



A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A GOOD NEW YEAR !

Kiltarlity News

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New sawmill site development

Though Kiltarlity Community Council has failed in two attempts to halt developments at the former Balgate Sawmill site, the opposition of local residents and the Community Council led to the imposition of conditions aimed to slow the pace of development. Now all parties are considering the possibility of an amendment that may be acceptable to the local community.

At a formal hearing in Inverness in September 2007 the developers' initial application for 27 houses was rejected by the Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey Planning Applications and Review Committee after our two councillors on the Committee, Mrs Margaret Davidson and Mr Hamish Wood moved that the application be refused on the grounds: that the development would be in conflict with Settlement Expansion policy of the Inverness Local Plan and

- would result in an unacceptable housing increase in the village
- would result in a loss of amenity for the residents of Pine Road
- would result in unsuitable layout and house design.

Developers William Gray submitted a second application for the reduced number of 23 houses, improving the layout and design next to Pine Road, scrapping the flats which had been in the first application and reducing the number of affordable houses proposed. Most Pine Road residents did not object to this application, but the Community Council maintained its opposition on the grounds that the Local Plan should be adhered to and rapid over-development resisted, especially as the total number of houses intended for the complete development was unknown.

But despite the efforts of our two Councillor members and supporters, the Plan-

ning Applications and Review Committee in August 2008 gave the revised proposals for the sawmill site the green light. William Gray had also submitted an appeal against the refusal of their first application and in September 2008 the Scottish Government's Reporter overturned Highland Council's decision, leaving the developer with complete freedom of choice to go ahead with whichever application he chose.

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Entrance to be unlocked for new village homes?

Party time again



Some of the guests enjoy the afternoon helped by a young artiste



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Christmas Party goes with a swing

This year's Christmas Party followed a familiar pattern—of folk getting together and having a very enjoyable time. Our photographer was there, so we have the proof.

Kiltarlity Community Council hosts the Party but could not do it without the help of others. We are extremely grateful to the following: Kiltarlity WRI for the excellent catering; the many local businesses and residents who made generous donations; Torridon, who provided first class music throughout; the talented individual performers and the choir, supported by Graham Bell; piper Craig MacRitchie; the Hall Association who made the Hall available to us; all those who helped both the organising committee and the WRI set up and run the event; and S Claus himself of course.

A very special thankyou must go to the organising committee of Dorothy Ward, Maureen Hanson, Karen Ferguson and Graham Bell.

About 60 guests attended this year, although it was disappointing that quite a number who had hoped to be there did not make it to join the fun and collect their gifts from Santa.



More young entertainers and (below) Torridon



Some more satisfied guests and (below) some of the people making it all happen



This year's solo piper, Craig MacRitchie



Inverness Council for Voluntary Services

The Inverness Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) are proud to have launched a new initiative throughout the Inverness-shire area. In recent months the Council have launched a series of surgery events, where anyone who runs or is interested in running a voluntary organisation was invited to pop along to their local surgery for any help they needed.

CVS Inverness provides advice on a variety of matters from legislation to writing constitutions, as well as helping organisations to source funding for their costs or projects. It doesn't matter what type of organisation, everything from a local sports team to a community book group, they can help you!

Surgeries have so far been held in Merkinch, Beauly, Tomatin, Ardersier, Culloden, Charleston, Dalneigh, Drumadrochit, Fort Augustus, and Hilton. Details of further surgeries will be released in due course.

There is no need to book to come along to these surgeries, just drop-in at the times shown, usually forenoon, afternoon or early evening. And if you are unable to make it along to any of the surgeries, just get in touch and CVS can arrange a meeting at a time and date to suit you. You can contact CVS on (01463) 714 303, by e-mail: anne@cvsinverness.org.uk or visit the website:

www.cvsinverness.org.uk

Footnote:

As mentioned in our last *Kiltarlity News* the Community Council would like to remind readers that Community Council members will welcome approaches for advice or assistance from any local resident whether on an individual or community basis. For example, the Community Council may be able to provide some finance for local projects either from its annual grant of around £750 or by applying for additional funds to Highland Council or other funding bodies. Individual members may be able to help with matters such as official letters, forms and documents, or put people in touch with an appropriate source of assistance. Any personal approach to a Council member will be treated with total confidentiality and will only be discussed in Council meetings with the clear agreement of the person who has made contact.

Campaigners plan to 'pylonpressure' during long wait for report

Scotland Before Pylons (SBP), the body co-ordinating all the groups involved in the Beaully Denny line Public Inquiry, now estimates it could be as late as October 2009 before the Beaully Denny Report becomes public.

According to a recent SBP statement "The outcome of the Inquiry is some months away - possibly over a year. We understand that the Reporters are still scheduled to pass their Recommendation to Scottish Ministers at the turn of the year. The Reporters' Recommendation will not be made public. There will be no indication of the outcome until the Ministers conclude their deliberations and go public which is likely to be between June and October next year."

Although some renewables campaigners insist that the giant line must go ahead without any of the mitigation measures proposed by groups such as Kiltarlity and the other Community Councils, local campaigners are opposed to any attempts to prejudge the decision of the Reporters. They point out that the huge amount of wind and tidal power which, it is being claimed, could be produced in the north and north-west of Scotland, would require two or more additional lines of similar scale alongside the proposed Beaully Denny 400 Kv giant line, and that undersea cabling, already being seriously considered by bodies such as the Crown Estates, is a more realistic option, and one which might well render the Beaully Denny enlargement unnecessary.

Although local campaigners have routinely been labelled "opponents" of the Beaully Denny line, they have consistently maintained that they have not opposed the principle of a new line, if it is proved to be necessary, but say that it should be laid underground through the beautiful and well populated area of Kiltarlity.

In spite of repeated allegations of undergrounding being prohibitively expensive, SBP report that various European

Local Inquiry to be held on Core Path Plan

Highland Council's Inverness And Nairn Draft Core Paths Plan, which includes Kiltarlity, has been approved for submission to Scottish Government Ministers.

But because a number of objections have not been resolved it will be necessary to run a local inquiry. A Reporter will now be appointed. And the date and format of the inquiry should be known within about six months.

As far as Kiltarlity is concerned it has been agreed to recommend in the plan that paths in the Ruttie Wood and Boblainy Forest are recognised as part of the Wider Access Network, rather than being designated as Core Paths. This means that these routes will appear on Highland Council path maps but they will not be signposted, or specially marked on Ordnance Survey maps as Core Paths. Eilean Aigas Estate and the Forestry Commission are happy to have walkers on these paths but were unwilling on this occasion to have them given Core Path designation. However, it is likely that the Community Council will want to have their status reconsidered at the next review.

Full information on the Core Paths plan and the objections and comments received can be found on the Highland Council website: (www.highland.gov.uk)

countries have now accepted that it is necessary and practical to lay high voltage lines underground for considerable distances. For example, there is a current proposal in Germany which could result in almost 250 km of the lines being put underground. The additional costs are expected to add 1 Euro per year to household bills but the costs will be spread across all German consumers.

And overhead power cables which have been spoiling the landscape at a Lake District beauty spot have been removed. About 2 km (1.2 miles) of power lines and pylons have been taken down in the picturesque Martindale Valley and been replaced with underground cables. The scheme - the first of its kind in the north Lakes - was carried out by energy firms United Utilities and Electricity North West.

SBP aim to ensure that Scottish Ministers are well informed when they consider the Reporter's recommendations. They state: "Scotland Before Pylons can and will continue to 'Pylontheppressure'. Over the coming months it is essential for all groups to explain to MSPs, MPs, and even MEPs, the potential impact of the SSE proposals. These representatives of our interests can and should be encouraged to pass on their constituents' views to Government Ministers both in Edinburgh and at Westminster. They can, and should, influence the Ministerial decision".

See "Further massive extension for Balblair" Page 20

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These pylons in England have been considered a "blot on the landscape" and not fit to be seen by visitors to the area.

Kiltarlity's Lovat Scouts

by Addie Mackenzie

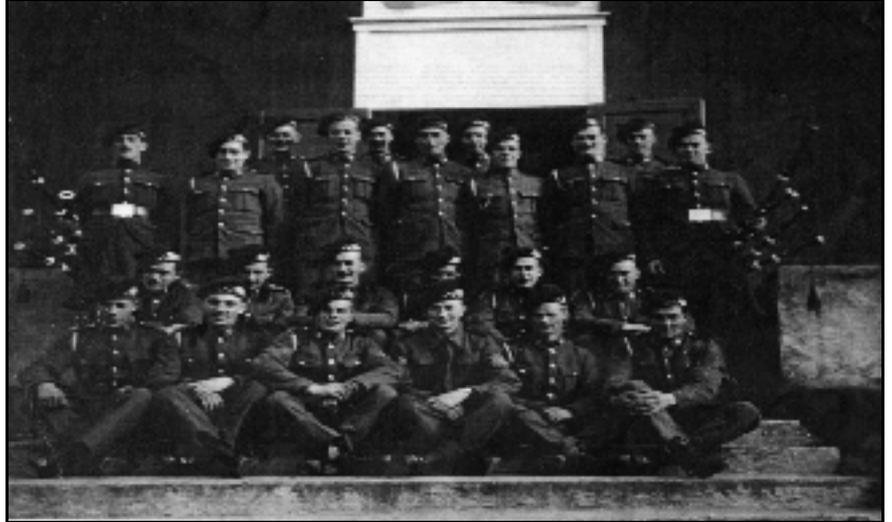
On attaining the age of 18 years, I volunteered for service in the Seaforth Highlanders regiment and joined them on the 10th January 1942 to complete the initial basic training at Fort George, Inverness-shire.

I was born within the parish of Kiltarlity, adjacent to the village of Beauly, the "home" of the Lovat Scouts. As most of my friends, and one brother, were serving with that regiment, I duly applied for a transfer, which was effected in April, 1942.

As no more than a young lad, I was excited, and not unduly scared, of the prospects which faced myself and my comrades. The realisation that duty demanded that you had to kill and or be killed in conflict was mitigated by the belief that we had to fight back against an evil aggressor.

The Faeroe Islands were occupied by the Lovat Scouts in 1940, following the fall of Denmark, the power that had hitherto governed this island group. They were known as the "Islands of Maybe" due to frequent sea-mists, and the resultant uncertainties of travel between islands. The Faeroese people welcomed the new British military presence, especially the Lovat Scouts, mainly Scottish Highlanders, with whom they shared background and cultural elements. Indeed many surviving Scouts return frequently for holidays, where they reside and meet with many old wartime friends. The writer has just recently returned from such a pleasant excursion, as he had made several friends due to the wartime and postwar associations that followed.

The regiment had returned to Scotland by May 1942, disembarking at Invergordon, and then were based at Nairn. During the month of August we were issued with new uniforms and despatched to Balmoral to assume protection of the King and Queen. Following this brief period, we commenced training as mountain troops at Glen Clunie and Braemar, and thereafter at the Snowdon range in North Wales, where we became adept in rock-climbing techniques. At this point, "hush hush" movements were occurring, leading the troopers to believe that we were to go abroad for active duty. We duly boarded the SS Mauretania at Liverpool and when at sea were advised that the ultimate destination would be the Canadian Rockies, for ski-training, with participation in an invasion of Norway the objective.



The journey across the Atlantic took five days. As the troopship was a relatively fast vessel, no naval escort was required. Nevertheless, the ship engaged in constant "zigzagging" manoeuvres to confuse a potential enemy U-boat presence. We also manned anti-aircraft guns in shifts. The journey was uneventful, barring a suspected collision, which caused some alarm. The mess dishes fell from their shelves, and troops were thrown from their hammocks. To the present day, we have not learnt whether the ship struck an ice-floe or a submarine.

The ship was soon to sail into New York Harbour. I could never forget our first view of America, with the Statue of Liberty and the city sky-scrapers brightly lit, a stark contrast to a blacked out Britain. We then travelled by railway for four days to reach western Canada, and were amazed by the quality, quantity and nature of the food-stuffs given to us - fruits, chocolates, etc, that were subject to severe rationing in the UK.

Despite the ongoing horrendous circumstances that dictated our goals, it must be stated that it was felt by all involved, that the Canadian experience was a truly memorable and wonderful one. We were stationed respectively at Banff and Jasper, both in the province of Alberta.

On the 9th June 1944 we arrived back in Scotland, and half the regiment at a time enjoyed a brief embarkation leave. Exactly one month later, we were leaving Glasgow by troopship, as part of a large convoy. Arriving in the Bay of Biscay, we were informed that we were

Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Scouts

From left. Back -3rd T MacKenzie, Drumreach, Kirkhill; 8th J Sutherland, Beaufort; 9th Ewen MacMillan, Kirkhill. Middle— 1st Malcolm Maclean, Camaultmuir, 2nd J Livingstone, Bruiach. Front—1st J Mackenzie, Allarburn, 5th F Chisholm, Caiplich

to join the 8th Army in Italy, and landed at the port of Naples, where the city was now extensively damaged, with many ruined buildings.

Within three weeks we were in action in the Apennine Mountains, north of Florence, as the 4th Indian Division along with the Gurkha Regiment. Going up into the front lines was a frightening experience. We travelled in the highly mobile jeep, supplies and munitions being conveyed by pack mule. The arid conditions meant that the enemy was able to identify our locations, as any progress made entailed the raising of dust clouds. We sustained several casualties before reaching the front line. We were employed tactically, being mainly involved in reconnaissance patrols in "no man's land" and behind the enemy lines.

Amidst these adverse conditions my mind often dwelt on the relative contentment of my prior life and some memories of the peaceful existence in a Highland village - going to church on Sunday and the honeysuckle that lined the route. I vowed then that, if a survivor of the conflict, I would be happy to remain permanently in that place. (As it happened this was not subsequently the case, as my career involved my resettlement in other areas of the country.)

The ultimate boost to our morale came

when the German troops retreated across the Po valley and VE day was declared. We advanced freely across the Alps into Austria, a very beautiful country, with streams and rivers resembling those in our native Highlands, which we fished whilst contemplating our homeward journey.

Alas this did not occur, as the regiment was flown to Greece, landing at Salonika. We were to participate in the ongoing civil war, based in the infamous Struma Valley. Ironically, this is an area in which the Lovat Scouts fought during the First World War, renowned for the presence of mosquito and the dreaded malaria it caused. (Following my return home, I discussed the area with Lovat Scouts of that era, who clearly remembered the terrain. Placenames adopted by them, Rabbitwood, Pheasantwood, Grousemoor, etc were reminiscent of their native Highlands, and most officers were indeed lairds of the Highland "landed class".

After approximately four months, demobilisation began. The selection process was based on age, and therefore most who had joined in 1939 were the first to be repatriated and discharged. I learnt eventually that I had been placed on the demobilisation list of July 1946, and travelled in a contingent overland through Greece, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and France with the Cameron Barracks in Inverness our final destination. I duly notified my family of my return and two days later was playing for the Lovat shinty team at the popular Glenurquhart Games. A swift transformation had taken place. I was now home at last, pursuing a favourite sport and also visualising a new beginning in civilian life.

The Lovat Scouts were a unique military unit in many ways. Recruitment had been localised in the main to harness particular skills, and thus as many as 20-30 individuals could belong to the same parish. This afforded us collectively during these war years a high volume of news

from a home area. With similar interests and backgrounds prevailing the natural spirit of comradeship was strongly reinforced. These affinities were recognised officially for some 50 years after the War, with Annual Reunions taking place in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness. The Lovat Scouts Association disbanded in 1996 and such formal reunions ceased.

Unofficial informal gatherings are still held each year in Inverness, involving former Scouts with their relatives and friends usually involving some 60 people. A meal is enjoyed, other refreshments taken, and old times are discussed. Some will have travelled from Southern Scotland or England for the event. Lovat Scouts tend to demonstrate a high level of loyalty and enduring regard for each other, a legacy of their common experiences and comradeship.

This level of friendship and mutual loyalty has been at the heart of every reunion and meeting held. Many have maintained regular contact with fellow Scouts for over half a century. During the holiday period it is not unusual that a knock on one's door will indicate a visit from a comrade from another region of the country. The number of topics that could be discussed would be inexhaustible.

The book -"History of the Lovat Scouts" by M. Leslie Melville, a former commanding officer of the regiment, depicts a humorous example of these attachments and common interests. On return to civilian life, a Scout with an office background chose employment as a shepherd on a Sutherland estate. This required his family to live alone in a remote glen, some distance from the Tongue to Lairg road. One evening his return from the hill became long overdue. His wife declared to their six year old son, "I wonder where dad has got to." The boy pointed at the far distance up the glen and said, "He must have met an old Scout."

On reflection I found it easy to adapt again to former ways after war service, and personally became more ambitious regarding career options, as the four years had actually broadened one's horizons, and somehow demonstrated that possibilities could indeed exist, an awareness that had perhaps eluded me in my pre-war life. But also I became much more appreciative of the wonders of nature, and many of the "simpler things in life".

Colin MacRae, Eilean Aigas (later seriously injured and awarded the George Medal) and companion at Canada US border in the Rockies.



Sawmill site Development

Continued from Page 1

However, both approvals now contained a strict requirement to build in agreed phases. Where the first application was concerned, the Reporter had accepted that the rate of expansion should be properly controlled (as envisaged in the Local Plan) and the first phase was to contain "no more than 8 units". But he dismissed the residents' concerns about building height and gave his blessing to the erection of two storey houses immediately behind Pine Road.

And if William Gray were to go ahead with the second, 23 house, approval, Highland Council had imposed a limit of 6 houses being constructed in the first phase. The Community Council had stated a preference for the second application which had one and a half storey houses next to Pine Road, but the Reporter's decision means there is nothing now to prevent two storey houses going up on the other side of Pine Road's back garden fences. However, an amended application has now been submitted involving a first phase of 13 affordable houses and one other house being built behind Pine Drive. **Whereas this is a larger first phase than those stipulated by the Reporter or Highland Council, it is understood that none of the houses would be higher than a storey and a half.**

The Government's Reporter has left the Community Council and Pine Road residents with very little choice and it looks as if a proposal for 14 medium height houses is now the best show in town. Resident Caroline Roy reflects the general feeling when she says, "We have always believed the developers will get their way. I would agree to a new proposal along the lines of the second application – simply because this would be preferable to the original proposal with its two storey houses."

And at its meeting on 19th November Community Council members heard that residents were in agreement with this point of view and that Cairn Housing Association would be able to finance the 13 affordable houses – a key consideration in current "credit crunch" conditions. The Community Council has agreed in principle that it would support such a proposal provided that a scheme of allocation of affordable houses could be agreed which took account of local needs. It also agreed to meet with Cairn to discuss this as soon as possible.

The key factor causing the Reporter and the Council coming down finally on the side of the developer is the fact that the sawmill site is now a disused industrial "brownfield" site and, in principle, a better site for new housing than, for example, the Glebe site. But because the Glebe was available for housing before the sawmill site the upper limit for expansion under the Local Plan had been reached before William Gray's application was submitted. However, the Community Council has defended its view that this did not justify over-development and that a much slower rate of expansion was in the interests of the community.

Twenty-eight years' service to Kiltarlity

Kiltarlity turned out on 13 September to mark the occasion of Mr Graham Bell's retirement after 28 years as Headteacher of Tomnacross Primary School

During an extremely enjoyable evening there were presentations from Tomnacross school parents and children, Councillor Helen Carmichael, Kiltarlity Community Council, Clifford Cook from the Education Service and Willie Ross's Bus Company.

Music was provided by Jock Fraser's Band with extra musical events from Jimmy Gallacher, Bruce Nairne and Fraser Gallacher and from Craig MacRitchie on pipes who also piped in Graham and Linda when they arrived.



Graham looks back

I came to Tomnacross in September 1980. That was the year the first computers appeared in schools – every primary school was given a BBC computer, with a stunning capacity of 32K. You had to load programmes from a tape recorder – those were the days! With the computer came a book, which contained a little story by an American computer guru called Simon Pappert. The story went something like –

Some time in the future, a woman is walking along a beach in California. She is the chief editor of a multinational news agency. In her hand she holds a small device with a 2" viewing screen. With this device she can speak to her editors in New York, London, Paris, Sydney and Hong Kong. She can view photographs taken moments ago by her photographers in locations all over the world. She can take part in world-wide conferences of editors, finance managers and reporters as she walks along. She can even view the front pages of major newspapers all around the globe.

Remember this was written in 1980, long before mobile phones. How far have we come in 28 years!

My first walk round Tomnacross brought a few shocks. The classrooms all had bare floorboards, and everywhere was dark brown varnish. There was a set of encyclopaedias in the P7 classroom dating from 1961. The gym hall floor was asphalt. The science room had a raised dais for the teacher's desk, complete with its own gas tap for the Bunsen burner, supplied from a cylinder under the desk labelled "coal gas." To be fair all of this was pretty much standard for rural Highland schools of the day!

Over the next five years I persuaded the powers that be to fund vinyl flooring on the basis of one room each year. The science room was eventually gutted and turned into a full-time classroom.

Being a Lowlander (and a Glasgow one at that) I knew nothing of shinty, but nevertheless tagged along after the school team coaches Jimmy Gallacher and Angus MacLean for a couple of years until I could manage the training on my own. It was to take until 1993 for a Tomnacross team to achieve their first national success, when they won the Mackay Cup. This was a real high point for me and I will always remember that day. Over the years it has been heartening for me to watch many Tomnacross players mature as they moved up to Lovat's under 14's, under 16's and into the adult game. The present Lovat first team includes at least 8 Mackay Cup winners, and quite a few of them with three winner's medals.

Some of the most memorable highlights of my 28 years are musical ones. I have a lasting memory of the old Kiltarlity Hall when, during a concert, the curtains refused to open. A brave parent and I wrestled with the thing for over 10 minutes while the audience of 200 waited patiently, but we did get it open in the end!

I always enjoyed working with the children for concerts, Music Festivals and other performances. One of the most memorable must be the first time we tackled the Yanomamo musical. We had great fun (and no small measure of satisfaction) in pulling together the music, costumes, still and video projections in what was probably a rather ambitious venture, but it all came together on the night and the kids were fantastic.

The Tree Nursery project was another first for us, in that it was basically a business venture. The senior class members rose to the occasion in taking on the directors' posts (we had directors for finance, production and marketing, as well as a couple of company secretaries.) The children were involved in everything from seed collection, propagation, transplanting, equipment sourcing and purchase, finding buyers, creating invoices and balancing the books. An appearance on Grampian News for Tomnacross was the icing on the cake, of course.

It hit home to me how long I had been at Tomnacross about 6 or 7 years ago, when one of my first P7's from 1980 came to enrol her child. Many more were to follow! I think living in the community allowed me to get to know and understand my "clients" (parents and children) in a personal way, as well as all the family connections that go to make up a rural identity.

In all of this, there is one person whose support I could not have done without, and that is my wife Linda. She was my secretary for 20 years, and took an awful lot of pressure off me by having such a firm handle on the admin side of the work. I confess that I have never been a terribly well-organised person, so it was just as well that she was there to keep me right!

My new job is a delight. I get to go round schools all over the Highlands, working with special children, putting computer-based support technology in place for them and training their teachers in its use. I can come home at 5.30 and switch off – it's fantastic! No marking!

Really the end of seven year Tomnacross delay

As can be seen from far and wide the seven year wait for Tomnacross School's refurbishment work to start is indeed over.

However, Tomnacross Parent Council report that there has been a slight delay in the building work caused by SSE taking longer to let the main contractors onto the site, but MacGregor's now have full possession. They were in November running approximately 3 weeks behind programme, but were endeavouring to make up as much of this time as possible.

The original completion date was 24th April so, as things stand, the revised completion date will now be 15th May.

The Parent Council are also in the process of trying to get the "huts" removed after the extension has finished and while the contractors are still on site but are anticipating a battle with the system. They have enlisted the support of Councillors Helen Carmichael and Margaret Davidson as well but would be grateful for further help.



arrangement now quite common in the Highland area.

Gerry McKenna (54), originally from Glasgow, was in business for many years prior to entering teaching. He was MD and Operations Director for a number of companies in the leisure and cinema industry and opened a chain of multi-screen cinemas throughout UK and Germany. Mr McKenna ran his own company in Holland as a day trader before returning to England where he qualified as a teacher in 1984 but didn't enter teaching right away.

In 2000 he began his teaching career and taught in the London area, Milton Keynes and Edlesborough, in Buckinghamshire. He had reached the level of Deputy Head teacher when he decided to move from Notting Hill in London to the Highlands for a better quality of life and has been Head at Teanassie for about two years. He was asked to look after Tomnacross on the retirement of Mr Bell and Highland Council clustered Tomnacross with Teanassie on a temporary basis. It is possible that this arrangement may become permanent under Mr McKenna's headship, provided parents agree. Meetings with both Teanassie and Tomnacross parents are now being held.

Mr McKenna finds both schools similar and is enthusiastic about them both. He comments, "Both sets of parents are very supportive, the Parent Councils are incisive, committed and effective. The pupils at both schools are polite, well-behaved and eager to learn. The teaching staff at both schools are top class and a joy to work with."

Asked about future plans for Tomnacross Mr McKenna says, "We are currently developing our School Improvement plan, which will be ready in a month or so. The 'Curriculum for Excellence' is being phased in gradually over the next two years in both schools.

We see both schools as the heart of their respective communities and our plans and actions as we go forward will reflect this."

As an example of this, he explains, "I ran a 'computers for beginners' course in the evenings at Teanassie over a six week period last year. This was attended by people of all ages and backgrounds. It is an example of how the school is re-drawing its traditional boundaries on what a school does in the community it serves. There is also a strong drive to involve as many parents/guardians as possible in the way forward for the school. There have been open meetings to help gauge the parents' opinions on the 'vision' for the school. We see the way forward as a combined community effort."

Mr McKenna is a firm believer in sport as character building and will continue to support its development as the school goes forward. He is pleased to note that Mrs Linda Bell has continued with the shinty training and that it is going well.

Meantime the construction of the new school hall is making good progress and is on schedule. Mr McKenna points out that this will have a significant effect on the schools and its pupils.

"We will be able to offer better PE lessons. Assemblies will be held in a much better environment than they are currently. The hall also has the potential to be used by the community. This latter point is an issue that will be developed further after the HMI inspection is over – an inspection that is imminent!"

Mr McKenna emphasises how much he has enjoyed being at Tomnacross as well as Teanassie and concludes, "It's a privilege to be given the opportunity to make a difference to the lives of the children under our care and looking forward to bringing the pupils of both schools together as appropriate joint opportunities arise."

However, he points out that the focus currently at Tomnacross has to be on preparations toward the imminent HMIE inspection!

New Tomnacross Head



Since the retirement of Graham Bell, Tomnacross Primary has been in the care of Gerry McKenna, Headteacher at Teanassie Primary. Mr McKenna is in charge of both schools which have, for the time being, been combined in a school "cluster" – where two or more small primary schools share a headteacher. This is an

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French still spoken

Anneliese Garvie reports on Kiltarlity Hall French lessons

Bonjour! Salut! Un croissant s'il vous plaît?

The hall has frequently been transformed into a *boulangerie*, *pharmacie* or *supermarché* in the last few months. The P6/P7 class performed a couple of short plays for their parents last term and enjoyed dressing up as 'chic' customers or the 'monsieur/madame' behind the counter of various shops.

With the older classes, in particular, we have explored many different parts of France, highlighting the different regional activities and foods – but croissants remain the most popular! The younger classes explore French with a cat, Minou, and his cheeky mouse-friend, 'Trottine'. They too have learnt the all-important words for buying food in France!

With Christmas coming up we are reminded how many words in the English language come from French including two very important ones (according to some theories): Hogmanay and haggis.... **Joyeux Noël!**

There are currently two classes on offer: P1-P3 – Fridays, 3-3:30pm and P4-P5 – Wednesdays, 3:30-4:00pm. If you are interested in these classes, or any other age-group, then RSVP

Traditional music classes—2009

Kiltarlity Community Council has agreed to part support another series of traditional music classes being organised in Kiltarlity by Margo MacLennan, Highland Council Tradi-

Kiltarlity News

We are keen to have material for the next issue of the *Kiltarlity News* and will print as many local news items, club, school news, sports obituaries, letters, articles etc, as possible. Please send material by **31 March 2009**. We may, but cannot guarantee to print later contributions. Material may be sent to R. MacLean, 'Berisay', Culburnie, (741323), e-mailed to rdmaclean5@berisay.co.uk, or given to any Community Council member.

tional Music Co-ordinator.

The six -week block of classes will be held mid-morning on Saturdays, from mid-January 2009. Classes will take place in Tomnacross Church hall and in Kiltarlity Community Hall with a final ceilidh planned for Kiltarlity Community Hall. Classes are open to children from 8 years upwards and adults, and tuition will be offered in five of the following - whistle, bodhran, chanter, fiddle and guitar.

Instrument hire is available in fiddle, guitar and bodhran. Whistles can be purchased from the tutor at a reasonable cost. Advance booking for instrument hire is required to estimate the number of instruments required.

Posters will be put out round the local area and booking forms will be sent out to students who have attended the previous block of classes in January 2007. They were successful with over 30 students from Cannich, Teanassie and Beaulay as well as from Kiltarlity.

For more information please contact:

Margo MacLennan
Traditional Music Co-ordinator
ECS Area Office
13 Ardross Street, Inverness,
IV3 5NS
01463 663817 (Extension 3817)

margo.maclennan2@highland.gov.uk

Kiltarlity S.W.R.I.

The 2008/9 Syllabus is well under way.

On September 3rd members heard The Chocolate Story by Lucas Story; with the Competition being "Favourite jug not higher than 9 inches". October 1st was Fair Trade talk and sales table by Rosalind and friends, the competition on that occasion being "Fresh flower arrangement in a shoe". On November 5th members learned about Floral Art from Kathleen Maclean with a "Melting moments" competition and "Bring an annual". Christmas night out was held on December 3 when the Competition was a "Cross stitch card".

The programme in 2009 is as follows. January 6th: Mountain rescue by Neil Ross. Competition: Snap farm animal with humorous caption.

February 4th: Neil Brotherston on Physiotherapy. Competition: Patchwork bag from secondhand material.

March 4th: Whist drive in aid of S.C.B.

U. Competition: Hat, mitts and bootees
April 1st: AGM and Pot Luck Supper.
Competition: Coconut ice

This session's Summer Outing will be on May 6th, 2009.

Melting Moments - a winning recipe

100g butter

70g of caster sugar

1 egg

105g SR flour

Crushed cornflakes

Few drops of almond essence - optional

Glace cherries – optional

Cream butter and sugar, add egg and flour, form mixture into balls with dampened hands, toss in crushed cornflakes. Place on greased baking tin, flatten each biscuit, place cherry on centre and bake at Reg. 4/180C/350F for 12-15 minutes.

Committee

President: Alison Mackenzie 741294

Secretary: Cath Macritchie 741264

Treasurer: Mary Macaulay 741501

Kirkhill and Kiltarlity First Shinty

First Shinty has now gone inside for the winter months and alternates on Friday evenings between Kirkhill Community Centre and Kiltarlity Village Hall.

First Shinty meets on Friday at the following times:

Primaries 1-3: 6.00 pm - 6.45 pm

Primaries 4-7: 6.45 pm - 8.00 pm

Beginners Class

A special invitation goes to **Primary One children** and indeed any new member wanting to try shinty for the first time.

50p per session (all ages)

For further information please contact:

James Gallacher on 741646



fraserjoinery

John Fraser
Kilcolvy, Kiltarlity, Inverness IV4 7JQ
t: 01463 741 790 m: 07821 871 125
e: john@fraserjoinery.co.uk
www.fraserjoinery.co.uk

Clubs meeting in Kiltarlity Hall

MONDAYS

3.30-4.30pm School Badminton (term time)

6.00-7.00pm Beavers (term time)

7.00-9.00pm Kempo (every week)

TUESDAYS

9.30-11.30am Mother & Toddlers - £1 (term time)

2.45-3.15pm French for p1-p2 (term time)

3.30-4.30pm School Shinty (winter terms)

6.00-7.00pm Fitness Class (term time)

7.15-8.15pm Badminton Juniors (s1-s3) - £1 (Oct- end March)

8.15-9.45pm Badminton Seniors (s4 to adult) -£2 (£1)

WEDNESDAYS

2.45-3.15pm French for P3s

7.00-9.00pm Shinty training

7.00-10.00pm WRI (1st Wed of each month)

7.00-9.00pm Craft class (2nd &4th Wed of each month)

8.00-9.30pm Hall committee meeting (2nd Wed of each month)

7.30-10.00pm Community Council Meeting (3rd Wed - can vary)

THURSDAYS

2.45-5.45pm Ready Steady Go (nursery-P7) (Term Time)

6.00-7.30pm Cubs (Term Time)

7.30-9.00pm Scouts (Term Time)

9.00-10.00pm Indoor Football (Adults) (Winter Terms)

FRIDAYS

2.55-4.15pm French Class (Term Time)

5.00-6.00pm Indoor Football (Children) (Term Time)

6.00-8.00pm First Shinty Club (Winter Terms)

8.15-9.45pm Youth Club (Term Time)

SATURDAYS

9.30-11.00pm Kirkhill Football Club (Winter Terms)

2.00-4.00pm Model Aeroplane Club (Winter Terms)

7.00-10.00pm Whist Drive (Last Sat of Month)

Please note: *Arrangements change from time to time, and the latest information and club contacts can be obtained by phoning the Hall Association Secretary on 741447*

Your local library Beauly

Beauly Library, sometimes overlooked because of its location within the Phipps Institute, is already well used by Kiltarlity residents, but would welcome even more local people.

You can borrow books, videos and a few jigsaws, use the computer including the internet, and look up reference materials. Resources available for loan also include audio books and DVDs. And if what you want is not immediately available you can place a request for it.

There are also special events, such as rhymetime, singing sessions for children and author visits. There's even a Book Group which meets in the library and welcomes new members.

Beauly Library is open every day except Friday and Sunday. Opening hours vary to ensure there's a time to suit everyone, but it is helpful to keep a note of them handy.

If you're not already a member of Highland Libraries, just bring along some proof that you live, work or study in the Highland area, and fill in a short form. (If you are under sixteen an adult must sign the form.)

Opening hours:

Monday 5.00 pm - 8.00 pm

Tuesday 10.00 am - 12.30 pm

Wednesday 12.00 pm - 2.30 pm

Thursday 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

Friday closed

Saturday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Contact details

Beauly Library
Phipps Institute
Beauly
Inverness-shire IV4 7EH

Telephone: 01463
782930

E-mail: beauly.library@highland.gov.uk

Full library information can be found on Highland Council web site: www.highland.gov.uk

Kiltarlity Community Council

Community Council meetings are completely open to the public who, with the Chairman's agreement, can contribute to the discussion, though not vote.

The Council has the right to discuss extremely confidential issues and take decisions in private session but the need for this almost never arises.

Community Council members:

Norman Grant, Chairman
(741532)

Hector Douglas, Secretary
(741881)

Dorothy Ward, Treasurer
(741253)

Karen Ferguson (831251)

Floris Greenlaw (741342)

Lesley MacColl (741430)

Ron MacLean, Newsletter
(741323)

Hamish MacLennan (741312)

Eunice Ramsden (741447)

Jan van 't Zand (741711)

Community Council Website:

www.kiltarlity.info

Community Council's special
thankyou to Graham



To mark the enormous contribution he has made over many years to the success of the Christmas Parties, Community Council Treasurer and convener of the organising committee, Dorothy Ward, presented Graham Bell at this year's Party with an engraved crystal tankard - and some cider to fill it, for the first time at any rate.

Obituaries *Inevitably, since our last issue there have been several deaths in or connected with Kiltarlity and not all of these may be remembered here. We will be happy to print all obituaries submitted to us..*

Marion M Graham
1937 - 2008

Marion and her twin brother, Sinclair, were born in Glasgow on the 3rd of September 1937, two years before World War 2 began.

At the age of 12 on the 6th of December 1949, a cold wintry night, Marion travelled with her family on the overnight sleeper from Glasgow to Inverness. Thereafter they moved to Kiltarlity where her father had rented Bruiach House from Lovat Estates. (He had been promoted by Dunlop Rubber Company to be their representative for a large area of the Highlands.) Inverness Royal Academy was to be the secondary school she and Sinclair attended for six happy years.

Living in the country was a major but very welcome change and the beauty of that part of the Highlands became very special to the Graham family, and to the extended relatives (of whom there were many!) and their friends.

The Christian faith and regular attendance at church was important in the family's life and from the age of sixteen Marion made a personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ as her Saviour and Lord. After leaving the I.R.A. she studied at Glasgow University and Teacher Training College.

Two years in the Inverness High School produced her parchment, but in 1961 her enthusiasm for a different type of teaching experience made her decide she should go out to teach in Zimbabwe, then Southern Rhodesia, at a Church Mission school called Ingwenya. Relatives and friends of the family had already been Missionaries at this Mission so Marion was aware of the African people's needs.

On the 12th of October 1961, she, along with a cousin who was going as a nurse to a Mission Hospital, 90 miles from where Marion would be, sailed out of Southampton on the Pendennis Castle, arriving two weeks later in Cape Town. A train journey of 3 hot days and 3 dusty nights took them to Bulawayo.

Marion's lifelong dedication to the Ndebele people began and never wavered throughout the next four decades. It began with working as a teacher in the two year John Tallach Secondary at Ingwenya financed by a Scottish church. Some of the pupils were as old as 20, four years younger than herself! But they were very keen to learn and the school role increased. More teachers from Scotland arrived and a Third year of pupils was added. Some time later, for the first time in Rhodesia, all children of 6 years were expected to attend Primary School and so the school continued to develop.

Marion became the Head Teacher in 1972 and by the time she retired in 2000 the school, with its 600 pupils and talented Zim-

babwean staff including the newly appointed head teacher and one or two Scottish teachers, had over the last two decades gained the reputation of having the best Cambridge S.4 O-level results in Matabele Land. There were also many keen athletes who came from the School. All pupils had also experienced what Marion considered the most important aspect of life and that was the knowledge of Jesus Christ as they studied the Bible, some to achieve a Cambridge O-level and others because it was part of the curriculum. During this period the school suffered from widespread fear and upheaval as Mugabe's freedom fighters took on the Smith government.

Marion retired to Inverness to be with Jane, her younger sister, and this was generally a very happy time; she was not idle though and went through to Dingwall two days a week to the Highland Theological College as a volunteer and also as tutor of one of the Access courses. However, the cloudy skies and dull wet days did not suit her at all and to enjoy a holiday on the Continent with blue skies and warm sunshine was her delight. She even managed to return twice to Zimbabwe, though the last time left her heart broken at the dreadful state of the economy, the shortage of food, petrol and many other goods which was affecting all her African friends - the result of the callous indifference of the dictatorial leadership and fanatical President.

Her illness and death were unexpected for she had enjoyed good health throughout most of her life. The diagnosis of terminal cancer came as a shock, but as she had done with the many and varied traumas in Zimbabwe, she faced death calmly and peacefully, assured that Jesus her Saviour and friend would never forsake her.

She died on Saturday, the 12th July in the Highland Hospice. A very large company of at least 400 friends and family came together in the Free North Church, Inverness to pay their respects to one who had given so much, so unselfishly to so many throughout her lifetime.

Winifred Anderson
Ferguson

It was with shock that the residents at Belladrum heard of Winifred (Winsie) Ferguson's death on Thursday 21st August, for she had attended the popular Tartan heart festival less than a fortnight before and had been regularly seen walking her daughter Mary's terrier over the summer months.

Winsie came to Belladrum in 1977 when the family bought the home farm from Seitze Kats who broke up the estate after



'Winsie' Ferguson

acquiring it from Davina Gibbs, mother of current owner and Tartan Heart promoter Joe. 1978 saw the building of her new home that she shared with her late husband Crawford and daughter Mary. They had moved north from their former home in Fife but this was not her first time in the north. She was born and brought up in Morayshire, at Cloves Farm, Alves. Youngest daughter of James Mustard, well known farmer and cattle feeder, and her nephews still farm the same land.

A young farmer's exchange visit to Fife in the early fifties brought her into contact with Crawford and they married in 1953 and lived and farmed at Grange of Lindores Farm, Newburgh, Fife, with their two children, Grant and Mary. Winsie was an accomplished curler, competing and winning in top level competitions all over Scotland in the late 60's and early 70's.

The 80's and 90's saw her take a quieter life; always there to support the family, especially her grand-children, Euan, Sam & Fiona, she took great pride in following their academic and sporting achievements. A private person by nature, she seldom complained of her lot, blighted in her later years by rheumatoid arthritis, a bad knee and latterly by cancer, she rarely mentioned herself, more concerned by caring for Crawford who died four years ago.

Edward Joseph Quinn MBE
1924 - 2007

Edward Joseph Quinn was a native of Derry. His first career was teaching but he later trained in Glasgow as a Customs and Excise officer.

It was in Glasgow that he met his wife from Fort William, Effie Campbell, a nurse and midwife. Edward Quinn's new career took him throughout Northern Ireland and his work there was recognised by the award of the MBE.

His last post was at Invergordon from where he retired. By that time he had moved to Kiltarlity, to the house above the Black Bridge, and it was there he spent his retirement, quietly but nevertheless with many firm friends in the local area.

He is survived by his family, Janette, Seamus, Paul and Mary and by his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Catherine Matheson MBE 1917 - 2008

Catherine Mackenzie was born in Al-larburn, Kiltarlity in 1917, one of the family of Charles Mackenzie, Tailor.

After attending Tomnacross School she left home to enter domestic service, as did so many local girls at that time. Catherine worked in Edinburgh but returned to Kiltarlity at the beginning of the Second World War and was employed in the Royal Liver Insurance business in Inverness. She later went into business herself, running a grocery shop in Inverness.

In 1961 Catherine moved to Pennan Inn, near Fraserburgh, where she married Ian Matheson. After that the couple moved to the Railway Inn, Banff.

After retirement in 1974 they returned to Inverness where some years later her husband, Ian, died. In Inverness, Cathie put all her energies into the local branch of the Guide Dogs for the Blind, for which she was honoured with the MBE.

Another passion was whist and she regularly attended all the drives from Dingwall to Inverness and Nairn.

Cathie died on the 22nd May 2008. She is survived by her daughter Celia, brother Addie, sister Flora and her grandson.



Cathie receiving her MBE from Lord Lieutenant Hamish Gray (Lord Gray of Contin)

William MacDonald 1921 - 2008

William MacDonald was born and brought up in Ness on the island of Lewis but a few years after retirement from teaching, he and his wife, Marion, moved to Kiltarlity and lived from 1985 to 1989 at 19 Lonvichkime.

After secondary education in the Nicholson Institute Willie MacDonald served throughout World War 2 in the Royal Navy, joining the coastal commando forces and serving on motor torpedo boats. On demob he attended Glasgow University and Jordanhill College in preparation for a very successful teaching career during which he occupied posts throughout Scotland. From his first post in Paisley he was appointed to Melvich in North

Sutherland and from there was appointed headteacher of Watten Primary in Caithness. Thereafter, he became the first head of a new primary school in Thurso, and finally became head of the large Lismore Primary School in Edinburgh, from where he retired in 1981.



An elder of the Church of Scotland, during his time in Kiltarlity Willie was Presbytery delegate from 1986 to 1989 and also took a Bible Class. One of his interests was in the welfare of prisoners and, having been a prison visitor in Edinburgh, he continued this work while living in Kiltarlity.

Hugh Arthur 1932 – 2007

Older former Lovat shinty players and supporters will remember the contribution of Hughie Arthur to the Kiltarlity game in the 50s and early 60s. Born in Greenock in 1932, Hugh came to Kiltarlity in 1937 to live with the Matheson family at Ruifour. He went to school at Glenconvinth and Tomnacross and after school worked on Convinth and Fanblair farms.

Hughie played for Lovat during the 50s and the beginning of the 60s but then moved away from Kiltarlity to work on the south side of Loch Ness where Boleskine benefited from his determined and skilful shinty.

His later playing days were for Inverness and he settled there permanently and raised his family of two daughters and a son (sadly, losing one of his daughters).

Hughie latterly had not been in good health.



Hugh Arthur (front row, second from left) in a Lovat team of c1960

Catherine Fraser 1918 – 2008

Cathy Fraser, Badden, was born in the old family home near Loch Battan, a short distance from the site of the present house. Her parents were Andrew and Margaret Fraser and she was the youngest of a family of four. Duncan, the oldest,

died at the early age of 39, but his family are still living on the family holding. Next were her brother Hugh and sister Greta, both of whom died quite recently.

Cathy had meningitis when young which left her weakened but she recovered her full strength and health over the years. After attending Glenconvinth School she stayed on at home to look after her parents, though during the War she served in the Land Army. When her father died she moved with her mother into Inverness, living first in Eastgate, then in Mary Ann Court and finally in May Court. She took up a post in Raigmore hospital as an orderly and worked there for 33 years until her retirement at the age of 63. Cathy then enjoyed a long retirement of 27 years.

She enjoyed the simple things of life, and liked to walk as often as possible. She was unfailingly hospitable and visitors to her home were always sure of tea and a bun and there was nothing she enjoyed more than a good ceilidh, especially with visitors bringing the latest news from Kiltarlity. She was a faithful member of the congregation of Inverness Methodist Church.

In 2006, Cathy could no longer carry on at home on her own and became a resident in Wyvis House, Dingwall. She was laid to rest in Tomnacross Churchyard on 28th May, 2008, on what would have been her 90th birthday.

Mary Stewart Belladrum Mill 1911 – 2007

Born Mary Fraser on 23rd December, 1911, the youngest of a family of four to Hugh and Mary Fraser of Arrie, Caiplich, Kiltarlity, the place of Mary's birth at more than 1000 feet above sea level is believed to be the highest homestead in the parish.

Mary's sister, Catherine Henton, died in 1958 aged 56 years, brother John died at Arrie in 1975 aged 76 years and sister Margaret Munro, who lived at Ardcharnich, Lochbroom, died in 2000, aged 93 years.

Mary, or Polly, as she was sometimes better known, was born into a home which mainly spoke Gaelic and she knew little English before going to Glenconvinth School. Along with her contemporaries she represented Kiltarlity at a local children's Mod held at Inverness. Throughout life she maintained an interest in Gaelic and conversed in the lan

language whenever she could, together with keeping up to date with the news and Gaelic programmes on the radio.

During her formative years she helped out on the family croft and as her parents became less able took a more important role about the croft and the home. She regularly undertook the six mile return journey on foot to the general merchant's shop at Glaiachbea, or alternatively, the nine mile return trip to Moniack Bridge to catch a bus to Inverness to collect stores. The long trudge home back up Knockbain Brae with shopping on her back was no mean feat. This ritual continued for a number of years until such time as the area was served by a grocer's van from Inverness. Shopping then became more of a social event, but with the grocer's times sliding by the week, he was soon known as the "midnight merchant".

In the late thirties Mary met Kenneth Stewart who had moved into the area from Easter Ross as hill keeper on the Belladrum Estate. He initially stayed at Heath Cottage, Foxhole, but when he and Mary married, they moved downhill to the keeper's house at Belladrum where they remained for the next thirty-four years. It was during this time that their four sons were born, Kenneth, Donald, Fraser and Alasdair.

In 1963 they moved to the small holding at Belladrum Mill. Her husband, Kenneth, passed away ten years later at the age of 76 years.

At Belladrum Mill Mary took a great interest in everything including the livestock. She also made her own contribution towards the bed and breakfast trade and was always very welcoming towards anyone within her home. Some former guests even made their presence known at her funeral.

Despite having always enjoyed good over all health she did suffer from arthritis and had to have both her hip joints replaced. When she was ninety she felt that the first joint replaced some fourteen years earlier required to be redone. But much to her disappointment, the orthopaedic surgeon would not agree to this.

Apart from her balance she remained well for some considerable time thereafter and until such time as her memory went into decline. This meant her having eventually to go into care. On 23rd March, 2007, and at the age of 95 years, she passed away in the care of the staff at Southside Nursing Home, Inverness.

Her funeral service took place five days later at the Free Church, Kiltarlity, and she was laid to rest in Tomnacross Churchyard.

CHURCH



UPDATE

St Mary's R C Church, Eskadale

Since the last Edition of the Kiltarlity News, Mass has been held at St. Mary's Eskadale on 28th July, 14th August, 26th August, 26th October and 30th November.

On 26th August the congregation held a farewell presentation for Fr. Colin Davies as he was leaving St. Mary's Inverness, Marydale and Eskadale, to go to his new post as Parish Priest of St. Margaret's Shetland.

On 26th October, the Baptism of Baby Isla Grace Aston (of Kiltarlity) took place at St. Mary's Eskadale and was officiated by Fr. James Bell, Dean of the Diocese. This was the first Baptism at Eskadale for a number of years and a large number of family, friends and congregation were present.

Repairs to the Church are still ongoing, and thanks to I.F. Contractor, rhones, downpipes, drains and harling are being inspected at present.

Father Gonsalves officiated at the Mass at Eskadale on Sunday 30th November (first Sunday of Advent).

Kiltarlity Church of Scotland

Twenty four members of both Kiltarlity and Kirkhill churches are busy learning their lines for the presentation of "A Christmas Carol", to be performed in Kiltarlity Village Hall on Friday 19 December.

On Sunday, 21 December, the two churches will hold a Service of Carols and Candles at 6.30 pm in Kirkhill Church. This will be a service of Advent and Christmas music, a selection of solos and trios, with several pieces by the "Festival Choir" of the two churches, with carols by the congregation. Mince pies and Wassail will be served following the service. The Eve of Christmas and Holy Baptism service in Kiltarlity will start at 11:30 p.m. on 24 December and will be conducted by Rev. Willis Jones.

The churches will come together again early in 2009 for a Burns Supper at Brockies Lodge on Saturday evening, 24 January.

The Sunday School, boys and girls

between the ages of 3 and 10, joins the congregation every Sunday at 12 noon and after the minister's address and children's hymn they and their teachers disperse to the church upper hall for their own activities. Tomnacross Church Club (TCC) is for young adults aged 11 + with no upper age limit. The group meets weekly in the vestry during the morning service. (*See separate report.*)

The Guild, with members from both churches, meets at Kirkhill on the first Tuesday afternoon (2.30 pm - 4 pm) of the month, until March 2009. Forthcoming events are: 13 Jan 2009 - Video on the Lydia Project; 3 Feb 2009 - 'Kids of Kolkata'; 3 Mar 2009 - Annual General Meeting.

Meantime, the Vacancy Committee continues to work quietly in the background as it seeks a new minister for Kiltarlity and Kirkhill.

Church contacts Locum Minister: Rev. Willis Jones (Tel. 01463 831662). Interim Moderator: Rev. Reg Campbell B.D., B.Sc., (Tel. 01463 772242, email: campbell578@btinternet.com). Session Clerk: Mrs Marie Harvey (Tel. 01463 741328). Website: www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk. Newsletter "The Parishioner": contact: Mrs Rosemary Mortimer, 7 Priory Place, Beaully (Tel. 01463 782648).

Kiltarlity Free Church

Kiltarlity Free Church has embarked on a major refurbishment of the building.

The original Church was built in 1846 and although it has had work done on it over the years it is now in need of a major refurbishment. The aim is to make the inside more comfortable, useable and friendly. We intend to renew all basic services and do some remodelling and modernising of the interior. We are going to remove the modern porch at the entrance and tidy up the exterior. We hope to have a fine building which will house a Church for many years to come.

Our activities include a Sunday School and Bible Class as well as a morning service every Sunday at 11.00 am. Our minister is Andrew Matthews who comes from Houston Texas. Andrew and his family stay in Camault Muir. We want to serve the community with the gospel. We will only survive if you join us in our worship and other activities. Visitors are welcomed and if you would like more information please ring James Fraser, Session Clerk, at 741729.

Kiltarlity girl who gets things going in Lochaber

Isabel Campbell (MacLean) grew up at Boblainy, Kiltarlity, where her brother Davie still lives, but has made her home in Fort William where her contribution to the local rural community was recognised in 2003 with the award of an MBE. Isabel moved to Lochaber when she married Fort William auctioneer Ewen Campbell. The couple have two children, Ewen and Linda.

After primary schooling in Tomnacross Isabel attended Inverness High School and has used the secretarial skills acquired there in a variety of jobs, all of them in fields important to Highland life. She worked on the Glenstrathfarrar hydro scheme, was for a time SWRI Organising Secretary in the Highlands, and has worked for vets both in Inverness and Lochaber.

Isabel and Davie's father died when she was only seven and from then on, young though they were, their help was needed if their mother was to continue to work Boblainy. Isabel quickly became expert in raising livestock and while she was still a small girl her lambs took top price at the sales. She also acquired other country skills such as churning butter, making crowdie and growing vegetables for the table. Early evidence of her knowledge and interest in agriculture was her membership when still in school of the Aird Young Farmers Club, where she added to her secretarial expertise, skills such as public speaking and stock judging.

During her years in Lochaber Isabel has put all her skills to use to serve the local community. From 1970 to 1999 she was Secretary to the Lochaber Agricultural Society and she has worked tirelessly to improve facilities in rural Lochaber. Faced in the 1990s with the threat of losing the area's only auction mart (she has worked with husband Ewen at livestock sales in Lochaber and throughout the West Highlands and Islands), Isabel led the campaign for a new mart, achieving success with the opening of the new purpose built Ben Nevis Auction Mart in 1999.

One of Isabel's main concerns has been ensure that rural and agricultural knowledge is passed on to the next generation. She has now set up the Lochaber Rural Education Trust which features a children's farm with small mammals, rabbits

and guinea pigs, assorted fowls, tame sheep and a pony.

Isabel believes that in the Highlands we are losing vital parts of our rural heritage all the time because most schools have no extracurricular activities allowing youngsters to learn about the land, where food actually comes from, and how their ancestors, especially in remote rural areas, made a living before supermarkets and the internet.

For example she is sure that if you ask most children where milk comes from they will instantly reply 'Tesco' or 'Asda', or the like. So, although health and safety issues ruled out a real one, she acquired Lochaber Lola, a life-sized glass fibre cow, fully equipped with udder and teats. With the help of volunteers, Isabel can teach the children visiting the children's farm how to milk, and also how to make butter, even though Lola just produces water poured into her from above!

The new Ben Nevis Mart also has an extensive and impressive display of old rural photographs illustrating crofting and farming scenes from all over the area. And an adjacent bog has been turned into a green field site for sports and dog shows; Isabel would like to see this field also being used to enable children from inner cities to come for camping holidays.

Though the Ben Nevis Mart is seasonal it is also the base for a range of activities throughout the year. Isabel and daughter Linda operate their own business, Bookkeeping, Organising and Secretarial Services (BOSS), from premises near the new Mart. There is also a farm shop within the complex site. The mart has also been used for many special events, including part of the Harry Potter film and BBC's *Rockface*, as well as for dances.

Besides working in their business with her mother, Linda, a talented keyboard player (a MacLean family trait showing up here), operates things behind the scenes while her mother presents *Country Connections* on Nevis FM, another contribution to the community Isabel manages to fit in.

The programme features a selection of Scottish, including Gaelic, Irish, and country music, and at the same time discusses rural affairs in a very laid-



Isabel Campbell MBE back on her home turf at the 2007 Kiltarlity Schools Reunion

back way which is also meant to be fun. Isabel explains, "It is called *Country Connections* because our aim is to bring the country to the town." The programme has a huge following and a lot of time is spent promoting local events and good causes as well as interviewing people and playing excellent music.

But, MBE or not, Isabel has no intention of giving up on a number of unfinished projects. The new children's centre is running but needs further funding for the wealth of courses and events that she has in mind. (She and her colleagues would be delighted to hear from *Kiltarlity News* readers interested in helping!) She would also like to see a crofting centre complete with old tools and equipment where children can learn how things used to be done and how important it is not to lose the old skills. Isabel is keen to move on with these projects as soon as possible, though, bureaucratic wheels turn far too slowly for her liking.

And once these matters are sorted out she has ideas for a book which would be an account of her rural upbringing and a record of the rural heritage of Kiltarlity, Lochaber and the wider Highlands.

Kiltarlity can certainly be proud of the girl from Boblainy.



Lola the helpful fibre glass cow

This summer two young local women undertook separate trips abroad to help children in the Third World. Fiona Ferguson went to Kenya.

Kenya ...a whistle-stop tour

By Fiona Ferguson

This summer I had the opportunity to spend eight weeks in Kenya. The main purpose of my trip was to volunteer at the Kenya Children's Home (KCH). I had heard about the orphanage at a coffee morning held at Beaufort Castle in the Easter break.

Having never visited Africa before, everything was so new and completely different to what I had ever experienced. On arriving in Kenya I visited a university friend. Her family have been out in Kenya for over 100 years and have a bean farm on the banks of Lake Nairobi. With the expansion of flower farms around the lake, all the wildlife is being pushed onto the few remaining farms, which is putting a huge amount of pressure on the available pasture. On the drive into their house I saw warthogs, impala, zebra, eland, bush buck, dik-dik, hippo and buffalo – never having seen many around Kiltarlity before, I was amazed!

I arrived at the orphanage knowing very little about where it was, where I'd be living or what would be expected of me. KCH is an independent home for orphans, abandoned and destitute children. At present there around 180 children, the majority of whom are in full-time education. The children are of mixed ages and sexes, with all siblings living together, recreating a more family-oriented environment. The Nursery which is a separate unit currently houses 27 abandoned babies under the age of two. I spent just over six weeks at KCH where I carried out a variety of jobs, from working in the kitchen, in the nursery - changing (re-usable!) nappies, supervising homework to teaching at Mashimoni Squatters School. All of the staff at the home were so kind and welcoming and made me feel at home straight away. There were six volunteers who lived together in separate accommodation.

The home runs a number of programmes:

- The Jonathon Gloag Academy
- Mashimoni Squatter School
- Soila Maasai Girls Rescue Centre

Mashimoni Squatters School was set up in September 2007 when the Balcraig Foundation began a programme of reconstruction to transform mud classes into brick built classrooms with desks and blackboards. The school is situated in the middle of Kibera (Africa's second largest slum) and currently has around 450-500 pupils. Many of them are Aids orphans and live in shacks with grandparents or distant relatives and the school provides a welcome environment where they can play, enhance learning and, most impor-

tantly, be fed.

The Soila Maasai Girls Rescue Centre, two hours South-West of Nairobi, provides for the welfare, security and education of Maasai girls who are rescued from very troubled family lives. The centre offers a place where the girls can go, be fed, educated, taught practical skills and clothed. The girls at the school were absolutely incredible. Many arrived with only their mother tongue and within a month were enthusiastically learning and studying. Education is their route out of poverty.

In the past I have helped raise money for a charity called FARM-Africa. In Kenya I got the chance to see where some of this money was spent. The project brings in Toggenburg goats which are then bred with local goats to improve their milk production and general breeding. FARM-Africa have not only brought in these animals, but have put in place a structure of vets, community health care workers and medical shops, all of which have been made up of people from the local population.

One of the main things that struck me



Children at Mashimoni School

whilst out in Kenya (which at the start of this year was in political turmoil) was how welcoming and positive everyone I met was. I feel very privileged to have been able to go to Kenya and visit both the home and the FARM-Africa project and having a friend living out there allowed me to see Kenya from two sides. The children at KCH, Suswa and Mashimoni were nothing short of amazing, many of whom have been through so much in their short lives yet are still so upbeat, hard working, kind and generous. What Anne Gloag and her family have helped to achieve out there is incredible and I feel very fortunate to have been allowed to go out and be part of it.

I would encourage anyone interested in getting involved to do so and can say happily that every penny is well spent.

For more information about KCH or FARM-Africa please don't hesitate to ask or alternatively please see the website:-
<http://www.kenyachildrenshome.org.uk/index.html>
<http://www.farmaffrica.org.uk/>



Children at KCH

Peru

Mairi Fraser, , volunteered to join a Vine Trust work party to Peru. Here is her account.

The Vine Trust's motto is Connecting People to Change Lives, and this is exactly what I experienced on my trip to Peru in July 2008.

I joined a group of 25 volunteers from Edinburgh for an adventure to darkest Peru. Seven of the kids from my youth group at Barclay Church had been keen to join a work team for years, but it was only now that they were old enough to come. So with our youngest team member just 16 years old and the oldest 65, we arrived, after 22 hours of travelling, in Lima Airport raring to go. Our enthusiasm was challenged on arrival at our 'hotel' at 2 am to find it had a power cut; but you don't need electricity to sleep!!

A couple of hours later, we scraped ourselves out of bed to return to the airport for a short flight to Cusco, followed by a slightly longer bus journey to Urubamba the town which would be our home for the first part of our work. It is here that the newest edition to the network of Street Kids Homes was opened in March this year. An individual donor from the UK has pledged the money for the home to be built and run for five years by which time the centre should have revenue generating projects that will help with its overheads.

Already there are 17 boys aged 5-13 living here along with the house parents Hector & Lucia. The main centre is beautifully finished; it is built as a quadrangle, with a courtyard in the centre and bedrooms, washrooms and a dining area all around. Our job was to prepare materials for a second building to be erected that would be used as a workshop to help raise money and train some of the older boys in woodworking.

Various jobs were undertaken here. Straw had to be cut with a scythe and gathered, "just like in the olden days" as one of our young team members commented. We mixed earth, water and straw together with our feet to create the mud for the bricks. People pay good money to be covered in mud at expensive spas and in Peru it is completely free! This mixture was then shovelled into large wooden moulds and compressed to create a huge mud brick that would be baked in the sun. Dry bricks had

to be stacked; bearing in mind that each brick weighed 20 kilos, this was quite a workout. Who needs a gym?

The kids attend a local school in the morning and receive extra lessons in the afternoon from Hector, who explained that some of the older kids had no experience of school before they arrived at the home. They had been on the streets since the age of 3 or 4. It is so hard to imagine a 3 year old in the UK crossing a road, let alone surviving on the filthy streets of Lima, finding food, shelter and avoiding arrest and abuse. It was obvious from some of the kids' appearance that they had been through terrible ordeals. They all bear scars all over their heads clearly visible through their hair. One boy had a scar that ran across his hairline and all the way down the side of his face; it had been coarsely stitched some time ago.

Hector told us that the boys don't like to talk about their scars or the horrors of their past since they believe this makes them evil and they wouldn't want Hector to think bad of them. This reflects the huge problem facing all the volunteers and staff who work with street kids in Peru. Generally within the Peruvian culture street kids are seen as vermin, lower than dogs. They are seen as a problem as they beg, steal, prostitute themselves (in exchange for food), and it disturbs people to see them sniffing from a bag of glue (in an attempt to forget their situation). The police have been known to round up street kids and beat them or even dispose of them. So it is no wonder that the kids see themselves as less than human too. In South America religion plays a huge role in society but not always positive. The boys on the streets have been led to believe that they are not 'good enough' for God to love them. This also has a huge impact on their self-worth and the staff try to counteract this by constantly reminding them they are loved and cared for by both God and people they come into contact with at the centres. We also learned from staff that in some cases it is just too late - a heartbreaking reality.

It might only be a matter of weeks since some of the 17 boys at Urubamba were on the street but these kids could smile and have fun just like our own kids at home. Any opportunity they had to play with us they would take. We had taken a parachute as a gift for each centre so this especially went down well as we spent our lunchtimes and evenings losing numerous balls and beanbags onto the roof of the centre. This is also where I left the beautiful Scotland book that was gifted by Tomnacross Church. The kids and staff loved it. Hector was very inquisitive about the Loch Ness Monster, so I obviously described her appearance, eating habits and character in great detail!

It was with mixed feelings we left Urubamba. We were sad about leaving the kids and the project we'd been working on but also eager to reach the project at Kusi. In 2003, I had had the privilege to work on the first couple of buildings at Kusi and I had returned in 2006 to witness the first handful

of boys living with their house parents Angel & Rosa. As these boys had just arrived at Kusi they had been quite distant and naturally wary of us 'gringos'. I was really looking forward to returning to see how they had settled.

Another nine hour bus journey from Lima and we arrived in the town of Yungay. Just a mile outside the town is Kusi (meaning happiness), now a home for 28 street boys as well as Angel, Rosa and their two children. It was lovely to speak with Angel and Rosa again.

This centre is now a small village in itself. It lies directly under the beautiful Huascarán, the tallest mountain in Peru and now has a cluster of buildings, dorms for the boys, family homes for staff, a school and lodges that can be rented out to climbers. The land for this project was donated by a wealthy land owner, Carmen, who is a formidable character who oversees all the work. I laughed as Carmen was introduced to the group and it was explained that she didn't understand English. I had learnt on a previous trip that Carmen had previously had a management position within HSBC bank and knew English well, but just pretended not to understand! She was committed to saving boys from the streets of Lima and creating a wonderful home for them here at Kusi. She employs builders from the area, who work alongside us amateurs

Now quite the experts, we made another 800 mud bricks at Kusi. Others stripped bamboo, as this is the material used for the roofs. We also helped dig the foundations for a new dorm. Some of us chose to visit the school for a morning. I did a wee Art lesson which was lots of fun. Kusi has come a long way since I was last there in 2006. I was delighted to see doors and windows in the buildings, which certainly made our room less draughty at night. They had also added paving between some of the buildings which made it feel like a real little village with its own streets.

Kusi was our last stop before we began the long return journey and it was a real high point. Kusi really is a place of happiness. The boys here are so well adjusted after just two years. They are so affectionate, and full of mischief, always playing games and jok-



ing. The boys have a warm bed, clean clothes, three fabulous meals a day, school and, best of all, they are part of a family.

But these are the lucky ones. No one knows just how many kids are living on the streets of Peru. On a previous trip the director of Union Biblica has said he estimated 300,000 children to be on the streets of Lima alone. So why bother to do anything, when so few can be helped?

Ernesto, the man who started SU's work with street kids in 1985 once used this illustration to help explain his own reasons:

Once a man was walking along a beach. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. Off in the distance he could see someone going back and forth between the surf's edge and the beach. Back and forth this person went. As the man approached he could see that there were hundreds of starfish stranded on the sand as the result of the natural action of the tide.

As he approached, the person continued the task of picking up starfish one by one and throwing them into the surf. The man was stuck by the apparent futility of the task: there were far too many starfish. Many of them were sure to perish, and he said, "You must be crazy. There are thousands of miles of beach covered with starfish. You can't possibly make a difference."

The other person looked at him and then stooped down, picked up one more starfish and threw it back into the ocean. He turned back to the man and said, "It sure made a difference to that one!"

If you would like to join a work team or want more info about the project go to www.vinetrust.org

Alternatively feel free to email me mairi-fraser@hotmail.com or visit me at The Drawing Room.



Peru and some of those bricks—no one too young to lend a hand

Obituary

William Fraser
1922 – 2008
Edna Fraser
1937 - 2008



Willie and Edna Fraser

Willie Fraser was born on 5th February 1922 at Balvattie Farm, Muir of Ord. His father, James, and his mother Jessie, who was also a Fraser, was from Corrick, Kiltarlity, where her family had been since 1865. They had crofting and farming backgrounds in common and both families were faithful followers of the Free Church.

The family had hoped that Willie would take over on the farm but instead, on his 17th birthday, he joined the RAF as a trainee navigator and went to war, causing his mother to exclaim that "he would be dead in 6 weeks!" But after five years of dangerous flying and witnessing much death and destruction he emerged with all his medals and nothing worse than a dislocated thumb suffered in a crash landing.

After the war he worked in Beauly for Hood the butcher but then decided to train as a chef, working in Stirling, in Sutherland, and at Aultguish Inn, before moving to the Grand Hotel, Fort William, in 1958, he met his wife, Edna.

Edna Chester Meldrum Douglas was born on 22nd February 1937 eldest daughter of Margaret and Charles Douglas, manager of the distillery in Fort William. She had planned to go to university, but shortly after her 17th birthday her father died and she had to start work instead to supplement the family income. However, while working in the Grand Hotel she met Willie and after a whirlwind romance they married on the 19th March 1959.

Their ambition was to buy their own hotel. They moved as a married couple to manage the Ord Arms Hotel and when it then came

onto the market they managed with family help to get the funds together to buy it. After a long and successful stay in Muir of Ord, during which their three children were born, the Frasers bought the Fraser Arms in Kiltarlity (now "Brockie's Lodge") in 1971 from Bill Fraser, who had built it. Willie's aunt had died in 1972 and left them the house and croft at Corrick and in 1972 the family moved from Muir of Ord to Kiltarlity.

Though Willie employed a manager at the Fraser Arms, he continued to do the cooking himself. In 1977 he sold the hotel and was able to devote more time to working the croft and one acre garden producing prize winning vegetables and tending his beloved roses day and night.

It was a great shock to the family when Edna, 15 years younger than Willie, developed cancer and died in March 2008, just a day before their 49th wedding anniversary. Just three days later, Willie was admitted to hospital after a fall in which he broke his hip. He went into Raigmore Hospital on the 30th March and was never able to return to his beloved Corrick. He passed away peacefully on the 19th August in the County hospital in Invergordon.

Willie and Edna are survived by their family of three. James, married with one child, has his own drill company in Bermuda. Sharon, a midwife, lives near Edinburgh with husband Grahame and their two children and Melvin works in Human Resources with HSBC and is married with two children.

off as a minor disagreement ends up as a full-blown dispute, causing everyone stress and worry.

When you get in touch with Highland Community Mediation we'll talk things over with you, and if we can help, we will arrange to visit both you and your neighbour separately in your own homes. You may not be sure that your neighbour will want to see us but they almost always do. This is because just about everyone involved in a dispute wants it to stop, even though it may not feel like it at the moment.

Our job is to help you find a way to resolve even the most difficult problems in a way that will suit everyone involved. If

everyone is willing, we will arrange a meeting to work out a way forward. Mediation meetings are organised so that everyone has a chance to speak and to be listened to, and it is the job of the mediators to ensure everything goes smoothly. Nine out of ten end in an agreement

If there are special reasons why people can't meet in person, we can sometimes arrange to help resolve the dispute without a meeting.

Highland Community Mediation, has been operating in the Highland Council area since August 2004 and offers a mediation service free of charge, and open to anyone living in the Highland Council area,

The aim is to help people who are experiencing difficulties in their neighbourhood to try to reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

Referrals may be made by any individual but may also be through the local authority service, police or other public services. You can get in touch either by referral form or simply by telephoning 01463 716325.

Highland Community Mediation

Ballantyne House, 84 Academy Street. Inverness IV1 1LU

Tel: 01463716325

Fax: 01463716326

Email info@highland.sacro.org.uk

Web: www.sacro.org.uk

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Highland Community Mediation

We all want to be able to enjoy our own home, though sometimes, it's not easy. There are so many things these days that can cause problems between neighbours - noise, pets, children, parking, fences - it's no wonder sometimes things just get out of hand. Every so often, what starts

Councillor Helen Carmichael reports Beauly Square survey

During the past month we have been surveying residents about Beauly Square. We asked about the problems they had encountered and any improvements they could suggest. We have now completed our survey, which asked questions about parking, pedestrian areas and pavements.

The initial results clearly show that parking is the major problem and we need to do something about it. Almost all respondents (9 out of 10) agree on a one way traffic system for both sides of the Square. In addition 85% have the opinion the main part of the square should be lined off for parking including disabled bays and wider pavements with some café style tables and chairs. Over at the narrow side of the Square the results were close between a total or partial pedestrian area. The full results will be in the next issue of the Beauly News which is due out before Christmas. Thereafter the results will go to the Traffic planners to design a layout which should alleviate the problems highlighted in the survey. My thanks to all of you who returned the survey forms, your additional comments have been noted.

FESTIVE GREETINGS

As another year draws to a close it is time to remember those members of our community who sadly are no longer with us, and to celebrate the new babies who have arrived to complete the circle of life.

My sincere thanks to Kiltarlity Community Council for their support at the Public Inquiry into the Pylons and Balblair sub station, and to all our residents for making our area a good place to live, work and raise our families.

May I wish you all A Very Merry Christmas and Good Health in 2009
Councillor Helen Carmichael.

DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

Our survey on Beauly Square included the pedestrian areas, the pavements and parking. The initial results show agreement that parking is a major problem and something has to be done about it. Almost all respondents (9 out of 10) agree on a one way traffic system for both sides of the Square.

In addition 87% think the main part of the square should be lined off for parking including disabled bays and would like to see wider pavements with café style tables and chairs. On the narrow side of the Square more agree the area should be a no car area (87%) while 74% said it should be partially pedestrianised.

Councillor Drew Hendry on Rubbish Attitudes

I once stopped in the street to challenge a girl who had picked the tomato slices from her sandwich and was casually throwing them on to the pavement, with a

litter bin only feet away.

Not only making the place look bad, but this was also creating a slipping hazard. I got a bit of abuse for my trouble, but that didn't worry me as I hope that the next time at least the girl will think about what she is doing if she throws her rubbish away.

It's not just the young, of course; it involves people of all ages and social status, including the middle aged van driver who threw a newspaper and other rubbish from his van just before I pulled up beside him at the lights.

I mention these incidents to make a point about rubbish and our attitude to it.

Fortunately, the majority of the people round here are good considerate neighbours and show respect to other places when visiting. I like to think that most of us wouldn't dream of littering like this. However, I am equally sure that a lot of us have seen this type of thing going on.

Often a wee bit of litter leads to more litter and this can sometimes lead to other things such as vandalism. It certainly reduces neighbourhood pride, so it's not something that should be taken too lightly.

When we see rubbish at the roadside, or anywhere else for that matter, it makes our own environment a bit less special and less likely to be respected by others. It is hard to challenge those who don't think or simply don't care, but this is something that we will need to do if we want to cut down on this behaviour.

The first step is to tackle the rubbish that is already there and to start to build pressure to keep things clean.

The Council, of course, has a duty to clean up the verges as well as other litter, and if you notice something that needs attention then you should call the council on 01463 702200. They are very good at attending to calls, but please let me or any of your other ward councillors, know if it is not dealt with quickly.

Littering is an offence and there are enforcement officers to take litter louts to task, so if you feel it's not happening then let's hear about it.

Cllr Drew Hendry
Aird and Loch Ness, Ward 13
Old Kilcoy House
Tore
Ross-shire
IV6 7RZ
Phone/Fax 01463 811480

Fly tipping - and tidy dogs
By Peter Taylor

I am the Education and Enforcement Officer with the Highland Council and my role is to address the issues of Fly Tipping, Litter, Dog Fouling, Abandoned Vehicles and Commercial Waste Man-



agement. The Education part of my job involves speaking to children, members of the public and businesses making them aware of the Law and possible consequences of breaking it. The Enforcement aspect involves the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for Dog Fouling, Littering and Fly Tipping.

Recently I was contacted by Tomnacross Primary School Pupil Council with regard to the amount of dog mess on the footpath that runs along side the road from the school to the village, an inspection of the path did indeed confirm that some dog owners are letting their dogs foul and not picking up. This is completely unacceptable and aside from the mess, constitutes a health risk to the children using the path (see toxocarasis on the internet) and is a breach of the Dog Fouling Act Scotland (2003).

I have erected signs explaining the legislation at each end of the path as well as arranged for free dog waste bags to be available from the Community Centre, and would also remind people that dog waste is now classified as household waste and therefore can be deposited in your own bins as well as the dog waste bin provided at the village end of the road and I will be monitoring the situation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the vast majority of responsible owners who do pick up after their dogs.

I can be contacted at:

Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey.
TEC Services,
94 Diriebught Road,
Inverness, IV2 3QN

Birds in Autumn and Winter

by
Malcolm Harvey

Whichever date is the official start of autumn, 1st September for meteorologists, or the autumnal equinox on 22/23 September for others, to me the sight of Swallows gathering on telephone wires prior to migrating to South Africa is the classic sign of the approach of autumn.

The Swallow has always been one of my favourite birds and it is amazing to think that from the time we see them departing in September, to their return next spring to the same outbuildings where they had reared their young, they will have travelled many thousand of miles, encountering many hazards, on their journey all the way to South Africa. In recent years in late autumn, I have watched migrating swallows feeding amongst the large herds of game on the African Plains and also in early spring heading back north across the Sahara Desert and through passes of the High Atlas mountains of Morocco. On these occasions it always crosses my mind that maybe one or two of the birds I am watching in these exotic situations could be our Highland birds.

The first visitors of the autumn are the skeins of Pink-footed Geese flying over towards their wintering grounds in Southern Scotland and England. They breed in central Iceland and because the climate there is more severe, they have to move out earlier than the Greylag Geese which breed in the milder coastal fringe of Iceland.

The Pink-footed Goose is fairly easily distinguished from the Greylag Goose by the characteristic fairly high pitched "wink, wink" note in its calls compared with the characteristic farmyard goose sound of the Greylag which tends to overfly us later in the autumn as well as wintering on our Firths.

Since I started carrying out wildfowl counts on the Beaulie Firth in 1967, there have been marked changes in the status of Pink-footed Geese in the north of Scotland. In those early days, all the Pink-footed Geese typically overflowed the Highlands in autumn, returning to spend several weeks in the early spring on the Firths, feeding up before making the onward journey to Iceland. Nowadays, not only has the population substantially increased, (unlike the Greylag which has declined overall) but many now remain to spend the winter around our Firths.

Towards the end of September and into October, large numbers of Thrushes arrive from Scandinavia and north Russia, and can be readily seen feeding in fields and especially on the crop of rowan berries. If the berry crop is a poor one, the majority

tend to move on fairly quickly to their winter quarters further south in Britain and on the continent.

Two species are involved and often occur together in large mixed flocks. The Redwing is a similar, but slightly smaller version of the Song Thrush (which is mainly a summer visitor to the Highlands) but is distinguished by a pale streak above the eye and reddish flanks. The other species is Fieldfare which usually arrives slightly later (although there is much overlap) and is much larger with a grey and rusty back and streaked yellowish underparts. It can be readily identified by its "chack, chack" call when flying over.

Blackbirds and Starlings also arrive in the autumn from northern Europe in large numbers to augment our resident populations.

In late October or November some years, large numbers of the exotic looking Waxwing appear when the berry crop fails in their native haunts in Scandinavia and North Russia coinciding with high population levels. From a distance it resembles a greyish Starling in size and shape but close up it has an unmistakable pinkish-chestnut crest, pinkish underparts and yellow-tipped tail. In good years they occur in gardens feeding on cotoneaster and other berries and are very tame.

However for me, the characteristic bird of the autumn is the Robin whose rather wistful, trilling song is the only bird song regularly heard at this time of the year. Although it is resident, it is even more readily seen in the autumn than in the spring. Both males and females sing and set up territories in the autumn which they fiercely defend. As winter progresses the females give up their territories and join the males.



Just to show the birds don't have it all their own way—this one is red,; and that's a robin below.



Boblainy Forest's potential to be explored

Representatives of Kiltarlity Community Council are to meet with the Forestry Commission in January to hear of progress on the Forest Plan for Boblainy Forest, published some years ago, and to discuss what the Commission propose for improved access and recreation.

The Community Council is also keen to learn of progress with community partnerships elsewhere and to find out how appropriate these might be to Boblainy. Some members of the Community Council feel that Boblainy Forest is a very valuable community asset but would like to see its potential being more fully realised.

An example of the hidden and unvisited "treasures" of the Boblainy is the little known Cunnaskiach Waterfall which, though not shown on local Landranger O.S. map (No 26), is at least a hundred feet high and surrounded by much higher cliffs. Readers may be interested in a walk organised for March 15th by the Inverness Ramblers and led by local member Floris Greenlaw, who is also a member of Kiltarlity Community Council. Local residents are invited to join the walk, starting at about 9.30 am near Ardendrain. The route will be mostly on forest tracks but boots are advisable. Since the date is still a little time away, anyone interested is advised to phone Floris on 01463 741342 for more information now or nearer the time.

Innes - Derek & Ruth (nee Wiper) are pleased to announce the safe arrival of their lovely daughter Sophie. A sister for Julia, born on 6th November at Raigmore hospital.

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Sunday	CLOSED

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Further massive extension proposed for Balblair

Although the evidence brought to the Beaully Denny transmission line Public Inquiry is still being considered and it may be well into 2009 before the Report is published, Scottish and Southern Energy have now submitted a further application to enlarge Balblair Substation. This will be in addition to the massive extension already controversially being considered along with the transmission line application.

Scottish and Southern had already asked to expand the substation by 7 hectares even though opponents of the overhead pylons had maintained that this application should not be considered before it was known whether or not the new transmission line would go ahead, and in what form. But SSE were nevertheless allowed to argue for their 7 hectares expansion proposal at a Public Inquiry held in Beaully in May and the decision will be announced at the same time as the main Inquiry.

One of the company's arguments at this Inquiry was that the additional structures would be some distance from the public road at a lower level, and out of sight behind trees. However, the latest application, for a further 3.5 hectares, which SSE say they require to bring in power by the projected underground cable from the Western Isles through Wester Ross, would consist of an Electrical Converter Substation comprising two very large buildings housing electrical equipment and further electrical and cooling plant outdoors, adjacent to the west side of the existing Sub-station.

Kilmorack Community Council point out, "During the Public Inquiry, we were informed that this area was designated for screening of the original planned expansion. The subsequent loss of screening and further destruction of trees for security fencing will make the whole development highly visible and detrimental to the landscape and beauty of the area."

In addition Kilmorack Community Council, who are fully supported by Kiltarlity Community Council in opposing the new application, say, "We question the validity of this application as the Lewis Wind Farm project has been rejected. We consider this application to be premature to the outcome of the Public Inquiry into the Beaully to Denny power line and the existing Balblair Substation Planning Application and we are

concerned that the Reporter(s) will base decisions on outdated information."

Kilmorack point out that during the Public Inquiry into the previous expansion application, "there was no mention of the need to make further expansion of the Substation. In this regard, the fears of the local community are borne out by the lack of transparency shown by SHETL (SSE and partners) throughout the Inquiry process. This large company has refused to submit all the planning applications at the same time creating confusion and distrust. It suggests either a lack of strategic planning or total disregard for the opinions and welfare of the local community."

At its November meeting Kiltarlity Community Council agreed to submit an official objection to Highland Council and also to write the Reporters to the Beaully Denny Inquiry to express concern at this fresh application.

Kilmorack Community Council are appealing to local residents, including Kiltarlity folk, to submit letters of objection to Highland Council Planners and MSPs. Standard letters have been distributed and information can be had from Teresa Shaw, Secretary, Kilmorack Community Council, on 782853, or e-mail: teresa.haw2@yahoo.com

SSE to pay transmission line Community Benefit to a community council

From the start, applicants Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) made clear that, although millions were to be paid out to local communities by windfarm developers, there was no question of community benefit payments to any of the communities along the route of the proposed Beaully Denny 400 kilovolt pylon line.

But earlier this year Aircity, a windfarm company partly owned by SSE, agreed to make an annual contribution of £3000 to Moorfoot Community Council, south of Edinburgh, since equipment will pass through the area and underground transmission cables are to be laid through Moorfoot to the grid connection, though the proposed wind farm itself will be further south, in the Borders. Moorfoot CC hope to spend the money on environmental projects in their area.

Like the line which is to pass under-

ground through Moorfoot, the purpose of the Beaully Denny line is to take south the power to be produced by wind farms. However, SSE have made clear that Kiltarlity is expected to host the massive overhead line with no prospect of any community payment.

At the Public Inquiry both Highland Council and Kiltarlity Community Council highlighted the unfairness which would result if it was decided that the giant pylons would pass through communities which were to receive no benefit whatsoever. However, Kiltarlity representatives were anxious to stress that the substantial community benefit which should be paid should be put towards the extra costs of undergrounding the line.

Advertising in the KILTARLITY NEWS

If you are interested in advertising in the *Kiltarlity News*, we can offer space in the Service Directory where we will print a maximum of 30 words for a cost per issue of £5.

We can also offer display/box advertisements which would have up to 150 words and would be approximately either 5 column centimetres (5 cm X 5 cm approx) or 10 column centimetres (ie twice as high or twice as broad). Cost per issue for a 5 cm box is £15 and for a 10 cm box £25.

Other sizes and designs can be arranged.

For the next issue please send your requirements and text by 31 March 2009 to:

rdmaclean5@berisay.co.uk

or post to

R D MacLean, 'Berisay', Culburnie, Kiltarlity IV4 7JJ (01463 741323).

Young Kiltarlity Accordionist kept busy

Twenty-three year old Matthew Maclennan has been travelling far and wide with his accordion, which he started to learn at 7 years old. This year he was invited, along with a young Shetland fiddler Dana Jamieson, to play at the Cannes International Film Festival, following which they were invited to Norway for six days.

Matthew had various tutors starting with the late Jim Savage Loudon,



Laura Anne Maclean, younger daughter of David and Eileen Maclean, Boblainy, and Gary MacKenzie younger son of Ian and Hazel MacKenzie formerly of the Meadows Muir of Ord, were married on 16th August at Tomnacross Church. The Reception took place at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer.



Glaichbea, finally travelling regularly to Aberdeen to polish his skills under Peter Farnham, one of the best tutors in the scene. This involved fortnightly 240 mile round trips for one or other of his parents - for a one hour lesson, but well worth it.

Shortly after leaving school Matthew spent some time in the Shetland Isles and took part in the music scene there, playing with Da Frustra Band, Jimmy Burgess and other Shetland musicians. He has also played with the Jarl Squad in Shetland's Up-Helly-Aa Festival, held every year in late January, and the Jarl Squad has also had him playing in the Scottish Parliament and on a visit to Norway.

From an early age Matthew has taken part in competitions, which meant more driving for his parents but also many happy gatherings of musicians and new family friends. Oban hosts the only invitation only competition in Scotland. Six accordionists are invited along with six fiddlers to compete for the Masters trophy and Matthew has been fortunate to win the accordion section trophy three times in a row. For the last two years he has been a close runner up in the all-Scottish traditional final in Perth.

This winter has been very busy so far, with Matthew travelling to Thurso, Wick, Perth, Lairg, Duns, which is not far short of the English Border, and Oban again as the guest artist at the Accordion and Fiddle Club.

When you hear the strains of marches, strathspeys and reels at the bottom of the Church Road, it doesn't mean another dance in the Hall, but Matthew getting ready for his next trip with music from Kiltarlity.



Mathew MacLennan

The Iain Goodwill Trust (Scottish Charity Number SCO39831) Mark Goodwill

Iain was tragically killed by an accidently started car last October. This has been a truly devastating experience for us all and we want to do all we possibly can to stop such an unnecessary accident claiming another young life and devastating another family. As a consequence we formally established Iain's Trust and gained charitable status this year.

Initially, Iain's Trust will focus on preventing accidents like that which killed Iain, both by pressurising car manufacturers to modify car design, and by raising awareness among other parents of the potential for driveway accidents. We hope to have all new cars fitted with a secondary safety feature which prevents accidental starting, for example by requiring the driver to depress the clutch before turning the ignition. Automatic cars have already been modified so that they won't move if accidentally started.

We are aware of many instances where cars have been accidentally started by children, and this cheap and simple modification will go a long way to prevent further accidents. However, in the meantime parents and carers need to be made aware of how easy accidents involving cars can happen in their own driveway. Where do you keep your car keys? We used to keep them on high hooks; we now use a combination locked keybox.

We have had a great deal of support from Danny Alexander MP, Jim Fitzpatrick MP, the Minister for Transport, and Iain Hudghton, MEP, to effect this design change among car manufacturers. As well as the Department for Health and Shona Robinson, MSP, in an attempt to add information to relevant booklets distributed to young

TCC Report

What is TCC? It's Tomnacross Church Club. The group was formed 12 years ago, to provide a Christian focus for young people aged 11 (primary 7) and upwards. (There is no upper age limit.) The group meets weekly in the vestry during the morning service at Kiltarlity Church of Scotland.

What do we do in these meetings? We don't just talk about the Minister's theme of that week, we debate it. Everyone's view is equal whether we are discussing if we should continue to remember the dead from the world wars or how much we feel we do adhere to the ten commandments. We have also created our own hymns and performed them in church, thanks to our ever-tolerant organist, Jock Fraser!

What do we do outside of these meetings? We also have a range of activities which make use of the beautiful and exciting surroundings in which we live. This year these have ranged from horse-riding to skiing (sadly we can't turn beautiful sunny days into snowy days so it was dry-skiing rather than the snow we anticipated on the Friday night!) We have to contribute to the funding of these activities, which is part of the fun! So, we have made soup, baked, run bouncy castles and frozen at car boot fairs. We have also been on weekend and week camps at Teen Ranch, a Christian outdoor activity centre near Dundee. Daytime activities include horse-riding and canoeing and in the evenings there is the opportunity to debate Christian issues and take part in services.

All who join T.C.C. can be assured of a very warm welcome and an exciting time from within the church.

parents. Other charities working towards similar objectives, notably the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), are helping with our campaign, and are publicising this and other safety issues concerning vehicles and young children.

As well as taking an active role in the promotion of car safety issues, Iain's Trust will donate a proportion of the money raised each year to other charities with similar aims. In the future Iain's Trust hopes to support research into driveway accident statistics, providing more impetus for government involvement in safety issues. In the future, the fund will not be restricted to issues surrounding young children and domestic circumstances. At some point Iain's Trust may support wider road safety campaigns, for example those aimed at young cyclists and young and inexperienced drivers.

We would like to thank the Community for your tremendous support over the last 12 months and for all the exceedingly generous donations.

Mark Goodwill, (Telephone 741854).

Lovat Shinty Club Season 2008

By

John MacRitchie

For the first time since its inception Lovat gained the right to take its place in shinty's top league, the Premier Division.

From the outset we knew that with probably the youngest squad in the division it would be a huge task just surviving in the league. As it happened our stay was short and we have returned to Division One. However as a team and a club we gained valuable experience playing at the top level and improved our standard of shinty over the season. However, as many people commented, we won promotion a year or two too soon.

Throughout the season we competed well against the teams outwith the top four of Kingussie, Fort William, Newtonmore and Inverary. In fact, with a bit of luck we would have been in a better position. We lost to Lochaber 3-2 with the winning goal coming in the 93rd minute; we lost narrowly to Kyles 3-1 and 2-1, lost 4-3 away to Bute but won the home game 2-1. At Oban we lost 3-2 and at home drew 4-4 after being 4-2 up. The most disappointing defeats were to Strathglass 2-1 and 3-1.

Nevertheless, the team found some form with excellent draws against Newtonmore, 1-1, and Fort William, 3-3. The season concluded with a 5-3 defeat at Lochaber in what was actually a very entertaining game with Lochaber scoring late on to secure the win.

In the MacAulay and MacTavish cups we lost in the early rounds, both times to Fort William. In the Scottish cup we lost 3-1 to Bute in the quarter finals after beating a very good Skye side 5-4 at Portree.

In addition to our already young squad with the likes of Daniel Grieve, Callum Cruden, Callum Macaulay playing well, we 'blooded' Owen Ferguson, Greg Matheson, Tom Smith and James MacPherson. If we can keep this group of players together it will not be long before we are back in the Premier Division and be better placed to remain there.

The Club also had a visit from a Czech Republic film crew who were making a programme about Scottish

communities and Highland culture. They filmed our home game against Kyles Athletic. They were to stay for the first half only but they were enjoying the game and hospitality so much they stayed until the end.

The next major event on the calendar was the very successful annual sale on December 5th and now we look forward to the Lovat Cup on January 2nd at Beauly, followed by the dance in the Kiltarlity Village Hall.



Some action against Strathglass at Cannich, but not enough this time.

Tomnacross Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association

Parent Councils were introduced into schools by the Scottish Parliament during the summer of 2007 to replace the previous School Boards. Tomnacross Parent Council was formally established on the 2nd October 2007.

The main aims of the Parent Council are to:

- Support the School's staff in their work with pupils and parents
- Promote contact and communication between the school, parents, pupils, the wider community and the Highland Council.
- Represent the views of **all** parents and report back to them.

The Parent Council meetings are open to all parents and we would actively encourage more to attend! Our new Headteacher, Mr Gerry McKenna also kindly joins us and without his expertise we would be far less effective. There is currently a core group of parents regularly attending and as a result we are able to represent all classes from Nursery all the way through to Primary 7. Our major project over the

summer has been ensuring that the new school hall project got off the ground after endless years of deliberation from the Council. This fantastic new school facility should be in operation by early May next year.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has similar aims to the Parent Council, but is less directly involved with the educational aspects of the school. However, it is dedicated to organising fun (Halloween and Christmas parties *etc*) and fundraising events in order to buy educational and play items for the children. Last year the PTA was awarded Lottery money for the excellent, wood outdoor play equipment, and among other things we bought new software for the classroom SMART Boards, a number of play items and subsidised the travel for the school trips.

Parent Council and PTA meetings tend to be run as one and we try to meet roughly twice per term.

Mark G. Goodwill
Chairman, Tomnacross Parent Council

Prehistoric remains at Glebe Farm, Kiltarlity

Nothing further has happened with regard to the archaeological work on this site. Because the housing development is on hold at present, further archaeological work is not proposed until the remainder of the area is stripped of topsoil. The archaeological report will follow.

If the development does not go ahead, Highland Council archaeologists will ask for a report on the work done to date. This report will be made available in Inverness Library and also on the archaeology website at <http://her.highland.gov.uk>

Work already done revealed a cluster of small pits, some of which contained prehistoric pottery, charcoal and charred seeds. A full study of these artefacts will be made following production of the report. The pits did not appear to represent the remains of a structure, but have been tentatively interpreted as a 'working area'. It is hoped that monitoring the topsoil stripping across the rest of the site will provide more information on the nature of these features and the prehistoric presence within the wider area.