughter at Kildary in Ross-shire.

When he was a young boy he served as a waiter on the steamer Gondolier which plied Loch Ness at that time. As a teenager he had proven himself by lifting the two hundred-weight bags of alumina to qualify for a man's wage at the aluminium factory in Foyers. He maintained a link with B.A. (British Aluminium Company, now Alcan) until the very end, having worked for the company for more than 30 years and been a key member of the former employees' Thirty Year Club which had its headquarters in the building near Foyers Shop which is now Foyers House (a guest house).

He had latterly been head foreman at Foyers before moving to the Hydro Board. Renowned for his after-dinner speaking, he had been one of B.A.'s fiercest critics when Foyers and aluminium finally parted company in 1967. It was to Batchen and the company's credit that they managed to rekindle their relationship following that stormy period which was a measure of Willie's respect for what the company had done for this tiny village and its overall importance in the industrial world. He always maintained, quite rightly, that this had never been properly recognised.

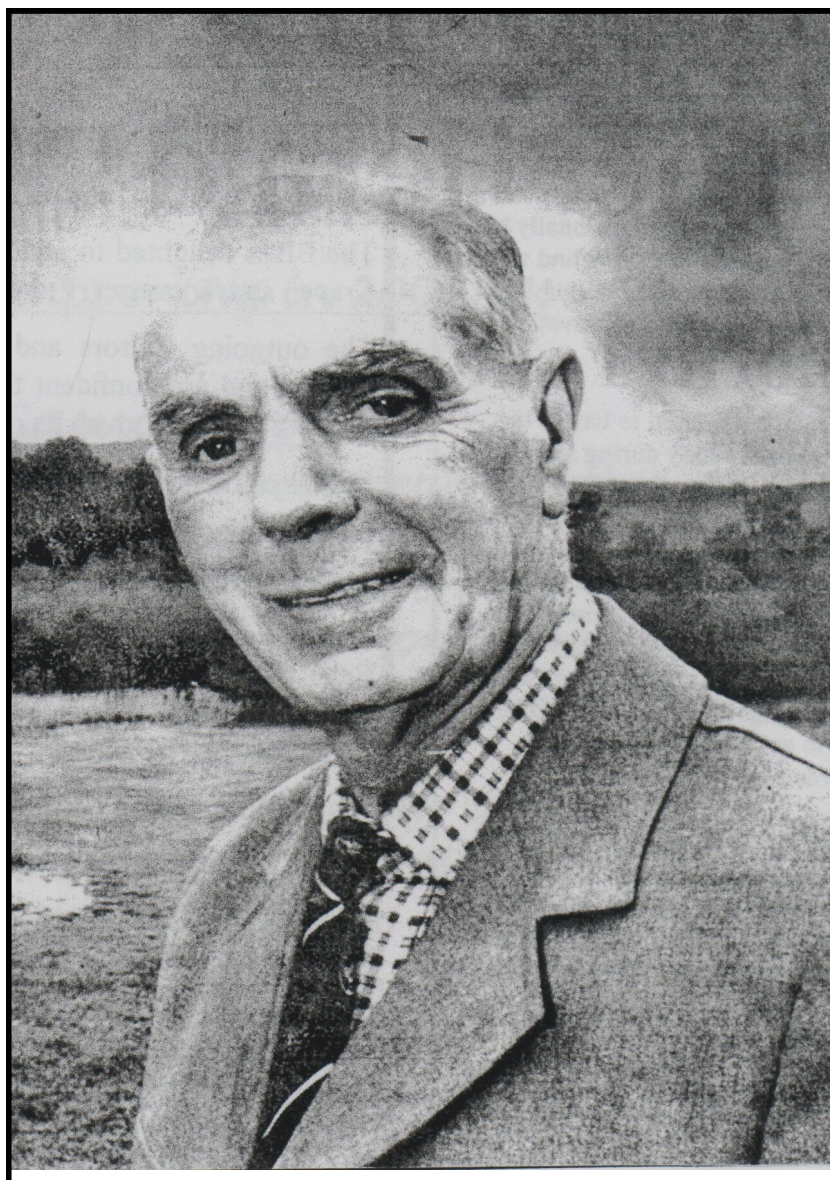
"Batchen" (as he was universally known) was one of the giants of the modern game of shinty. Secretary/

Treasurer of the Camanachd Association for 12 notable years, he was probably best known as a shinty referee par excellence. He was a player with Boleskine, although he was a footballer of some note having played for Inverness Caledonian from 1934 - 1944 and thereafter with Clachnacuddin in Inverness and Nairn. Not everyone agreed with Willie who was never shy of expressing trenchant views but his judgement and deliberations were always sincerely delivered and they came from the heart.

He was a Justice of the Peace, for a

time a local Community Councillor and was on the Committee of the Knockie Charitable Trust. He was pre-deceased by his beloved wife of 44 years, Morag, in 1988 and is survived by a brother, Alistair, daughter Kathleen, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was a contemporary of Sadie Hipkins (Foyers) and was best man at her wedding to Jack.

His funeral was in Inshes Church, Inverness on Friday, 30th December and Willie was laid to rest in Foyers Burial Ground.



Letter to the BB

As someone who uses the service bus at least twice a week, I must support our regular driver. I have found her to be kind, courteous and above all a safe driver. We do occasionally have relief drivers on Saturdays and when our regular driver is on holiday and sometimes their driving leaves a lot to be desired.

We must be thankful to have a bus service particularly during school holidays. As for taking the bus home at night, it was Rapsons' suggestion that the driver take the bus home to Fort Augustus (not Invergarry as in the CC report) in the Summer and leave it at Whitebridge in the Winter. The day we had snow, the bus was at Whitebridge and our driver did her best to get to it. Rapsons were informed of the situation.

We are still adjusting to the changes from one bus and our former driver, Dave to needing two buses as there are too many children for one. Perhaps a few more paying passengers should support the service rather than criticise.

M.E.Ellis

THANK YOU

Buddy, Ana and Peter would like to express their grateful thanks to you all for the support you have given us during our caretaking of the BB. We would particularly express our thanks to Dave Bradwell and Jill Cooper for their skill in the pagesetting and their endless patience with we rank computer amateurs! Our thanks also to Bob How for his photographic skill and help. It has been a privilege to have been part of the BB and we look forward to the new era.

BB lives to fight another day

The BB is delighted to announce that we have a new Editor, Peter Craven and Treasurer, Frank Ellam.

The outgoing Editors and Treasurer wish the new team every success and are confident that all of you will give them the same support you have given us over the past years.

Details of the new team are as follows:

Editor Peter Craven, 28, Glenlia, Foyers, IV2 6XY. Email address - petercraven@hotmail.com

Treasurer Frank Ellam, Easter Boleskine, By Foyers, IV2 6XT.

Obituary (author unknown)

TODAY we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend by the name of Common Sense who has been with us for many years.

No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valued lessons as knowing when to come out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm and that life isn't always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge). His health began to rapidly deteriorate when well-intentioned but over-bearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six year old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition!

He declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant.

Over time, Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffeee was hot, spilled it in her lap and was awarded a huge settlement from McDonald's.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son, Reason, (not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone). He is survived by his two stepbrothers, My Rights and I'm a Winner.

Christian Comment

As we move forward through this Year of our Lord 2006, there must be many people wondering what lies ahead for us in the future. On the world scene there is the continuing threat of terrorism in Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Niger, Uganda, Sudan and many other places - maybe some nearer to home. In our own lives we cannot know what may happen to us in the coming days.

When our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, was making His journey towards Jerusalem, He was aware of the events that we remember during Holy Week - this year April 9 - 16. What was it that enabled Him to continue on His way that was to involve the cruel suffering of the Cross of Shame, when the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate proclaimed Him to be the King of the Jews?

We read in the Bible that He was sustained by the 'joy that was waiting for Him' (Hebrews 12v2). Death is not the end of the road for the Christian: Jesus is with us as we journey through this life, through the 'Valley of the Shadows' and on to our Heavenly Home. This gives us every day both hope and security - so we may say "I don't know what the future holds, but I know Him who holds the future".

Martyn Bateman

A Community 'Easter Praise' is planned for Sunday, April 16th at 3.30pm in the Stratherrick Hall to which everyone is most warmly welcome.



Recycling
Highland Style

CHURCH MEETINGS

Church of Scotland

Sunday: 10 am Boleskine, 11-30 am Dore.
Mr. Donald Mackintosh 01463 794870.

Episcopal Church

Sunday: 11 am Croachy.
Rev. Peter Mosley 01805 521397.

Free Church

Sunday: 6 pm Errozie.
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.
Mrs. Therese Finley 01456 486747.

Inter-Denominational Bible Study

Rev. Martyn Bateman 01456 486273

Out and About

We regret to announce the death on 16th January of Malcolm Chisholm of Penstock House, Foyers and send our condolences to his family.

We have also to announce the death of Willie Batchen (fuller Obituary in this issue) and send our sympathy to his family.

Congratulations to one of our much loved local personalities, Sadie Chisholm, on her recent 80th birthday which Sadie celebrated with her family and many friends.

Due to the time of year, many people have been suffering from 'flu or other 'bugs' and we wish all a speedy recovery to full health.

To all newcomers to the district, we extend a warm

SHINTY

The Boleskine Camanachd Club fixtures for season 2006 are as detailed below. The Club play in the North Div 2. Their home games are at Smith Park, Inverarnie, matches commencing at 2-30pm generally, but check local press for details of any changes. The club website at :- <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/shinty/index.htm> will give updates in Fixtures & Results section, also any events organised by the club in the Club News section. We intend to enter teams in the U14 & U17 North leagues this season – no fixtures released yet .

Anyone interested in playing shinty or becoming a member of our monthly draw club, contact club secretary Joan Fraser on 01456 486220.

Home team listed first.

Adult North League Div 2

4 MARCH	LOVAT v BOLESKINE
11 MARCH	KINGUSSIE v BOLESKINE
25 MARCH	BOLESKINE v NEWTONMORE
8 APRIL	SKYE v BOLESKINE
15 APRIL	BOLESKINE v STRATHGLASS (Str)
22 APRIL	BOLESKINE v FORT WILLIAM
6 MAY	BOLESKINE v KILMALLIE
13 MAY	BOLESKINE v KINLOCHSHIEL (Suth)
20 MAY	BOLESKINE v CABERFIEDH
10 JUNE	STRATHGLASS v BOLESKINE
17 JUNE	BOLESKINE v LOVAT
15 JULY	BOLESKINE v KINGUSSIE
26 AUG	NEWTONMORE v BOLESKINE
2 SEPT	BOLESKINE v SKYE
23 SEPT	FORT WILLIAM v BOLESKINE
30 SEPT	KILMALLIE v BOLESKINE
7 OCT	CABERFIEDH v BOLESKINE



Family Christmas Carol Service

Sunday 11th December

We are fortunate to have Stratherrick Hall - it's a great venue for our Christmas Carol Service. With over 100 people attending this year, we nearly ran out of chairs!

It was indeed an afternoon blessed with lovely singing, friendship and a strong sense of worship. The enthusiasm and appeal of the boys and girls from Stratherrick School brought to their two Christmas songs and their singing of 'Away in a Manger' had a few folks reaching for their hankies!

The Rev. John Buchan was presented with a portable sound system and cheque in recognition of his great support to the Parish as our locum Minister for the past two years and Mrs Buchan was presented with a bouquet of flowers - we shall miss them both. Unfortunately Dr. Margaret Conway was unwell and so could not be present to receive her presentation in recognition of her many years service as

Organist at Foyers Church - we all wish her a speedy recovery.

Mrs. Sheila Mosley's Fair Trade Table was well supported and the retiring offering in support of the Highland Hospice raised about £100.

A welcome cup of tea and hot mince pies followed the Service completing a very happy afternoon. Thanks to everyone who helped - our readers, the children's choir supported by Mrs Angela Cryans and Mrs. Margaret Campbell, Colin Adamson on tenor horn and Callum Martin on drums, Callum's Dad, Graham for the brilliant lighting effects and Iain King for leading the Service. Special thanks to the ladies who provided the decorations and provided and served the refreshments!

*Eddie Moore
(who incidentally played guitar for the occasion - Ed)*

Scott of the Anarchic

A celebration of the literary talents of Iain Crichton Smith.

This is a new drama from Splinters Productions who brought the hugely successful George Mackay Brown's "For The Islands I Sing" to Stratherrick Hall last year.

Paying a compelling and affectionate tribute to one of Scotland's best-loved literary figures, this production is by turns richly comic and deeply moving, and showcases Iain Crichton Smith's talents as storyteller, playwright, poet, and his unique vision of Highland life and culture.

Colourful and crazy characters abound, as we follow the hilarious antics of Murdo Macrae - the author's alter ego - whose wild and fertile imagination takes the audience on a roller-coaster ride through his surreal existence. This is a wonderful celebration of the creativity of a powerful and compassionate writer - Iain Crichton Smith.

South Loch Ness Heritage Group

The Group had a very pleasant evening on 5th December at Dores Hall when Mr Norman Newton spoke to us on Loch Ness Roads and Places. He produced some fascinating old maps of the area which exercised our brains to recognise some of the name places. These meetings are always very enjoyable and we do hope more members will support them. The next one is in Gorthleck Hall and will be a talk from Mr Pentecost-Ingram of the Highlands Historical Research Society. This will be on 6th March, so it is possible that it may be too late by the time the Bulletin is published.

One small point, we have already received a big response from people wishing to reserve copies of '**A Country Called Stratherrick**' by Alan Lawson. This book is an absolute 'must have' for anyone living in and interested in our area. Please ring Jean Marshall on 01456 486758 to **reserve your copy**.

One more plea for any old photographs of your family who resided in Stratherrick or any pictures of yesteryear - we will take great care of them and return them to you, but we are most anxious to build up an archive of days gone by before it is too late. Your help will be much appreciated.

Glendoe Hydro Liaison Group established

A new group has been formed to serve the Fort Augustus and Foyers & Stratherrick communities as work begins on the largest hydro scheme to be built in Britain for 50 years. The 100MW hydroelectric scheme is being built by Scottish and Southern Energy on the Glendoe estate at the southeastern side of Loch Ness.

The purpose of the group, which will meet every month, is to share information with the communities in the vicinity of the development and to provide regular updates on progress of the scheme. The group will also address concerns of the communities as work on the scheme progresses and discuss key issues affecting the communities.

The inaugural meeting of the Community Liaison Group was held recently (19

December) in the Stratherrick Hall in Gorthleck and in future will be chaired by Fort Augustus community council chairman the Rev Dr Adrian Varwell. Other members of the group will include Loch Ness West Councillor Margaret Davidson and Loch Ness East Councillor Ella MacRae. Foyers & Stratherrick community council chairman John Willie Campbell will also be a member of the group along with Highland Council planning officer Andrew Brown, Community Liaison Officer Douglas Gilchrist and Barry Crouchman, site manager for the main contractor Hochtief. Scottish & Southern Energy's interim site manager, Angus Speirs, will represent SSE on the group.

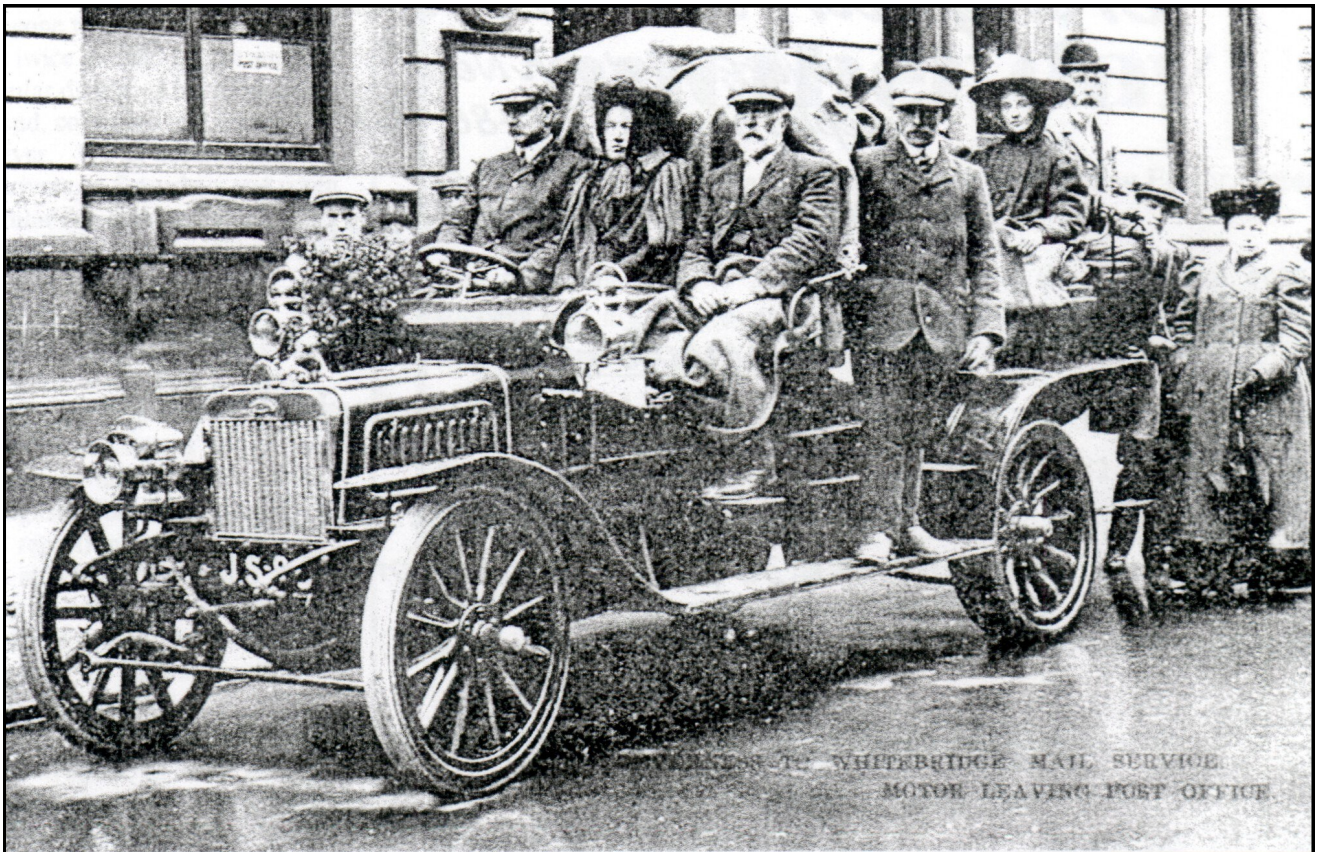
Adrian Varwell said: "The Community Liaison Group will provide a useful forum for local people to find out about the

progress of the Glendoe project and to identify the opportunities it provides. It's also a good way of airing any concerns and ensuring they are resolved."

Among the first issues to be discussed within the group was the question of job opportunities for local people and a reassurance given by Hochtief that site vacancies as they arise will be advertised in the local press. Hochtief site manager Barry Crouchman also gave an update of the project so far. Tree felling work has begun in the areas around the tailrace road and the access tunnel. Early in the New Year blasting work will start for construction of the roads within the site.

Any person wishing to contact the Community Liaison Group with concerns, questions etc can do so by telephoning Community Liaison Officer Douglas

The Inverness to Whitebridge Mail Service



Ada Johnstone (formerly of Achnabat) sent this photograph wondering if anyone can identify any of the people pictured. If so, please either email Sheila Sinclair at sheila.sinclair1@btopenworld.com or write to her c/o Sheila Sinclair, Whemstead Gate Farm, Nr. Ware, Herts, SG12 0PG whence it will be passed on to Ada.

Seemingly if the load of goods was too heavy, then the passengers had to alight and walk up the Dores brae to facilitate the ascent. This photograph (framed) also hangs in the hallway of the Medical Centre here in Foyers.

Great Wilderness Challenge

The weather for the 25 mile walk was, once again, beautiful with early morning cloud clearing by the time we'd negotiated the two river crossings (and the bog in between!).

The wonderful ridges and peaks of An Teallach dominate the first section, before the long slog up to Check Point 3 at the highest point. Then on across the plateau (with the leading runners catching up on us) with A'Mhaighdean and the other remote Munros of Letterewe and Fisherfield Forests spectacular to our left, and on to the half-way point at Carnmore, where the keepers and their good ladies provided refreshments (including a welcome dram!). A short rest (plenty of midges!) and then a steady tramp over easier ground for the next twelve miles to complete the walk from Dundonell to Poolewe.

Good comradeship, fine support from Dundonell Mountain Rescue Team, the welcome soup and sandwiches in the Hall at Poolewe and the wild walk itself combined to make a memorable day. Thanks to the 'Challenge' Committee for organising the event in support of the Highland Hospice and the other Charities which are so dependent on voluntary financial support.

Most especially, thanks to everyone who sponsored us -- for a remarkable total of £1180! With the addition of the tax reclaimed and the 60% added by the Great Wilderness Challenge Organisation, this will make a total sum of over £1900 for the Highland Hospice. Thanks again!

Colin Adamson

Guided Walks

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/9k11m

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.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

AIDS HELPLINE: Freephone 0800 567123. Open 24 hours.
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (AA): Open 24 hours, confidential service, charged at local rate.

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

ALCOHOL COUNSELLING (INVERNESS): Tel. 01463 220995
Free, confidential, one-to-one counselling for anyone 16 years and over who is worried about their own or someone else's drinking.
BROOK HIGHLAND: 77, Church Street, Inverness. Tel. 01463 242434. Sexual Health Advisory Service for young people under 25 years old. Contraception, pregnancy testing, infection testing and counselling available.

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

CHILDLINE SCOTLAND (BULLYING): Tel. 0800 441111.

Free advice: Mon. to Fri. 3.30p.m. - 9.30p.m.

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

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.

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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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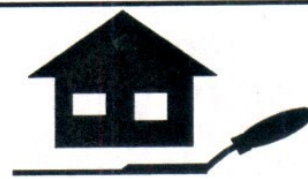
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Thursdays 7.00 - 8.30pm ring Sylvia on 486434

Monday 6th March - Heritage Group - speaker Mr. Pentecost-
Ingram Highland Historical Research Society

Sunday 16th April 3-30pm - Easter Praise

Saturday 3rd June 8pm - Scott of the Anarchic - drama from
Splinters Productions

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
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