

# The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue No. 2  
Spring 1998

## BOLESKINE TAKE TOP AWARD FOR JANUARY

*Reprinted with kind permission of the West Highland Free Press*

"Boleskine, the team nestling in a Loch Ness hillside, currently has no player living in the club's home village of Foyers as many team members have moved elsewhere for work reasons. But, their collection of exiles and imports has surged to the top of the North Third Division and picked up the Marine Harvest Team of the Month award for January. They collect the £100 prize, with South First Division outfit Tayforth gaining £50 as runners-up.

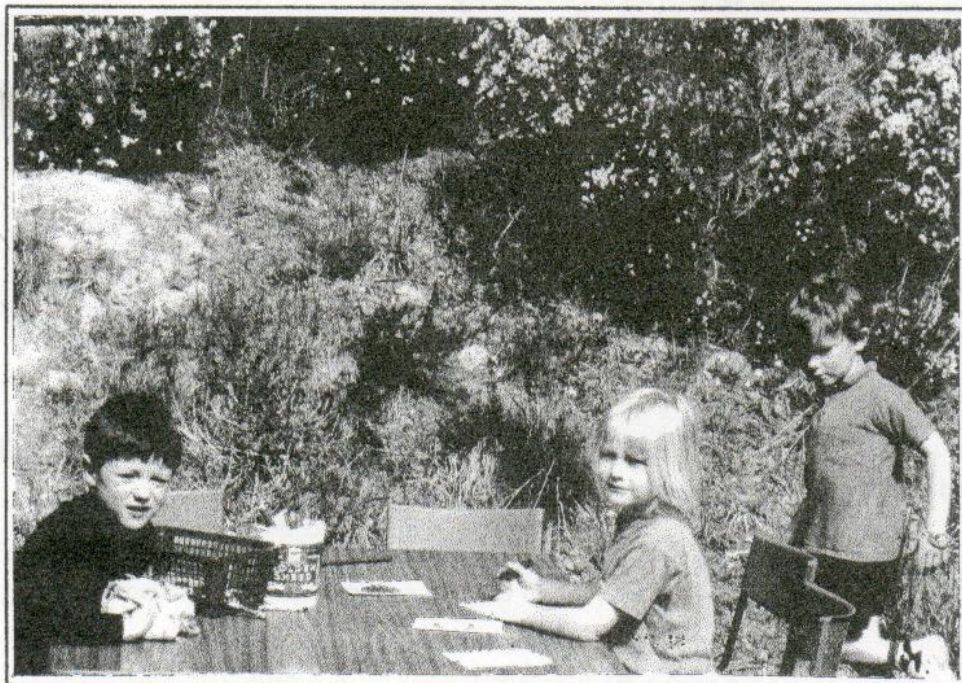
Boleskine are hoping the award is an omen of better times for the club with one of the smallest recruiting areas in shinty. "This recognition is a real morale-

booster," said club secretary Jim Stoddart. "We've no Foyers-based players left this season and our lads come from as far apart as Inverness and Fort Augustus. They've done remarkably well in the circumstances. Now we are looking to underpin the club's future by a major upgrading of our home ground Factory Field, along with new changing rooms and clubhouse. We are working together with Foyers Community Council to complete the financial package and secure the necessary grant aid." He added: "Enthusiasm for the game is still strong in the village, even though our players are now scattered far and wide. We started the season shakily as our new-look side bedded in, but we've been going strongly lately, as this award underlines, and we're very hopeful for the immediate and longer-term future."

## Boleskine Shinty

Club are planning a coaching course for primary school boys and girls at Foyers. Neil MacLennan, the Camanachd Association North Development Officer, will be in attendance to offer his assistance. The date of the course will be announced later.

Three members of Boleskine's shinty team are travelling to Le Havre, on the weekend of July 18th to take part in an exhibition shinty match there. They are Neil Cairney, Robert Henderson and Lewis Smith. This came about following a visit by Guy Henou, who runs a club called Le Trait de Union in Le Havre for inner city kids and their main game is shinty.



'Out in the sun last June' Play School pupils  
left to right Ross MacDonald, Heather Paveley and Michael Hook

## Talented Voices in the Strath

Three Stratherrick Primary School pupils gained success at the recent Inverness Music Festival. In the solo singing competition, **Laurie Chattington** was awarded a Distinction Certificate, while **Moti Parrott** and **Heather Summers** were awarded Merit Certificates. Congratulations to all three on their success. **Margaret Campbell**, Gorthleck has been selected to join the B.B.C. Radio Worship team on their pilgrimage tour of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor in May. The tour includes visits to Istanbul, Ephesus and Patmos. The B.B.C. will record services at each of the locations visited. These will be relayed on their Radio 4 Morning Service at 10 a.m. later in the year.



# HALL HAPPENINGS

## A.G.M. Thursday 30th April

Perhaps the forthcoming AGM will prompt thoughts as to what happened to the feasibility study carried out on behalf of the Community Council and the Hall Management Committee late last year. The responses to this have been collated by Independent Northern Consultants, and the options available and costs involved will be reported at the A.G.M.

The Hall Committee was of the opinion that there was insufficient local support to raise the large amount of funds needed to proceed at this time, but the decision will be open for debate at the AGM.

The Hall continues to be well used, but to ensure its continued use and future prosperity, please come along to the A.G.M.. Join in the discussion and let us have your thoughts.

**Better still, consider joining the Hall Committee and help us benefit the community by ensuring the continued prosperity of what is, after all, your local Hall! WE DO NEED YOUR HELP!**



## SENIOR CITIZENS BUS OUTING

The ladies of the Home Visiting Group originated the annual bus outing for senior citizens fifteen years ago. The group raised funds privately to enable those on their visiting lists to be taken on the outing. A hall was booked at the destination and all sat down to a high tea provided by the group. It was brought to the attention of the Knockie Trust Committee that only some senior citizens were being invited to the function, and the leader of the Group was approached to investigate the possibility of inviting all senior citizens if the Trust funded part of the outing. After discussion, the Group decided that it could not cope with catering for two bus loads of people, so a sale of work was held to enable the party to have a meal in a hotel or restaurant.

Each year we have received £400 from the Knockie Trust, which with the proceeds from the sale, enables the outing to continue. However costs are rising: in 1987, £452 was the sum needed while in 1997, £760 had to be found.

**Please give your support to our next Sale of Work on 18th April.**

*Rose Fortune*



"Do you remember the days  
when we just walked  
where we wanted to go?"

## community council news

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council meets at least once a month alternately in Gorthleck and in Foyers. The meetings are open to the public. To find out when and where the next meeting is, check the recently renewed notice boards throughout the area or contact the Chairman - John Campbell 486240 or the Secretary - John Joyce, Schoolhouse, Whitebridge.

The Community Council is involved in many different projects, ranging from upgrading the Shinty pitch to trying to secure funds for repairs to the old bridge at Whitebridge.

The Community Council has ten members drawn from each of the communities in its area. A list of members is available from the Secretary (also printed in the last issue of the B.B. - Ed.) The two Highland Councillors for this area (Cllr. Mrs I. MacRae and Cllr. Mrs K. Matheson) are *ex officio* members of the Community Council and attend every meeting. They support and make representations on behalf of the Community Council as appropriate. The local Police Constable is also invited to every meeting as a matter of course.

Minutes of the meetings of the Community Council, and all its Committees, are available free of charge from Foyers Post Office or from the Secretary.

*(It is hoped that every issue of the B.B. will report on the current issues concerning the Community Council - Ed.)*



# Farming News

As I put pen to paper it looks like winter has arrived in Stratherrick and I saw the first lapwing arrive amidst nine inches of snow on the second of March. It must have wondered if it had taken a wrong direction somewhere! Up until now the weather has been exceptionally mild and on the last days of February I have never seen so little snow on the high hills. So that from a farming viewpoint the winter so far has been extremely kind to livestock. Sheep are in very good condition and with a reasonably favourable spring they should go into lambing in the best of health. We have finished pregnancy scanning part of our flock and results show that the ewes are very well in lamb with a few more potential twins and triplets than last year. This is only the start however, and a lot of factors can affect lambing percentages and we can only do our best to ensure a good survival rate.

However, all is not good in the sheep industry. Since November, the lamb trade has plummeted and for most farmers who bought lambs for fattening in the autumn this exercise has been a complete disaster. Most farmers are experiencing a loss of around £15 per head on each lamb purchased and this will inevitably mean that next autumn when the hill farms sell their lambs they will probably only receive about half of what they got this year. This is a very serious situation for the hills and uplands of Scotland unless our Government gets to grips with the problems.

Cattle have also wintered well and we are well into our spring calving. We have managed to keep calf scours and pneumonia at bay and with plenty of winter keep they should go out to grass in mid-late May in good condition. However, with all the problems associated with the BSE crisis, the export ban and cheap foreign imports flooding the market, there is not much to look forward to when we will hopefully sell these cattle in October or November.

No doubt once the clock changes and long spring and summer evenings arrive, when the lambing is in full swing and there are signs of new life everywhere with fresh growth appearing, we will no doubt, forget the down side of the business and concentrate on producing stock to the highest quality we can, as this will be the only way to survive.

Ken Fraser

# The Forests of Farigaig

This winter has seen considerable progress in Forest Enterprise's plans to improve the diversity and enhance the beauty, of forests in the Inverfarigaig district. Most of these forests were planted in the 1950s, as Great Britain was attempting to replenish the reserves of timber ravaged during two world wars. Rapid timber production was then essential, leading to the establishment of geometric plantations containing fast growing exotic conifers. Such plantations answered the needs of those turbulent times, but often rode "roughshod" over issues such as wildlife habitats, the landscape and recreation.

As the Forest Design Plan for Erchite enters its third year, a more balanced approach to managing forests can be seen. Timber harvesting is still a high priority, but takes strict account of richness of wildlife and archaeological remains found in the area - such as the colonies of red squirrels, or the ancient chapel and burial ground found at Erchite (just west of Dore). Many remnants of semi-natural broadleaved woodland also exist, which will be managed to encourage natural regeneration.

Large areas at Erchite and Balnagarline have been re-planted this winter, with mixes of Scots Pine, larch and spruce. Open spaces have been included to encourage wildlife and improve the landscape. The forests around Inverfarigaig should continue to provide employment, wildlife habitats and enjoyment well into the next millennium.

Forest Enterprise - Fort Augustus.

## Countryside Ranger events for the Spring

**Sunday April 11th** 2-4.30pm - Corrie-yairack Walk - Wander in Wade's Footsteps - Meet: Just off the Ardachy Road, Fort Augustus. Grid Ref: NH 377 074

**Sunday May 24th** 2-4pm - Wild Food Walk - Foyers. Discover how useful and tasty some of our local plants can be. Meet in the car park next to the village shop in Foyers.

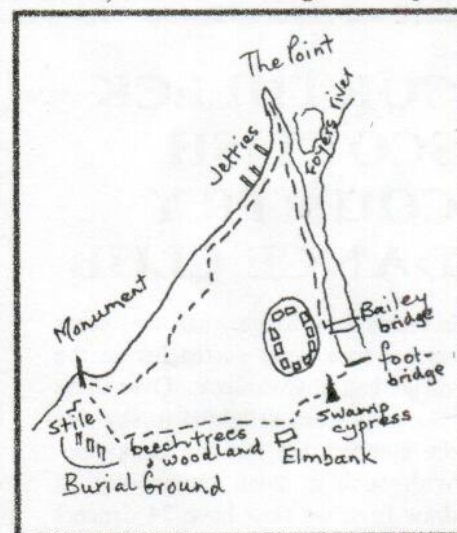
Further information from Katy Stirling:  
01463 724260

# Lochside & River Walk, Foyers



Begin at the Bailey bridge, Lower Foyers, and walk down a gravelled track fringed by bramble bushes. I watched a pair of otters gambolling in the river here. The sweet song of a dipper can sometimes be heard, ceasing only for its underwater forays. Down at the Lochside are caravans and boatsheds but the anglers' jetties are in a sorry state having been battered by storm waves this year. From the Point are clear views up and down the Loch and over to Meall Fuar-mhonaidh. One or two pairs of oyster catchers nest here and their plaintive cries are the sound of summer nights. Walk past the jetties and along the pebbly beach and then scramble up to the raised beach under the beech trees. A precarious sheep's path leads up to the field fence. Beyond, is the monument to Jane, daughter of the old Fraser family who used to own all this land. She is reputed to have died of a broken heart. A stile takes you into Foyers Burial Ground (a tranquil place) and from here through a gate and along a dirt road under beautiful old beech trees, skirting woodland where roe and sika deer can often be seen and sometimes a badger rooting in the leaf litter.

Go through a gate near Elmbank (a terrace of houses) and bear left along the road past

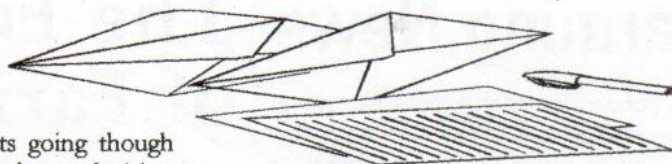


a very old swamp cypress (which used to be a village trysting place) and a redwood and monkey puzzle tree - remnants of the wooded policies of the Foyers Frasers, in the vicinity of which their old house once stood. Go over the footbridge and past the bus shelter and then down the road back to the Bailey bridge.

Buddy MacDougall



# LETTERS



Like most people living and, until recently, working in the countryside I am aware of the many problems associated with preserving our way of life, yet longing for changes that will improve it. I see many things that concern us all. Things like closure of schools, inadequate transport, limited employment opportunities, higher cost of living, economic discrimination by large petrol companies, the pressure on land for building. Your readers can add their concerns to the list. And it will be a long list.

At the same time I see that not all country dwellers hold the same opinions on some topics. I am aware that farmers' and keepers' may not have the same views on pest control as those who press for conservation of wildlife; that not all landowners feel the need to keep open Rights of Way, while some country people do; that the desires of those who choose to settle in the country because they value the peaceful quality of life may be different from those whose income comes from tourism. Again, there are many areas where we who live in the country want widely differing things.

These were the thoughts going through my head while I watched on television pictures of the march held in London last month and the blazing beacons lit nation-wide, both organised by The Countryside Alliance.

I was pleased that the demonstration brought much needed publicity to the concerns of those living in the countryside, but I was also uneasy. Without much in the way of publicity statements about the purpose of the march, I found myself wondering which of the many aspects of country life, a few of which I have just mentioned, was the large turnout of people for or against.

It is a very fine title, The Countryside Alliance; an emotive name. It gives the impression of all country people uniting in a common aim - the improvement of life and conditions affecting it for that part of the population which lives or works in rural areas across the country. I should support it. I don't doubt that your readers would support it - if that were its aim.

But, and it is a very big but, we should remember that it is not a union of all who care about the countryside. It is a pressure group formed largely of an

informal alliance of The Landowners' Federations, The National Farmers' Union and the British Field Sports Society. Its primary purpose is to put pressure on parliament to defeat a private member's bill which seeks to ban fox-hunting.

I found myself wondering just why an alliance was needed. Why confuse the issue? Why not make the message strong and clear to parliament and the nation - we do not want a ban on fox-hunting?

Then an uncharitable thought came into my head. Perhaps they want to do just that. Perhaps they do want to confuse the issue. After all, fox-hunting with dogs is a minority sport and one that does not draw much support from the general public in or out of the countryside. It hardly affects Scotland at all. Why not use the farmers' anger with the government over the restrictions on British beef to give the campaign wider appeal? Why not choose a title that will draw all those worried about changes that may radically alter their way of life? I must congratulate the person or persons who planned the strategy and the name. It was a masterly move. Manipulative, but masterly.

Yours, Frances Abbot

## GORTHLECK SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE CLUB

It seems a lot longer than two years since I took over as teacher in the village hall at Gorthleck. Over these two years I am delighted to say that the numbers are steadily increasing. With such a small community to draw from we now have 24 dancers on the books. But, we still have room for more! I cater for all types; slim, tall, big, small, young, and old. Whatever, they all persevere with my haranguing - it does seem worthwhile as the standard and enjoyment seems to be on the increase. There will always be room for improvement!

The evening commences at 7.30pm on Wednesdays finishing at 9.30pm and consists of step and formation practice followed by four dances - usually two reels, a jig and strathspey.



Keeping in mind the current trend in healthy diet with plenty of exercise, which should give us extra longevity, what better way to lose those extra few inches in a fun way than by coming to dance? A shared interest will always make friendship. I look forward to seeing new faces and trying to help you achieve either a renewal or something new in your life. Classes continue through into early summer.

**Rob Sargent (018089 521 for further information)**

### LETTERS AND ARTICLES TO:

Buddy Macdougall, Coach House, Foyers

Sandy MacLure, Woodacre, Gorthleck

Frances Abbot, Schoolhouse, Whitebridge

Three issues each year: March, June, Sept, Dec. Please send copy in preceeding month.

Production team:- collection of material - Buddy, Sandy & Frances; word processing - Jane O'Donovan & Jill Cooper; Editing - Frances & Jane; Proof reading - Jill; Desk Top Publishing - John Parrott; Printing - Ray Cooper; Distribution - Buddy plus Foyers volunteers & Sandy plus Gorthleck & Errogie volunteers. Advertising - David Munro



# CHILDREN'S CORNER

first day was rather scary. All the first years were split into groups which we will remain in until the third year. I was pleased to find that three other people from Stratherrick were in my group. My fear of getting lost never eventuated as each group was allocated two senior pupils for guidance and they were very helpful.

I found it strange having different teachers for different subjects, to make this more confusing we each have a registration teacher and a guidance teacher who will remain the same throughout our time at the Academy. I must say that although odd at first I now really enjoy this system and find having so many different subjects and teachers very interesting and varied. Every day is very different and seems to fly by.

My impressions of the I.R.A. having been there for six months are still the same as my first. It is a very warm and friendly school which is great fun to attend and I'm glad my initial fears are over and I can enjoy my education.

*Jessica Ricketts*

## My First Impression of Inverness Royal Academy

One day I would be a pupil!! Knowing this, every time I passed the enormous building of the I.R.A., my imagination would run wild. Who would I meet? What would the teachers be like? Would I get lost? (I thought this definitely was a prospect as Stratherrick Primary is so small in comparison). As the change over became closer everything became clearer as we had a very informative visit to the I.R.A. and Miss Graham (one of the guidance teachers) came to Stratherrick with more details.

Despite everyone being very kind and determined to make our change from schools as smooth as possible, arriving on the

## Bring and Buy Sale for UNICEF

Primary 4,5,6, and 7 at Stratherrick School were learning about India and we found out that many children were working every day and could not go to school. We decided to hold a Bring and Buy Sale to raise money to give to UNICEF which is trying to help children to attend school. At the sale we had stalls with toys and games, arts and crafts, plants, a raffle and cake and candy. There were teas, orange squash and biscuits too. Parents helped by giving us donations and things to sell. They baked and served teas. In all we raised just over £162. Thank you to all who helped.

*Simon Allan P7*



Those of you who are still waiting for that first Lottery win will be glad to know that at least some of your money has come back to the area. Both pre-school groups using Gorthleck Village Hall came up trumps in the last round of Lottery Grants. The Mothers and Toddlers Group which meets every Wednesday (10-12am.) received £1147. Part of the money has been used to fence off the Hall grounds enabling the children to play outside safely; the rest will be used to cover the Hall rent. South Loch Ness Playschool, which was set up in 1996 for 3-5yr olds, received a grant of £4102 spread over 3 years. This will allow the Playschool to fund training, cover on-going expenses and, most importantly, offer a reasonable reimbursement to our dedicated play

leaders. The Playschool meets every Tuesday (9.30 - 12noon) and has so far proved to be a useful addition to pre-school education in the area. Apart from the normal activities of a playschool, the group goes on nature walks, has visits from the policeman, nurse etc... and also had a music teacher teaching the children carols.

The small number of 3-5 year olds in the district means that even with the Lottery grant, financing the Playschool will always be difficult. However, the group has raised a lot of funds over the last 18 months through various events and from donations. Nurse Caskie even walked the West Highland Way for us, raising over £470 - split between both pre-school groups! With the money raised we have bought new toys and equipment for both groups - easel, sand/water table, cooker/sink units, to name but a few. Both groups are well attended and, with a number of expectant mums, they should continue to be so! Those of you who have pre-school children and are not currently attending one of the sessions, please come along. We'd be delighted to see you!

**Mothers & Toddlers** - Wed. 10-12 noon: Tel: Tina on 486275

**South Loch Ness Playschool** - Tues. 9.30 - 12 noon: Tel: Heather on 486426



# TRADE DIRECTORY

## ALL JOBS

Dab Hands - 486416/430  
Eddie Berry - 486492

## BUILDER & JOINER

Steve Ricketts - 486225

## CAFE & RESTAURANTS

Foyers Bay House - 486624  
Foyers House - 486405

## CONTRACTORS

Angus C. Fraser - 486650

## DANCING & KEEP FIT

Iris Everett - 01320-366235

## GLASS FIBRE MOULDING

Colin Evans - 486285

## HOTELS & LOUNGE BARS

Craigdarroch House Hotel - 486400  
The Foyers Hotel - 486216  
Whitebridge Hotel - 486226

## LANDSCAPE GARDENING

Ian Munro - 01463-240413 or  
01456-486400

## PICTURE FRAMING

Hugh Nicol - 486350

## SHOP & POST OFFICE

The Foyers Store - 486233

## NATIVE TREE NURSERY

Jane O'Donovan - 486355

## WAX PICTURES

Betty Brailsford - 486254

## WOODTURNING & GIFTS

Peter Tyler - 01808-521414

*This trade directory is compiled to assist the residents of the Boleskine Bulletin readership area to place their business locally. If you would like your trade or business name to be included, please telephone Dave Munro on 01456-486400 or fax 486444.*



**Andrew Fraser**  
Building Contractor

Houses - Extensions - Renovations  
Stonework

Bein Sgurrach, Errogie  
tel 486408

## ADVERTISING

Trade Directory: £15  
for 4 issues  
Display advertising:  
prices on application

## STAFF REQUIRED CRAIGDARROCH HOUSE HOTEL

*Waiting staff, pay rate £4.25 per hour. House Maid staff, pay rate £4.00, required for seasonal work in 4 Star hotel. Uniforms provided. Applicants must be smart in appearance and have a pleasant and good humoured disposition. Contact Kate Munro on 486 400*

## THE TELFORD CENTRE

The Telford Centre in Fort Augustus is to have a **Coffee Morning and Sale on Saturday May 9th** from 10am - 12 noon. Raffle, bric-a-brac, home baking etc. Do you have any skills, interests or time you could share with the people who attend the Telford Centre? We welcome anyone who can offer a few hours on a fairly regular basis. Contact Brenda or Kit on 01320 366 511 for a chat if you feel able to help. We are also in need of some paperback books or recent magazines in good condition, as we cannot keep up with the demand of the readers here! We can collect, so please ring the above number if you can help.

## FUND RAISING SALE

STRATHERRICK SCHOOL  
P.T.A.

**SATURDAY 13TH JUNE**  
**2.30P.M**  
**STRATHERRICK HALL**

## CHURCH DIARY

**Free Church** Sundays Errogie - 12p.m.,  
Dores - 4.15p.m., Farr - 4.30p.m.  
**St. Pauls, Strathnairn (Episcopal)** Sun  
8a.m. Matins, 11a.m. Holy Communion,  
6.30p.m. Evensong. Sunday School 10  
a.m. each Sunday.  
Wed. 10.30 Holy Communion  
**Church of Scotland** 5th April summer  
services begin. i.e. Boleskine Church  
10.00a.m., Dores Church 11.30a.m.,  
Foyers 6.00p.m.  
Good Friday service at Dores Church at  
7.30p.m.

## STRATHERRICK FEIS

Classes for the Feis will be taking place on 17th April at Farr School, from 7-9p.m. followed by the ceilidh from 9-10p.m.

## Highland Festival week 22nd May - 6th June

The Feis during this week will be organising classes with tutors including Mary Ann Kennedy and Bruce MacGregor. Phone Alistair Forbes for details. 01808 521333

## Daimh

An exciting new young band, Daimh (or "kinship") is being launched at this year's Festival. Keeping the emphasis very traditional with haunting Gaelic songs to fast lively tunes. The musicians themselves are from Ireland, The Highlands, Hebrideas, Cape Breton and California and bring together the Celtic music from all these areas. With fiddle, bag pipes, banjo, mandola, tin whistles, guitar and vocals, all the ingredients are here for a BIG sound. So don't miss out .....

**TUESDAY 2ND JUNE**  
**STRATHERRICK HALL**  
**8 P.M.**

Supported by local friends and members of Strathnairn and Stratherrick Feis, including 'Monadhliath', the youngest all girl group in the north.

## HOME SAFETY SCHEME

If you are over 60 and need help with smoke alarms, locks etc (See enclosed Care newsletter) Contact Rose Fortune 486663 for application forms.

## BUS SERVICE 24

### Foyers - Inverness

	Weekdays			Saturdays	
Upper Foyers	07.55	12.50	16.23	09.00	13.30
Lower Foyers	08.00	12.56		09.05	13.36
Inverfarigaig	08.07	13.02	16.30	09.12	13.42
Inverness	08.50	13.40	17.10	09.50	14.20

### Inverness - Foyers

	Weekdays			Saturdays	
Inverness	11.55	15.20	17.43	12.30	17.43
Foyers	12.40	16.15	18.28	13.16	18.27

