

# The Boleskine Bulletin

Issue  
No.7  
Summer  
1999

## TELEVISION TO GO IN TEN YEARS

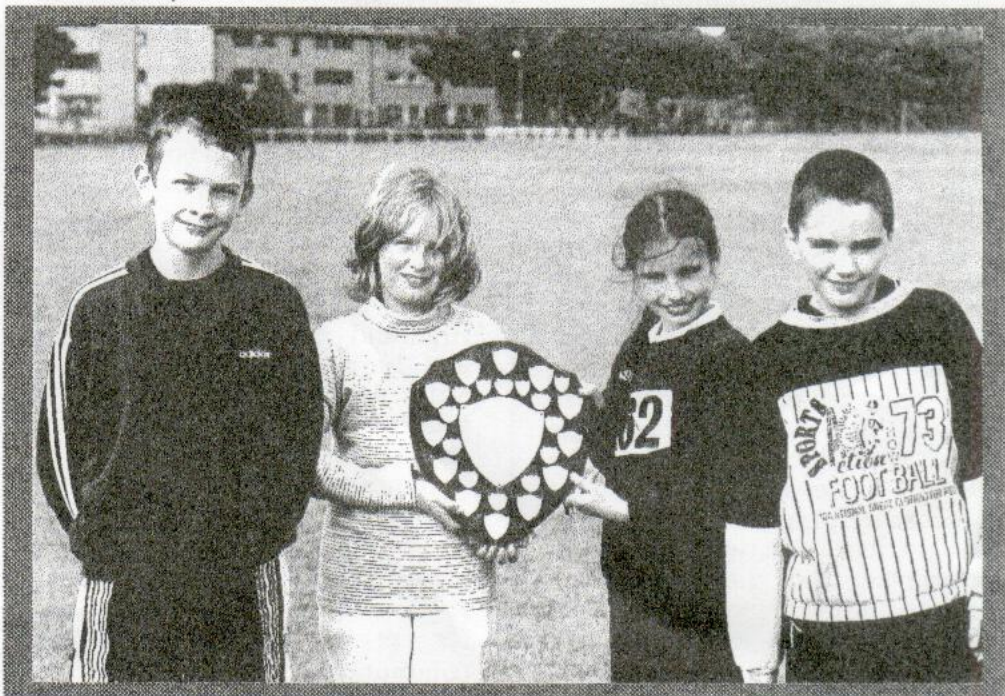
'The current analogue terrestrial television service will be "switched off" within 10 years' said Mr Nigel MacKenzie, Director of Protective Services at Highland Council in a recent letter to all community councils. This will result in large areas of the Highlands having no terrestrial television service.

The Government's proposals are that for those areas unable to receive Digital Terrestrial Television, digital satellite will provide the television service. However, both ITV & Channel 4 have yet to confirm if their services will be made available, free to view, via satellite. There are also concerns that not all areas in the Highlands are actually able to receive satellite signals. The upshot of this is that when the analogue service is "switched off", consumers in the affected areas will have to pay for a satellite system they otherwise may not wish to have - just to be able to receive a reduced level of television service.

Making a plea to rural communities everywhere, Highland Council are mounting a campaign to collect as many signatures as possible in the hope that this will persuade Government to provide a satisfactory DTT service across the whole of the Highlands. Every member of the community council is in possession of a petition to sign - to be returned by the end of July. Alternatively, write directly to Nigel MacKenzie, Protective Services, Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX to voice your opposition to the Governments decision.

## Car Theft hits Gorthleck

**Late** on the night of Friday 16th July, Nancy and John Garth's car was stolen yards from their bedroom window at Loch Mhor cottages in the centre of Gorthleck. A neighbour noticed the car missing at 1.30 am and thought Nancy or John must have gone to pick up one of the children. The car, however, was later discovered at 3.30 am by Inverness police after an incident was reported to them concerning a collision with a parked van in the Kessock ferry area. Investigations are continuing and the police are keen to hear from anyone who noticed anything unusual on the Friday night. The stolen car was a Blue Vauxhall Nova with 'L' plates attached. Give our local policeman Torquil Macleod a phone on 486222 if you can help. Torquil would be interested to hear of any break-ins or thefts in the area at any time.



**The Murray Challenge Shield** was won by Scott Barclay, Heather Summers, Moti Parrott, Sophie Chattington and Alexander Fraser from Stratherrick School for their efforts in the relay race which they took part in at the South Highland Athletic Association meeting at Bught Park in Inverness on the last Saturday in May. The team, minus Moti, who had to leave early are pictured above.



## Community Council Business

Among things currently under discussion:- Planning application relating to chalets at Craigdarroch, Lower Foyers; Footpath safety for the school children of Foyers; Whitebridge bottle bank; possible play area in Gorthleck; purchase of computer for the secretary. A response has been made to the Scottish Forestry Strategy paper. Minor road problems are on-going.

The Community Council meets each fourth Tuesday of the month alternately in the hall at Gorthleck & Foyers Power Station at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Forthcoming dates are:

24 August - Stratherrick;

28 Sept - Foyers;

26 Oct- Stratherrick;

23 Nov - Foyers

John Willie Campbell

(Chairman)- Gorthleck 486240,

and our local councillor, Ella

MacRae can be contacted on

01463 751203

New planning application: Dr &

Mrs MacKechnie, Birchfields

woodlands, Whitebridge for a

house.

## Plan for Camus Forest

A 'Forests for Real' meeting was held recently in Foyers, with approximately 20 local people attending. Forest Enterprise is compiling a Design Plan for Camus Forest. Those attending were able to put forward their ideas as to how they thought the forest should be managed in the future. The evening was a great success helping to strengthen the links between Forest Enterprise and the community. Forest Enterprise in Fort Augustus would appreciate any local information on nesting sites, setts, etc. which will be treated in confidence. Talk to Adel Beck. 01320 366322. They also ask that if anyone suspects illegal activities on forest land they should contact the police immediately.

## LEADER II ending

The last day of 1999 sees the official end of the Leader II programme which has been using European Union money to fund projects throughout the Highlands since April 1995. The Boleskine Bulletin itself received start up funds from Leader II; the feasibility study for both the Foyers Shinty pitch and Stratherrick Hall were funded; the Forest Walk project received money and money was also obtained for a couple of our young people to participate in the Youth Parliament with a trip to Sweden. Our two Leader II agents over these years have been Hugh Macnally and Sandy Maclure. A successor programme, 'Leader Plus', is expected but we will have to wait quite a long while before it is clear how this is to be organised and what kind of projects it will be looking for.

There is, however, a formal partnership for rural Inverness and Nairn which has already been formed. This aims to unite the member organisations in working together for the good of rural communities by promoting development and improving local services. Acting quite independently of the Leader programme, this partnership comprises Highland Council, Inverness and Nairn Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage, Highland Health Board, the voluntary sector and the Association of Community Councils.

The partnership will be looking for community agents whose role will be to present to the Rural Partnership ideas for projects from the local community.

**SENIOR CITIENS ANNUAL BUS  
OUTING IS OFF TO ULLAPOOL  
-WED. 21 JULY - TWO BUSES:  
FOYERS AND STRATHERRICK**

## COMMUNITY CARE FORUM

A recent meeting in Beechwood House, Inverness revealed that rural communities tend to receive a better home caring service than those in the town. Four local residents went along on the day, two of them having either received care in the past or were receiving it at the moment. Some concerns however, were highlighted. It appears that relief holiday cover for carers is difficult to man in rural areas; it is not in the carers job description to do small maintenance jobs such as light bulbs, curtains etc. and this was felt to be unfortunate; a requirement for a once a year spring clean by carers would be appreciated; and the problem of washing/ bathing and light nursing duties by carers was discussed. It was felt that for them to perform some of these duties training should be provided.

## TO RECYCLE OR NOT? THAT IS THE QUESTION



The results of the 'Planning for Real' workshops held in Gorthleck & Foyers are now available from Highland Council. One of the popular demands from the people of Stratherrick & Foyers who attended the two meetings in the Spring was the desire to increase recycling facilities in the area. The community council is currently discussing re-siting of the bottle bank at Whitebridge. At their last meeting the community council voted to relocate the bottle bank if a suitable site could be found and if the facilities would be regularly serviced. It could be that neither of these conditions can be met.



# On a Wilder Note

## Wildlife in the Strath



Having been asked to contribute a short article for the Bulletin on our local wildlife, I sit at my PC, wondering where to start. As usual, I stare out of the window, and what better place to look for inspiration? I am very fortunate in having a fine view of Loch Mhor. Not 30 yards offshore a pair of red-throated divers float serenely, framed by the reflection of Meall Donn above Farraline. These divers return to Stratherrick every year, raising their young on small lochans. Like many other birds, divers are unable to nest on Loch Mhor because of fluctuating water-levels. The drawdown still has a tremendous impact on the value of the loch for wildlife, and I often wonder how Loch Farraline might have looked when the school was first built in the 1870s. But there have also been gains in our breeding fauna. A redwing has been seen and heard singing in Errogie during May and early June, and is very likely nesting. Redwings are a common breeding bird in Scandinavia, visiting Britain in the winter, and sharing the berry crop with fieldfares and blackbirds. In 1925, a pair were found to have stayed on and bred in Sutherland. Since then, breeding numbers have built up to a few dozen pairs in the Highlands in most years. The

song is quite characteristic - a loud monotonous "cooeee!" repeated 3 or more times, sung from a high perch. Listen out for it.

Although not on the coast, Stratherrick sees the occasional unusual bird passing through on migration. On 27th May, I was asked to come and identify an unfamiliar bird which had shown up two days earlier. It turned out to be a Greenland Wheatear, stopping off to re-fuel before travelling on to its breeding grounds in the far north. Although only a subspecies of our common wheatear, the Greenland race is quite distinctive - larger, more brightly-coloured and with a more upright stance than the race which breeds in Stratherrick.

Birds are not our only migrant visitors. Migrant insects also show up every summer in the strath. The most frequent are red admiral butterflies, often seen feeding on buddleia bushes, and the silver Y moth, but the fast-flying painted lady is annual, and we were visited once by a humming-bird hawkmoth. These migrants are most common in a hot summer, so if the forecasts are right, watch out for exotic visitors in your garden!

John Parrott

*It is hoped to make these Notes a regular feature in the Bulletin. If you have any interesting or unusual observations, topical or historical, please let John know on 486426.*

## HERE'S A WALK FROM BUDDY

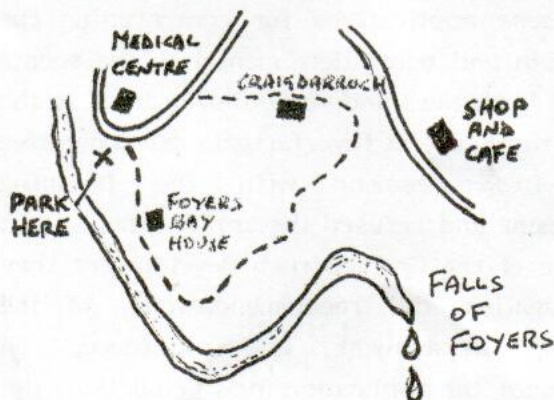
This is a pleasant half-hour's walk beginning at the bus shelter near the Medical Centre in Lower Foyers. There is good space here to park your car. Walk up the road and then take the road to the right sign-posted 'Foyers Bay House' until you branch off to the right into a path at the Bay House gate. This high path skirts the gorge of the Foyers river and in autumn the colours of the deciduous trees are lovely. Flocks of long-tailed tits can sometimes be seen twittering in the tree canopy here. The path goes on through Scots pines and rhododendrons and follows newly built steps up to a promontary giving good views over the gorge to the Falls of Foyers. A succession of steep steps leads up towards the shop and cafe which we follow, but our path leads left, still under the canopy of Scots pine down steeply past Craigdarroch and down onto the gravel road lined with lime trees and on to the Lower Foyers road leading past the line of cottages called 'Clubfield' and from there to the bus shelter.



BUT..... is it a

*torrent or a little piddle*

Work has been going on in the Falls of Foyers area constructing stout steps in areas which formerly consisted of steep gravelly slopes. Highland Council is doing excellent work and locals and tourists alike will feel all the safer on the walks either side of the gorge. A pity the Hydro Board has to deprive the Falls of water in their production of electricity now and again leaving people viewing a little piddle instead of a majestic water fall!





# 'THE KNOCKIE TRUST'

The Knockie trust, was founded during the early 1800's by the Frasers of Knockie to relieve poverty and distress in the area. We do not know how the trust was managed in the early days, but during the 1900's the local parish minister disbursed money to those who were judged to be in hardship. Because the parish minister acted in this capacity, many people thought wrongly, that the funds of the trust were only available to those associated with the Church of Scotland.

In 1985 the Knockie Trust was re-framed, the then parish minister, Rev. N. Archer thought the task of managing the Trust was more suited to a committee with Trustees. A committee of Trustees was formed with 3 Trustees representing the community, and 3 Trustees holding position because of their role in the community - the local G.P., the local parish minister and the chairman of the community council. The area in which the funds of the Knockie Trust could be used was defined as within the boundaries of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council.

The current Trustees are :-

Chairman: Mr W. Batchen, Foyers;

Mr H. Macnally, Whitebidge;

Dr G. MacIntosh, Foyers (local G.P.);

Rev. J. Christie, Foyers (local Parish Minister);

Mr J.W. Campbell, Gorthleck (chairman, com. council);

Mr A.C. Fraser, Lynemhor Lodge, Gorthleck (secretary/treasurer)

The income the Knockie Trust receives comes from a portfolio of shares which are invested by stockbrokers. The policy of the trust is to have a portfolio which allows for a reasonable amount of annual return along with capital growth. Annual income is usually about £4,000 p.a. and to illustrate capital growth the value of the fund at April 1988 was approximately £65,000 compared with April 1999 when the approximate value stood at £135,000.

The income is normally used for a) coal and electricity stamps for senior citizens, widows and widowers at Christmas time. b) contribution towards the senior citizens summer outing. c) contributions towards senior citizens Christmas parties and d) donations to both Stratherrick and Foyers Primary Schools, South Loch Ness Play School, Cross-Roads scheme and other minor contributions.

Sometimes we are approached by members of the public, who have moved into the area and are keen to access the Knockie Trust. It is worthwhile to point out that there is a four year residence period before entitlement to Knockie Trust funds. Individuals who feel that they are in hardship should feel free to approach any of the trustees in confidence. Observations and suggestions are welcome.

*Angus C. Fraser Secretary/Treasurer*

## .....AND MORE ON KNOCKIE

The Highland Festival production of the 'Captains Collection' in Stratherrick Hall on the 2nd June was attended by well over 100 people. The evening was a wonderful mixture of drama, dance, music and singing as well as allowing us to understand a little more of the extraordinary character of Simon Fraser, his 'Knockie' collection and how much he contributed to the world-wide recognition of Highland music.

.....

Following the theme of music making, in Stratherrick, Mrs Margaret Campbell of Gorthleck has come across three instances of this recently. In her role as Trophy Convener for Inverness Music Festival Association she has discovered that the Carnegie Trophy, awarded in the annual competition for country church choirs, was won in 1935 by Stratherrick and Foyers; a modern psalm tune, composed by John Campbell of Inverness, called "Stratherrick" is sung in her local church; and in a 100 year old book of dance tunes, lent to her by Mrs Campbell of Aberchalder, there is one called .....yes, "Stratherrick".

## Inconsistencies in Planning Arena

On Friday 2nd July members of Highland Council Area Planning Committee attended two site meetings in the Foyers and Inverfarigaig areas. First to be considered was the application by Mr & Mrs MacDonald for a house at Inverfarigaig and second, the application by Mr & Mrs Munro of Craigdarroch for 15 chalets in Foyers. In both instances the Planning Department of Highland Council had recommended to the committee that they turn down these applications for contravening the local plan and being detrimental to the scenic value of Loch Ness and surrounding area. In the case of the house at Inverfarigaig the Committee voted in agreement with the Planning Department and refused the application, and in the case of the Craigdarroch development they voted against the recommendation of the Planning Department and approved, on amendment, the application for 13 chalets.



# A COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION/ TRUST - WHAT IS IT ? DO WE WANT IT ?

Everywhere in the Highlands 'communities' are trying to 'help themselves'. Its becoming common to create a 'community' association or a 'community' trust. It makes sense; there is money out there to be accessed for many things if the 'community' has the energy. The community council spend a great deal of their time having to react to decisions made by Highland Council, (responding to papers, considering planning applications, thinking about road repairs etc.), a community association or trust can be proactive i.e. act to implement projects within the community. Many communities have highlighted a project for which the people locally felt they needed e.g. Laggan and its television, Abriachan and its wood. They have then created their community trust/association to access funds. In the case of Laggan community they have gone on to run the shop as a co-operative, have a huge new hall, community woodland projects, publications and a sawmill. In Abriachan the woodland was purchased but then the hall, newsletter, web site for tourism and many other things have come under the umbrella of the one charitable body. In theory

this cuts down on the numbers of committees and meetings. It should also be said that jobs can be created within this framework. Does now has a 'Dores Beach Project' - a joint project with its own committee for accessing funds. They have T shirts for sale with all proceeds going to the project. (Price £8.50 and available from Dores Inn.) At the present time Highland Council has a 75% grant available for up to £5000 for any community project concerned with the environment and or culture of the area. And the Scottish Parliament is setting up a land fund for communities to access in the case of land purchase.

There was an old man called Eric,  
Who had a fine house in Stratherrick,  
He made lots of money,  
By selling local honey,  
Oh! Those busg, busy bees of Stratherrick



by Sophie Chattington

## GARDENING NOTES



Oh my knees, oh my back; yes, its that time of year again when gardeners spend hours doing battle against the 'successful' weeds like Hairy Bittercress and Whitlow Grass which year upon year infest our gardens. My son-in-law calls weeding 'under gardening'! I once heard a BBC Gardeners' World broadcast in which the panel informed a member of the audience that hairy bittercress could produce up to 900 seeds in one flowering and eight generations in a good season, so what hope have mortals like us against such fertility. Some things are good though; for instance have you noticed how the humble bluebell is slowly spreading through bits of woodland and grassy road verges - especially in the Foyers area.

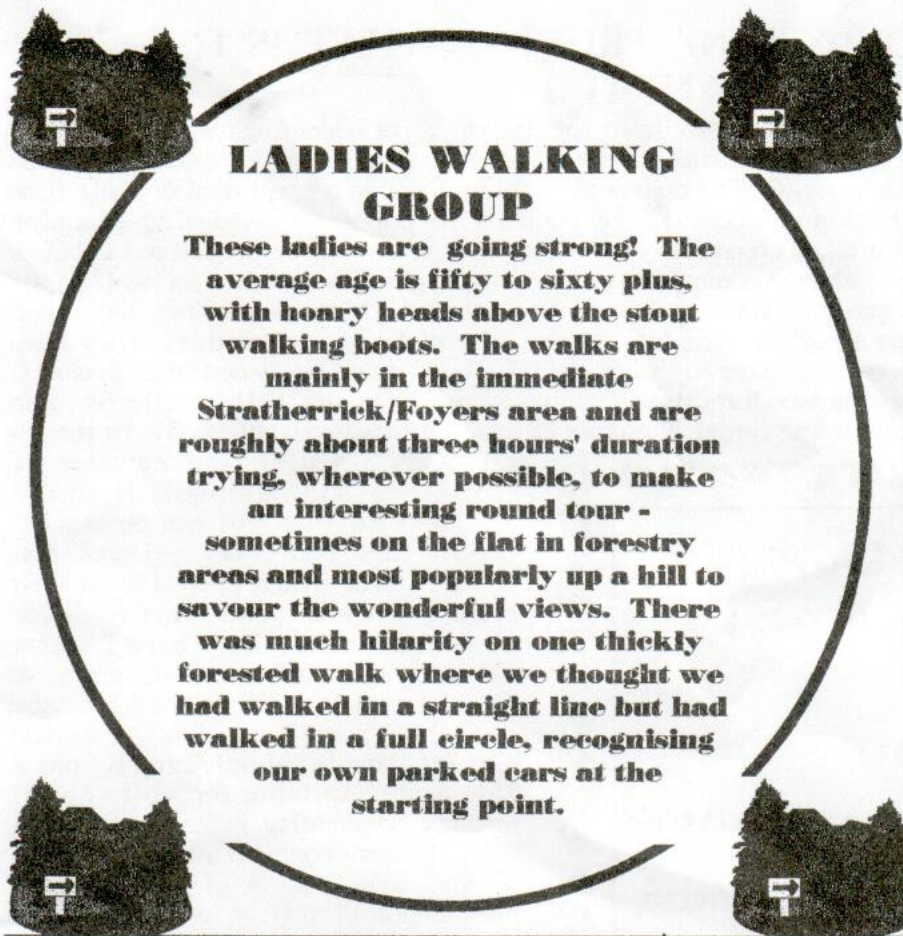
In my newly cleared plot I have planted a little herb garden, and one Tuesday recently I was recommended by Mr. Nicol (he of the fish van) to try some Dill, which I have never tasted, only knowing it in pickled gherkins. Just goes to show that I have yet to learn to cook, having spent all these years merely getting meals ready.

*Maureen Evans*

## DISAPPEARING GRAVESTONES

Some years ago the old table graves (mostly Fraser) in Boleskine Cemetery were demolished and the actual gravestones placed flat on the ground. The excuse, given at the time, being to facilitate grass-cutting. Cemeteries all around the Highlands were officially "vandalised" in this way. Now grass cuttings have accumulated on the gravestones encouraging the growth of moss, and the ancient lettering is almost obliterated. Grass is also creeping over the sides so that eventually the stones will disappear from view. Frasers visit here from all parts of the globe searching for their ancestors and these gravestones are their history. If anyone feels strongly about this issue please give Buddy MacDougal a ring on 486 366





## LADIES WALKING GROUP

These ladies are going strong! The average age is fifty to sixty plus, with honary heads above the stout walking boots. The walks are mainly in the immediate Stratherrick/Foyers area and are roughly about three hours' duration trying, wherever possible, to make an interesting round tour - sometimes on the flat in forestry areas and most popularly up a hill to savour the wonderful views. There was much hilarity on one thickly forested walk where we thought we had walked in a straight line but had walked in a full circle, recognising our own parked cars at the starting point.

## HALL TO CONTINUE AS NORMAL

The application to the Lottery Fund for the upgrading of the hall is to be sent off in August. The Lottery Fund need three to five months to process the application, so the hall committee has decided that provided the application is accepted, work will not commence on the interior of the hall until the Spring of 2000 at the earliest and possibly not until the summer recess. Winter activities in the hall will be able to proceed as normal. There is a slim chance that the application to the Lottery Fund may fail. If this happens the hall committee will be asking everyone what to do next! For information contact the chairman Hugh Nicol 486350



## PLAY SCHOOL MOVE LIKELY



The South Loch Ness Playschool which has been based at Stratherrick Hall is looking for a new home while the hall is being upgraded. After scouting round the area it seems likely that the staff and children will be able to avoid disruption from building work by leasing one of the industrial units at Foyers from Inverness and Nairn Enterprise. Both the Highland Pre-school service and the Social Work department are supportive of the plan and funding is available for alterations to make the unit comply with fire and environmental health standards. So, if the unit passes inspection and change of use, it may be possible for the playschool to open in its temporary premises in time for the start of the new school year in August.

Information on registering children for the playschool from Susan Fraser 486242 or Catriona Fraser 486287

## 70th ANNIVERSARY OF FOYERS W.R.I.

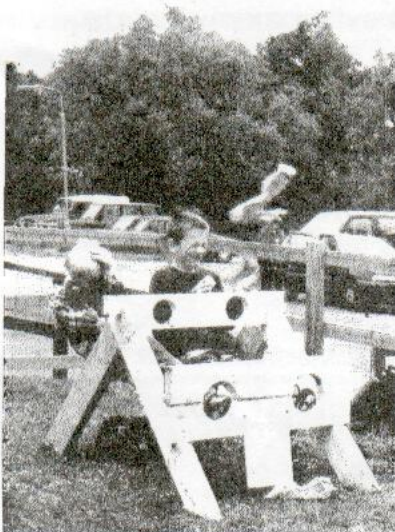
The Foyers W.R.I. had a most enjoyable evening of High Tea and a special cake at the Haughdale Hotel, Inverness in June to celebrate their 70th Anniversary. Presentations were made to Sadie Hipkin for her work as President for the last 20 years and to Marjorie Stoddart, for occupying various posts within the W.R.I. as well as her birthday. Other long standing members were present, notably Mrs A. McKenzie and Mrs E. Scott, who recently celebrated her 97th birthday.

*Linda Cooper (Press Secretary)*

## HELP HELP

If we are to continue the Bulletin in the long run we do need help, most of all we need someone who could take on the advertising side of things. Make sure we keep the trade directory up to date, work out the cost of advertisements, help Ian Nisbet (the treasurer) to send out invoices. Its a tiny job but none of us can add up properly and Ian hasn't got too much time to devote to us. Please, please come forward if you would like to be involved. If we want to continue the little paper we will need to evolve two separate teams - one for keeping the thing running (i.e. finance and distribution) and the other for producing it (i.e. coming up with stories/articles and getting it to the printer). Thanks as usual go to Ray Cooper for his printing facilities.





## Fun at the School Sale

Despite the wet and windy weather, around £550 was made at the annual school sale held in the Hall up at Stratherrick. Lots of fun was

had by all with a pets parade and miniature garden competitions. One of the most popular events was the wet stocks: the foolhardy being subjected to dripping cloths or buckets of water thrown over them. Many thanks to all who helped make the day a success.

*Heather Parrott*



### PEOPLE NEWS ...

Christine Smith has decided to stand down from the community council after five years of service. In her place the council decided to co-opt a new member from Inverfarigaig - Rory Robinson.

Eddie Fraser of Knockcarrach, after 33 years as ranger for the Forestry Commission, is laying down his gun. Because of a shoulder injury he sustained some time ago, he has been given lighter duties and is now assisting with timber harvesting. We will still be able to wave to him as he passes in his landrover as part of his new job is keeping a check on picnic sites.

John Joyce is now serving as a member of the Highland Health Council. This is a newly formed body made up of 20 volunteers, serviced by 8 staff and based in Alness. It is primarily a 'user group' drawn from all ages, areas and experience which hopes to be able to respond to the current concerns within the population.

### **The Start of the River Foyers**

A shallow rocky river bed,  
With pebbles, sand and weeds,  
Surrounded by a pine forest  
And some old birch trees.  
Sheep graze on the hills around it,  
On the poor soil with short grass and reeds.

Rising above Loch Killin  
Is a tall, steep cliff,  
Where wild goats graze  
And hide among the trees.

But the real source  
Of the Foyers River  
Are just little trickles  
Draining the Monadhliath Mountains,  
That race down the mountain side  
To reach Loch Killin.

Charles Paveley, Foyers School

**NEW VENTURE FOR 'ANGELS'.** Nigel Hensby and Beverley Lavender whose home has been Leadclune Farmhouse, Torness, for the past eighteen months, have taken the lease on the cafe at Foyers, adjoining the Foyers Shop, for the summer season. They are running the cafe alongside their business (Angel's Factory) selling a plethora of their own hand-crafted mirrors, picture frames and ornaments (including angels - hence the name!) and a selection of Nigel's paintings. Beverley bakes a good selection of cakes and her home-made soups are worth tasting, while Nigel is ever-ready with service with a smile. We wish them well in their venture.



# TRADE DIRECTORY

## ALL JOBS

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486400

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Ian Munro - 486 400 or  
01463 240413

## NATIVE TREE NURSERY

Jane O'Donovan - 486 355

## PICTURE FRAMING

Hugh Nicol - 486 350

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The Foyers Store - 486 233

## WATERCOLOURS & ART

### CLASSES

Ros Rowell - 01463 751314

## WAX PICTURES

Betty Brailsford - 486 254

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readers to place their business locally.  
Please support our advertisers.*

## next issue of BB October

Contributions or ideas by **20th Sept** to:  
Buddy MacDougal, Foyers 486366  
Sandy McLure, Gorthleck 486435  
Francis Abbot, W/bridge, 486645  
Jane O'Donovan, Gorthleck 486355  
Rory Robinson, In'farigaig 486669  
or leave at the Foyers shop marking  
envelope BB

## ADVERTISING

£15 for four issues in the Trade  
Directory  
Display advertising: £1.50 per cm  
column; two line adverts £1

## **Countryside Ranger Guided Walks.**

**Thursday 22nd July** 2-4.30pm - Foyers Frog Frenzy!

Meet in the car park by the village shop, Foyers.

**Tuesday 3rd August** 6-9 pm - Wandering in Wade's

Footsteps, Fort Augustus. Meet at Lower Culachy, just off the  
Ardachy Road, Fort Augustus (grid ref: NH 377 074)

**Thursday 5th August** 2 - 4 pm - Falls of Foyers.

Meet in the car park by Foyers shop..

## **FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD**

Stratherrick Hall. Meeting in  
preparation to distribute a  
special millenium edition of  
Lukes gospel to every home in  
the parish. Details from Martyn  
Bateman 486273

## **HARVEST SUPPER AND DANCE**

Stratherrick Hall. Friday  
**October 1st 7p.m.**

Music by John Henderson of  
Fort Augustus on piano  
accordian: admission by  
donation - proceeds for  
Christian Aid. Details from  
Martyn Bateman 486273

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wanted good home** for  
cute, spayed, timid, tabby cat,  
approx. 2 yrs old, sorry no dogs  
or children. Must be kept  
housebound for up to 4-6  
weeks until used to her new  
home. Caring owners only.  
Ring Barbara 486 294

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CORRECTIONS**

The BB apologies for  
several errors in the last  
issue. Our apologies go to  
Dulsie Macaskill for spelling  
her name wrong. To Ian  
Nisbet at the shop for  
renaming him after the  
journalist Ian Hyslop. And  
for a misinterpretation of  
the facts concerning the  
'Fatality at the Falls' - it was  
not Dr Lesley Mackintosh  
who attended the dying man  
but nurse Caskie who was  
present at the time.

## **FIRST MOVE IN NEW PARLIAMENT**

The new Minister of  
Justice, Mr Jim Wallace  
intends to introduce early  
legislation to abolish the  
feudal system. This is  
based on a Report published  
by the Scottish Law  
Commission in February.  
The report is available on  
the Scottish Office website  
at [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk) or  
The Stationery Office, 71  
Lothian Road, Edinburgh,  
EH3 9AZ. Price £22.50



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**Material wanted for  
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especially letters.**

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wanted.

**Just things!**



Thanks to Ray Cooper for  
the printing