

STRATHDEARN NEWSLETTER

November 2009

Volume 9, No 4.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR TOMATIN

Richard Heggie, Planning Consultant for the Tomatin Estate, attended the September CC Meeting to discuss plans the estate has to build approximately 20 houses in the wooded field between Sandside and the back Station Road, with a quota of approximately 5 affordable houses, possibly to be built in the field opposite Tomatin Church, in the area between the School and the Viaduct. (The numbers are approximate at present as the site analysis work has not been completed.) The estate is also identifying a site for a shop. The estate hopes to apply for planning permission before the end of the year.

The Inverness Local Plan sets out Highland Council's requirements for these sites, including the need for provision of land to accommodate a 1.0 hectare community playing field within the main housing site or elsewhere.

The CC's Football Field Sub-Group are currently trying to secure a sports field on which football, shinty and cricket could be played. Mr Heggie reckons that a shinty pitch would need a minimum of 0.82 hectares, plus some surrounding space.

The sports field is one option the community could choose as planning gain. If this was the community's majority view, the Estate would gift the land to the community, probably via the Strathdearn Community Charitable Trust. The Estate would not intend to provide the pitch itself or any associated facilities. The Football Field Sub-Group would see a sports field as their preferred option, possibly in the field opposite the planned housing development, between Pinewood and Porter's Lodge. Members of the Football Field Sub-Group have been advised to submit individual letters from their sports' clubs and teams saying that the sports field would be their preferred option.

But what do **YOU** think? The estate is consulting the community to find out what the majority of the community would like – a sports field, or something else? Another suggestion is a footpath connection between the northern and southern parts of the village. The Paths Sub-Group have, with the CC's permission, commissioned Chris Cairns of Conserve to carry out a paths survey, so this is another topical suggestion. Or would you like to suggest something completely different?

**Please send all your suggestions, comments and views to
Mr Richard Heggie, Urban Animation, 22 Westhall Gardens, Edinburgh EH10 4JG Tel: 0131 477 0676
Mobile: 0775 106 4937 E-mail: urban.animation@blueyonder.co.uk**

BY WEDNESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER, sending a copy to the CC to help us in our discussion at our next CC Meeting on TUESDAY 17TH NOVEMBER and our eventual submission to the estate.**COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

**First Monday of the Month
September to May (ex.January)**

7.30pm, Findhorn Room,
Strathdearn Hall

WRI

Contact: Mrs Carol James 531220

2nd & 4th Mondays of Month

7.30pm Findhorn Room,
Strathdearn Hall

Needlecraft

Contact: Mrs Chris West 511412

3rd Monday of Month

7.30pm Findhorn Room
Strathdearn Hall,

Gardening Club

Contact: Mr Alex Don 511729

Every Wednesday

10.30am Findhorn Room,
Strathdearn Hall,

Community Coffee Morning

All Welcome

Every Wednesday

2pm Strathdearn Hall

Walking Group

Contact: Mrs Kathy Bonniface 511740

Every Wednesday

7.30pm Findhorn Room
Strathdearn Hall

Art Class

Contact: Mrs Betty Watson 511271

Every Thursday

11am – 12noon Tomatin Inn

Coffee Morning

All welcome

Every Thursday

11.30am – 1.30pm Tomatin Inn

POST OFFICE

Every Thursday

1.30pm Findhorn Room,

Strathdearn Hall,
Art Class
Contact: Mrs Betty Watson 511271

Every Friday (NB Change of day)
10.30am Findhorn Room
Strathdearn Hall
Exercise to Music group
Contact: Mrs Denise Barley 511733

(During Term-Time)
Fridays 12.15 - 2.15pm
Strathdearn Hall
Croileagan Tom Aitinn
(Tomatin Gaelic Playgroup)
Contact: Mrs Rosemary Dempster 531215

Monthly, various dates
Natural History Club
Some indoor, some outdoor, events.
Days vary, so look out for posters.
Contact: Mr David Bonniface 511740
or Mrs Carol James 531220

1st Strathdearn Rainbow
and Brownie Unit
for girls aged 5 - 10.
Contact: Trish (511486)

Beaver Scout Colony
For boys and girls aged 6-8.
Contact: Ruth Mantle 511287

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sun 8th November:
Strathdearn Hall 10.30/ War Memorial 3pm **Remembrance Day** Services.

Fri 13th November:
Strathdearn Hall 7pm:
Hospice Fundraiser Raffle, teas, baking, bring and buy.

Sat 14th November:

Strathdearn Hall 12 noon:

Help the Homeless Lunch

SIMON COX

It is with great sadness that the wife and family have to announce the death of Simon Cox, aged 69, of the Old Manse, Tomatin, on 11th October in the Highland Hospice after a short and sudden illness. He was full of life, always smiling and laughing, and will be sorely missed.

If anyone wishes, donations to the Hospice would be much appreciated.

Strathdearn Beaver Scout Update

The 30th Inverness (Strathdearn) Beaver Scout colony will hold its first meeting on Monday 11th January from 5.45-6.45pm at Strathdearn Primary school. Meetings will be held weekly during school term time with occasional weekend activities.

Beaver Scouts are young people (boys and girls) usually aged between six and eight years old. They belong to the first and youngest section in the Scouting family. Young people can join Beaver Scouts in the three months leading up to their sixth birthday.

Easily recognised by their distinctive turquoise sweaters, Beaver Scouts enjoy making friends, playing games, going on visits and helping others. Behind the fun of Beaver Scouts, there is an educational programme with 6 main areas which are: Outdoor and Adventure, Global, Community, Fit for Life, Creative and Beliefs and Attitudes.

The Beaver Scout Leader is Ruth Mantle and the Assistant Beaver Scout Leader is Sarah Macdonald. We also have Hannah Bell, Murray Manson and Robbie Taylor-Dempster on board as Duke of Edinburgh volunteers. Debbie Wrightson is the secretary of the colony and we are actively seeking others to join the team! All adult volunteers will be subject to a Disclosure Scotland check. We are fortunate to have been granted monies from the Strathdearn Charitable Trust and we are grateful for their support.

If you would like more information on how your child can join in the fun or ways in which adults can volunteer then please get in touch.

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you!
Ruth Mantle
01808 511287 strathdearnbeavers@yahoo.co.uk

HELP THE HOMELESS

The Inverness Churches' run Inverness Care Shelter provides hot meals and accommodation in Church Halls in the city for people who would otherwise be sleeping rough in Inverness. Moy, Dalarossie & Tomatin Church are to cook three meals for around 20 homeless people in the Shelter this year, and to raise funds for the food, invite you to a

Fundraising Soup and Pudding Lunch

in the Strathdearn Hall from 12 noon – 2 pm on Saturday 14th November

(No Admission Charge – you are requested to leave a donation
for the amount you would normally spend on lunch)

VACANCY FOR A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR

At our October CC meeting we regretfully accepted the resignation of Andy Brown who has had to step down due to his new post with the Scottish Police College. Andy provided a lot of good advice to the CC and will be missed, but we wish him well in his new job. Nominations for a replacement, co-opted community councillor will be sought at our next meeting on 17th November from residents in the Strathdearn area.

Matthew West Wild Bird Food

After 10 years of selling wild bird food we are sorry to report that we are no longer trading. Due to rising costs of the various bird foods and fuel costs it is not viable for us to carry on.

We are very sorry for any inconvenience this may cause. We would also like to say a big thank you to all customers past and present.

Betty's Recipe

JUGGED HARE

1 hare

1pt stock

4 rashers bacon

2 onions

herbs

1 tblsp lemon juice

3oz flour

redcurrant jelly. seasoning

forcemeat balls (Mix chopped hare liver, 4oz breadcrumbs, parsley, 1oz suet, 1egg. Form into balls and fry).

Cut hare into joints and roll in flour.

Dice bacon and fry with hare

Turn into casserole with herbs, onions and lemon juice.

Cover and cook 3hrs in moderate oven

Thicken gravy with flour, add balls and heat. Serve with redcurrant jelly

TOM NAN CLACH WINDFARM

Mr Mark van Rij, Project Manager, Infinergy; Mr Graeme Strachan, Consultant; and Ms Jean Cumming from Platform One updated the community about their plans at the October Community Council meeting.

HIGHLAND FOOD BANK

The Highland Food Bank (part of the work of Blythswood Care) works in collaboration with partner agencies (both statutory and voluntary organisations) who refer clients who for various reasons are facing financial crisis and are unable to buy food for themselves. These clients are either given a voucher which they can bring to the Food Bank Centre in Inverness (open 12 noon – 2 pm Tuesday – Friday) to exchange for non-perishable food items, or (if they live outside Inverness or are facing a crisis on a day when the Centre is not open) they are provided with an ‘Emergency Food Box’.

Each client receives for themselves and for their family (where appropriate) a three day supply of food together with suggested nutritious recipes to help them make the best use of the food. The intention is that this three day period should provide the client a ‘breathing space’ enabling them to find help to put their finances on a more stable basis. However, it is recognised that some clients may require further vouchers and each client is limited to a maximum of three vouchers within a given space of time.

During 2008 the Highland Food Bank helped nearly a thousand more people than in 2007. The most common causes of their financial difficulties were delays in payment of benefits (36%), homelessness (18%), low income (16%) and debt (7%). And the current recession has meant that this year many more people are needing their help. Already in 2009 2,588 people have received food – an increase of 49% over the same period last year.

The Highland Food Bank depends on donations of food via collections at churches and supermarkets. Moy, Dalarossie & Tomatin Church supports the Food Bank and collects donations of food at the Family Services held in the Strathdearn Hall on the second Sunday of each month at 10.30 am. Anyone wishing to donate food (from the list of food items listed below) – please contact Vivian (511355), Sandra (511246), Michelle (511411) or Jackie (511325).

Items Requested by the Highland Food Bank

Breakfast Cereal; 500g/1kg Packets of Pasta; 500g/1kg Packets of Rice; Tinned Potatoes; Oatcakes/Crackers; Tinned Vegetables; Tinned Tomatoes; Tinned Fruit; Long Life Fruit Juice; Tinned Ham/Corned Beef; Tinned Creamed Soup; Tinned Soup; Tinned Tuna/Salmon; Tinned Mince/Stew; UHT Whole Milk; Tinned Custard/Rice; Teabags/Coffee; Sugar.

Strathdearn Primary School

News from Primary 3 pupils:

I love being back at school because Mrs Davidson is back. **Anna MacQueen**

I missed Mrs Davidson. **Melissa Ross**

I am glad to be back at school I can not tell a lie! **Michaela Fioretti**

I liked making a space rocket at school. I like seeing my teacher again. **Rachel Morrison**

I like the new stuff in our house corner and I like Mrs Davidson coming back. **Skye Burdell**

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News from Primary 4-5:

We all had a very interesting October holiday. Andrew told us he had been in Italy and brought back lava rock from Mount Etna. Sophie went to France and brought back a snake skin. Katie and Alexander had a mini break at Crieff Hydro where they met new friends. Rosalie went to Deep Sea World and saw three sharks. Lauren had fun at Abriachan with her mum and the dogs.

This term we are looking forward to our trip to Abriachan where we will be mountain biking and orienteering. We always love Halloween and Bonfire night but best of all Christmas! We are hoping to have parties and maybe even a show.

Our work is going to get better every minute of every hour of every day of every week!!

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News from Primary 6-7

The P6/7 class have just recently returned from our fun filled holidays, but we are all excited about coming back and seeing all of our friends!

Mrs Ferguson has just come back to the school after her maternity leave to be teaching us and the other two classes so we are all excited for her return.

This term there is lots to look forward to: we have TASC (Thinking Actively in a Social Context), the pantomime and of course Christmas. We will be putting on a Christmas play/ musical, the whole school will be going to Aviemore to see Sleeping Beauty pantomime and lots more.

We are all sad that Mrs Macrae has left the school, but are happy that she will be in school on Monday as she will be covering for Mrs Robinson and we hope she has a good time teaching in other schools.

Nature Notes from Dalarossie

Autumn, the season of mellow fruitfulness, is here. This year is particularly fruitful, with the Rowan tree branches drooping under the weight of berries and the garden shrubs and trees all displaying great quantities of fruit.

The rowan berries have attracted unusually large numbers of migratory thrushes. Every morning for the last couple of weeks I have looked out of the kitchen window at clouds of Fieldfares feeding on them. There have been several hundred of these handsome birds here at any one time with even more flying over. In previous years the rowan berries have mainly been eaten by the Mistle thrushes before the Fieldfares arrive from Scandinavia but this year there have been fewer Mistle thrushes, and the Fieldfares have arrived earlier.

The Cotoneaster berries in the garden have also attracted migrants: there have been two male Blackbirds feasting on them. For most of the year, my garden is Blackbird-free but in autumn I often see one or two at a time for a couple of days before moving further south.

The pheasants and squirrels have also been eating the cotoneaster berries. Until a few months ago I had seen very few squirrels in the garden since I moved in eight years ago, in spite of putting nuts out for the birds all year round. This autumn, however, up to five squirrels have been in the garden at any one time, eating berries and hiding nuts. These are carried down the wooden post the feeders hang on and across the hard standing to the flower beds. A cluster of pheasants often hang around at the bottom of the post hoping for some bits of nuts to drop. One day a squirrel came down the post and, instead of going round the pheasant, jumped onto its back and then to the ground! The pheasant was so surprised that it jumped and squawked, surprising the squirrel in turn, who dropped the nut and ran off. One up to the pheasant!

Another day I was watching a cock pheasant eating cotoneaster berries when a mouse ran by. The pheasant watched it intently and then ran across and pecked vigorously at it. It attacked several times, throwing the mouse about four or five times before disappearing into the flowerbed with the mouse in its beak. A short while later it reappeared without the mouse. When I went out I found a well-pecked mouse carcass in the flowerbed. I had not known until then that pheasants will eat rodents, lizards and small birds as well as vegetation and insects. Two up to the pheasants!

I wonder what else this autumn will show me. I'll keep watching and let you know.

Carol James

STRATHDEARN FLOWER SHOW 2009
PRIZE WINNERS

- **FLOWER SECTION - The Commemorative Shield:** Denise Barley
2nd Madge Fraser 3rd Pat Wells
- **VEGETABLE SECTION –The J M Gleeson Quaich:** Alec Don
2nd Billy Hendry 3rd Madge Fraser)
- **BAKING AND PRODUCE –The Carillon Trophy:** Madge Fraser
2nd Sheila Don) 3rd Sandra Flett
- **ART SECTION – The United Utilities Trophy:** Jean MacRae/Michelle Bertie
3rd = Stan Beaumont, Betty Watson
- **HANDICRAFTS – The Silver Salver:** Jo Irwin
2nd Sheila Don, 3rd = Alasdair Wallace, Carol James, Jan Wilson, Ruth Mantle
- **FLORAL ART – The National Windpower Rose Bowl:** Carol James
2nd Kathy Bonniface, 3rd Pat Wells
- **PHOTOGRAPHY – The Neil Thomson Shield:** Carol James
2nd = Bob Irwin, Denise Barley
- **BEST SCENTED ROSE – The Rose Cup:** Madge Fraser
- **MILLENNIUM CUP 2008 goes to Winner of Handicrafts:** Jo Irwin

FINALLY for the most Overall Points:-

- **THE STRATHDEARN TROPHY:** Madge Fraser
2nd Alec Don 3rd Denise Barley
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- **CHILDREN**

Calendula Challenge

Under 8 Years - no entries

9 to 12 Years (received medals):

Gold: Lewis MacKay Silver: Gavin Kippen, Lauren Kippen Bronze: Sebastian Beaumont

OVERALL:

UNDER 8 Years: ---- (book token) Sophie Ross 2nd Melissa Ross 3rd Finn Mantle

9 to 12 Years: ----- (book token) Lauren Kippen 2nd Georgia Ross 3rd Sebastian Beaumont

The JUBILEE CUP for Most Points (All Ages): Lauren Kippen

CORRYBROUGH ESTATE

Mr and Mrs John Tinsley and family have left Corrybrough after nearly 30 years during which time they generously gave the community the use of the Raigbeg Football Field, gave sites for affordable housing and donated the Raigbeg Green to the community. Our best wishes go with them all.

We welcome the Duke and Duchess of Bedford to Corrybrough and hope they and their family will be happy in Strathdearn.

From Dulnain Bridge to Nakom Nyah

Extracts from an unpublished book written by the late Murdo MacAskill, Alt-Dhubhag, recording his wartime experiences.

Another strange sight we witnessed in Changi was the departure of our Generals. All ranks from Brigadier upwards were at the gun park one morning waiting for conveyance to Singapore where they were to embark for Japan. A single lorry drove up, similar to those which took working parties to the city. The very smartly uniformed Generals in their red braided hats clambered aboard. There were over twenty of them, so it was standing room only, each holding on to the man in front. Though we sympathised with these unfortunate men in their humiliation, most of them middle aged, we could not help laughing at such an incongruous sight.

The following episode will illustrate the kind of officer/ordinary ranks relations that then prevailed. A high ranking Japanese general was to inspect us one day. A couple of hours or so before the appointed time we were marched to a large, open, level area. After a bit of manoeuvring we finally stood ten deep round three sides of a square and were told to sit down. Our five ranks of Signals were positioned behind five ranks of Engineers. Our senior officer, Colonel Holmes of the Australians, stood right in front of us about twenty yards away. A very smart, red-moustached officer, Major Ferguson, was engaged on a final check of all units. This completed, he approached Colonel Holmes from our right. With truly Guardsmanlike precision he halted before the Colonel and put up a faultless salute. This so impressed some of the Engineers sitting in front of us that they loudly clapped their hands in applause. His report completed, the major took one pace backwards and saluted again. Then, instead of making a right, or an about turn, he made a left turn, which placed him facing his audience, to whom he deeply bowed, then, straightening up, turned left again, and marched smartly away. This manoeuvre, of course, was loudly applauded by all who observed it.

During our time at Changi we received individual rations of ten cigarettes and an ounce of sugar every tenth day. As Vic and me were both compulsive smokers, and never tasted our sugar rations, these were immediately exchanged for cigarettes with non-smokers. With all the willpower we could muster, our twenty cigarettes would seldom last three days. No ends were ever thrown away; with the aid of any kind of paper we could get hold of they were recycled to produce further smokes. We also unashamedly picked up dog ends wherever we found them. With eyes like seagulls we could spot a dog end at a hundred feet and would always have a scrounge round the gun park and other likely places when very hard up. While thus engaged one Monday morning at the rifle range, and expecting to find a few ends about the stage after the previous Sunday evening show, I came on a wireless set underneath the stage. When I told Vic, he said he had already discovered it, and realising how necessary it was to keep it secret, had told no-one, not even me. We never went near it again.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH MEETS IN TOMATIN

Did you know that for over 1 year now the Seventh-Day Adventist Church has had a presence right here in your community? We worship together at Strathdearn Hall from 10am until 3pm almost every Sabbath (Saturdays).

DID YOU ALSO KNOW? – The Seventh-day Adventists are the 8th largest Christian Denomination in the world, with well over 15.7 million baptized members as of June 2008, this membership is spread over 203 countries. The main growth of the church is currently in Africa and Central/South America. On a worldwide level we operate over 170 hospitals, over 7000 Secondary and Elementary schools and over 100 colleges, universities and seminaries. We also run very successful television networks and radio stations on a worldwide basis too, like www.3abn.org.

We also get heavily involved in humanitarian work in over 120 countries around the world via our internationally recognised NGO - ADRA which is the Adventist Development and Relief Agency. This organisation brings disaster relief to these countries and aids in bringing freedom from poverty.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has been present in Scotland for the past 100 years but there was never a church in Inverness-shire until now. So why not come and join us at Strathdearn Hall where we study the word of God, Pray, Worship our Lord Jesus Christ, Sing and Fellowship together. Lunch is provided and ALL are welcome. Call Robert or Michelle for more info on **01808 511281** or visit www.adventist.org/beliefs or <http://www.adventistchurches.org.uk/history/scotland/scotland.php> for Adventist-Scottish History.

TOMATIN AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB PROGRAMME

All meetings at Strathdearn Hall 7.30pm.

New members always welcome.

Secretary: Sheila Don 511729

19th October – talk by members of Highland Bonsai Society

16th November – Mr Bob Moore, Chairman of Inverness Horticultural Society

21st December – Quiz Night

18th January 2010 – tba

15th February – AGM and Flower Show Schedule

Natural History Club

We started our 2009/2010 season in fine style with an entertaining and thought-provoking illustrated talk by James Fenton on “Upland Ecology”. The life cycle of peatlands was particularly topical, representing, as they do, a major carbon store.

In October we will once again have our tour of Strathdearn looking at seasonal changes – our own “Autumn Watch”.

In December we welcome Pete and Hilary Moore who will talk on “The Wild Garden”. Those who came on our tour of Insh marshes with Pete will remember his enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, nature. This should be of interest to those of all ages concerned with the school’s garden, as well as the rest of us who love to see wildlife (except rabbits!) in the garden.

In January we welcome back Tom Prescott whose earlier talk on butterflies was a highlight of 2007. This time he will talk on “Mainly Moths” and hopefully return later in 2010 to set up some moth traps.

Dates:

Autumn Watch Tuesday October 27th 1:30

The Wild Garden Thursday December 3rd 7:30

Moths Thursday January 27th 7:30

Club membership is open to all for a £5 membership fee. All our talks and events are also open to non members for a nominal admission fee of £1, with the exception of our May outing to the Aigas Centre which will be for paid up members only.

David Bonniface (Secretary)

Step It Up Highland

Autumn is now here, and with it the beautiful, changing colours of the trees and the hills. We have been enjoying monitoring these gradual, subtle changes on our Wednesday afternoon walks around Tomatin, Carrbridge and Moy. Certainly we walk for health, but also for so much more: the pleasure of the countryside and the companionship of our fellow walkers.

Please come and join us: we would be delighted to see you. Our regular meeting place is Strathdearn Hall at 2:00PM on Wednesday afternoons, although that does occasionally change. When the walk is over we all enjoy a blather over tea or coffee at the hall.

For more information contact Kathy or David Bonniface on 511740 or Carol James on 531220.

The Wednesday Community Coffee Morning

Most of you will know of the coffee morning in Strathdearn Hall at 10:30 AM, to which all are welcome. We have an unofficial rota to which people sign up for acting as hosts or hostesses for a particular Wednesday, and we pay £1 for the pleasure of real coffee and scrumptious scones and cakes: an excellent value treat!

Any profits from this venture are usually donated to charities of our choice. We are currently in the process of giving money to three charities: The Multiple Sclerosis Centre in Inverness; the Heartbeat Challenge which is raising money for a mobile heart monitor for the Raigmore Hospital Cardiology Department; and the Inverness branch of the RNLI. What a good way to enjoy ourselves and at the same time help others!

Carol James and Kathy Bonniface (current coordinators).

If you would like to....

- Receive Community Council Minutes by e-mail: contact Elspeth MacQueen 01463 772152 strathdearncc@tiscali.co.uk
- Use the community photocopier located at the Hall: contact Denise Barley 511733 Barley@btinternet.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR CONDOLENCES TO:

Mrs Julie Cox on the loss of her husband, Simon, who died peacefully at the Hospice on 11th October. He will be remembered for his helpfulness and cheerful nature and will be missed by all his friends in Strathdearn. Our thoughts are with Julie and his family at this sad time.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Dylan Robert MacGregor Hallam was born to Duncan and Lisa on 22nd August, 2009 weighing 8lb 6ozs. A wee brother for Lucy and a new grandson for Trish Hallam.
- Sam James Nixon was born to Ali and Lisa on 26th September, 2009 weighing 9lb 3ozs. A first grandchild for Bob and Evelyn Nixon.

AND WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- The Lord Macpherson of Drumochter and his bride who were married on 17th October in Edinburgh.
- And to Ali Cameron-Mackintosh and Karen Macrae who are getting married at the Free Church (Continuing) on 20th November.

We wish both couples a long and happy married life.

WELL DONE TO:

- Johann Roden, who is graduating from the University of Strathclyde this month with an MSc in Refugee and Migration Studies (Social Research). Johann is busy looking for work in social research but is meantime tutoring first year Sociology students at Strathclyde University.
- Robert Nixon had a very successful season playing for the Highland Cricket Club. He had taken the most wickets in the MacAllan League and his Club won the trophy. Congratulations to Robert and everyone in the team.
- Glenan Lodge Guest House has been awarded four stars – well done Lesley and Rob!

GET WELL SOON to:

Mrs Ann Glynne-Percy, who is recovering from a fall at the beginning of September when she broke her wrist.

And to the young man who suffered a serious foot injury when working in Distillery Wood in October.

NEW!! EVENING ART GROUP

The Art group (Art in Strathdearn) has decided to start running evening sessions – Wednesdays 7.30pm at the Findhorn Room, Strathdearn Hall from 4th November – to give an opportunity for those otherwise engaged during the day to enjoy the pleasures of quiet creativity away from the bustle and distractions of home life. As in the Thursday afternoon sessions, members will usually do whatever they fancy, and share tips and experiences as and when required. There are some stocks of paper and paints and books of advice available for those who presently lack materials but would like to have a go anyway. Most current members work with either watercolours or pastels, but oils, acrylics, silk and glass painting, pottery and mosaic-making also are/have been tackled. Cost: £.150 per session

Church of Scotland
Parish of Moy, Dalarossie and Tomatin
Minister: Rev R F Campbell, Daviot Manse, Daviot. Tel: 01463 772242
www.strathsnairnanddearn.co.uk

SUNDAY CLUB:

welcomes primary-school aged children every Sunday morning during term-time in the Strathdearn Hall at 10.30 am (except for the second Sunday of the month when there is a Family Service). Further information from Sandra 01808 511246.

THE GUILD:

meets in Tomatin Church at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month between September and April inclusive to hear some interesting talks and enjoy a time of fellowship. Speakers for the next few months are:

11th November: Chief Supt Andy Cowie, Northern Constabulary.

9th December: Christmas Night at 7.30 pm in the Strathdearn Hall
with Mrs Sandra Edward and Mrs May Buckle

13th January: DISCUSSION PROJECT: JUSTICE – WHAT CAN WE DO?
with Hymns chosen by members.

BREAKFAST CLUB:

Join us for breakfast (healthy options available!) in the Strathdearn Hall on the last two Mondays of November and January, beginning at 9.30 am. Stay for a discussion of a Bible passage, and a time of praise and prayer. Worried about yourself, or someone else, or a situation which is troubling you? If you would like us to pray for someone or something (confidentially), please contact Vivian on 01808 511355.)

CHURCH SERVICES during the winter months take place at 10.30 am at:

Dalarossie Church on the first Sunday of the month.

The Strathdearn Hall on the second Sunday of the month. (Tea served after this service)

Moy Church on the third (and fifth) Sunday of the month.

Tomatin Church on the fourth Sunday of the month.

All are most welcome to join in any or all of our Services or Activities

Strathdearn Sports Facility

I am delighted to be able to report that we have received the offer of another grant to help us build the outdoor covered sports facility which has been a priority for the community for some time. LEADER, has offered us a grant of £35,000.00 which when added to SportScotland's offer of £66,000.00 and the Gannochy Trust's grant of £10,000.00 gives us a total inward investment of £111,000.00.

LEADER is a programme financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community, and those of us involved in the negotiations with LEADER are grateful for all of the assistance given by local representatives.

We have asked the Strathdearn Charitable Trust for the remainder of the estimated cost: the Community Council recommended the application to the Trust at its last meeting, and are hopeful that building work will begin as soon as the Building Warrant is obtained.

Duncan J Hendry
Community Development Worker

WARTIME CHILDHOOD

I started school at Dalarossie at the beginning of the second world war. There was a swing bridge across the river Findhorn below Clune, where we lived. We then crossed the fields to the glen road and walked the three miles to Dalarossie school where Mrs Macdonald was schoolmistress. I remember getting dragged along by my sister, Jean and Doreen Stuart, who lived at Auchintoul. I think my little legs were giving out!

There was a sudden influx of pupils at Dalarossie, evacuees from Edinburgh, who were staying at Glenmazeran but they soon went back, preferring the risk of bombs to the isolation of country life. There was a family called Kings, of whom I was in awe as I thought they were royalty. It must have been quite difficult for Mrs Macdonald but I remember a kind man who used to tie my laces so he must have been a relief teacher.

Being country children, we weren't affected too greatly by rationing and our diet was pretty healthy, with home grown produce from the garden, eggs from the hens, and rabbits, hares and the odd salmon supplementing it, and the occasional boiling fowl and sheep's head from the farm next door making nourishing broth. They also supplied us with milk from their cows. Our rations of sweets we got from the shop and Jean said she always ate hers before she got home. I remember getting her butter as she preferred marge. How lucky can you get! Uncle Jock was a butcher in Comrie and used to send us parcels of pork sausage meat in cans which was disgustingly fatty! I remember seeing biscuit tins with wonderful pictures of assorted biscuits and wondering what they tasted like. The first time I tasted a banana was after the war. John Macpherson took one to school. I didn't think much of it but actually he ate the banana and gave me the skin! As part of the war effort we brought fruit to school to make jam, but ate most of it on the way home till we felt sick and poured the rest down rabbit holes!

We were taught to knit and made socks and mitts for the soldiers. Another contribution was collecting books which were sent to the troops. There was an award system where you got badges of rank from private, corporal, sergeant, etc, which were eagerly

sought after. John quickly reached the rank of colonel while the rest of us were still struggling up the ladder. Being in the farming community, he had a lot of willing subscribers but as a lot of the books were of a rather serious nature I think the troops would find them heavy going!

We were issued with gas masks in little cardboard boxes with a bit of string to go over our shoulders. We were thoroughly indoctrinated on careless talk, spies etc. Jean says she thought that walls really had ears! If we saw a plane, our strategy was to dive into the nearest ditch, regardless of mud. Fortunately we were never strafed. There was a large poster in the classroom displaying disguised explosive devices so when we found a strange object in the playground we immediately took action. It was about seven inches in diameter, a round, brightly patterned ball like object. On Tuesdays the bus went up the glen to Garbole, so Mrs Macdonald stopped it and got Bob the driver, an ex-policeman, to check it out. To our disappointment it turned out to be an ornamental china ball but where it came from we'll never know.

My father was in the Home Guard and took his duties very seriously. Jean, Alex and I were occasionally lined up and put through army drill and taught to march round the kitchen table. I can slope arms with the best of them to this day! I remember a cavalry regiment camping in the woods and being fed hard tack and cheese by the soldiers.

Our school holidays were spent with our grandmother in Comrie, Perthshire. We used to watch the German soldiers being marched from the railway station to Cultybraggan POW camp, defiantly singing German marching songs as they went. Sometimes one would escape from the camp but were usually caught. I think most of them were happy to be out of the war. Radio was our main connection to the outside world and the news was listened to anxiously. I remember hearing "Lord Haw-Haw" with his sardonic voice, "Gairmany calling" and Churchill's encouraging broadcasts; "Workers' Playtime" for the industrious munition workers and Tommy Handley with "Itma".

Betty Watson

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – 8th NOVEMBER

There will be a
Remembrance Sunday Family Service in the
Strathdearn Hall
at 10.30 am
and another Service at the
Strathdearn War Memorial at 3 pm
Poppies are available from all the usual outlets in
the village.

Into Battle

We lay there in the trenches
Covered in mud and flies
I heard a bugle playing
I heard a soldier cry

Across the nearby hillside
The sound of rifle fire
We were going into battle
Someone was going to die

I reached for my rifle
And looked up to the sky
It seemed so very peaceful
As the clouds went swiftly by

Louder sounded the bugle
Louder the rifle fire
And from across the horizon
Smoke now filled the sky

O why do we have to battle?
O why do we have to die?
Why should we kill each other
When God is watching by?

Gil Calder
(previously of Kyllachy)

TOMATIN AND MOY SWRI

The Rural has had an interesting start to its winter session. The history and current status of the University of the Highlands and Islands featured in our first meeting and ocean sailing for youths in our second. A visit to Aviemore and Rothiemurchus SWRI enabled members to learn about the Scottish Ballet company. An active evening learning First Aid from a Red Cross trainer is planned for our meeting on 2nd November.

Members will be hosting the Senior Citizens of both communities to a Christmas Lunch on Monday 14th December in Strathdearn Village Hall, courtesy of the Strathdearn Community Trust. Invitations will be distributed later in the month and we look forward to meeting as many of you as possible then. Transport will be arranged if needed. We will also be treating ourselves to a Christmas dinner earlier in December.

Meetings start again on Monday 1st February, when we will have a talk about the Mountain Rescue Service. We always welcome visitors and new members to our meetings.

For further information contact : Betty Watson
(President) 511271 or Carol James (Secretary) 531220

FOOTBALL FIELD SUB-GROUP

The Sub-Group had met to review progress made in relation to securing access to the Raigbeg Football Field. A planned meeting between members of the group, Mr Tinsley and Council officials had not taken place due to summer holidays and the Grouse Season, and in the meantime the possibility of the Tomatin Estate gifting land for a sports field as planning gain for developments they had planned in Tomatin had arisen (assuming this was the community's preferred option). It was agreed to defer further consideration until the results of the consultation were known. Mrs Roden contacted Mr Tinsley and his Farm Manager whom it seemed were happy to continue the present arrangement meantime. A summary of a letter received from Mr Alan Hardwick was read at the meeting and it was suggested that Mr Hardwick forward this for publication in the Newsletter.

UNCLE HAMISH AND THE BEAUTIFUL BLADE

The heavily-subsidised foreign windfarmers currently defacing our Highland landscape might think they are the bees knees, but I have a tale to tell of the very first non-subsidised wind powered generator in Strathdearn.

I was about 8 years old and staying, along with my two sisters, with our grandparents and an uncle at Moybeg as the long, dark days of World War II were drawing to a close.

We did not see too much of our frail grandfather who was mainly confined to his room, but we saw plenty of our Uncle Hamish who was a full-time railwayman and an enthusiastic, part-time scientist and inventor. He was a magnet for inquisitive youngsters because he knew about absolutely everything.

We often shivered in the cold night air as he pointed out nearly every star in the sky and how it was only the Law of Gravity that kept our feet on the ground and prevented us from floating off to join them. He told us that gravity was different on other planets, especially one where a matchbox could easily weigh half a ton.

Like most rural cottages, Moybeg had no services whatsoever. Water had to be drawn from a nearby well and carried indoors in pails. Candles and paraffin lamps were used for lighting, and if you needed to “go” you had to go outside to a “dry toilet” in a wee shed where pieces of newspaper hung from a string.

Uncle Hamish actually solved the first problem and introduced me to the wonders of the syphon system when he dug a trench from the house, uphill and over a hillock, to a stagnant lochan and piped water into Moybeg. Of course we were constantly reminded that this water was not for drinking by the abundance of pond-life that tumbled from the big tap and wriggled about in the sink.

Hamish then decided that the cottage was to be illuminated using the power of the wind and having searched in vain for something useful from the pile of handy debris that filled his shed, he looked further afield. He located a derelict bus from which he stripped wiring, switches, lights and a big black dynamo. Next, he began the long, laborious task of forming a propeller from a split railway sleeper. Night after night he hacked, shaved, planed, filed, sandpapered, waxed and polished until he finally produced a truly beautiful blade: a propeller that would have graced any transatlantic airliner.

The hillock beside the lochan behind Moybeg was chosen as the generator site and a substantial 15 foot plinth was erected. Although well dug into the ground, it was cobbled together from logs, rails, fence posts, boards and rough wood. Eventually the dynamo was heaved aloft, fixed to the turntable and linked to the propeller shaft by motorbike chains and cogs. Wiring was connected to the cottage where lights and switches had been fixed. I remember being wary of the tiny switches because I had seen the real big ones in town.

Demonstration Day arrived and late one winter’s afternoon Uncle Hamish escorted us up the hill to witness the fulfilment of his efforts. He smiled in triumph at the humming blade as he cranked it slowly round into the teeth of a westerly gale. However, the mechanism for turning it back refused to work and the humming soon turned to screaming and then roaring and as the plinth shook and the ground trembled, both Hamish and witnesses turned tail and fled headlong downhill in utter panic!

In the calm, cold light of the following morning, the plinth stood alone - the dynamo and beautiful blade torn away and presumably still resting in peace at the bottom of the lochan.

Our hardworking grandmother, ever suspicious of Hamish’s schemes and contraptions, dismissed his latest well-intentioned failure as “A Right Carry-On!” Candles and paraffin lamps continued in use at Moybeg for many years to come.

Donald MacAskill

TOMATIN DISTILLERY VISITOR CENTRE AND GIFT SHOP

Open Mon - Fri 9.30 - 5.00p.m. Tours available all year round.

Closed for Christmas on 25th and 28th December
Closed for New Year on 1st and 4th January

Come and browse round our Gift Shop for that special Christmas gift or buy your New Year bottle of whisky from our new range of Tomatin Single malts - 12, 15, 18, or 25 year olds, and there is always that old favourite Antiquary 12 or 21 year old de luxe blended whisky.

You'll always get a warm welcome at Tomatin Distillery

DIGITAL TV SWITCHOVER

October 2010

The traditional 'analogue' TV signal will be switched off next year, the process starting in May and ending in October (the date for switchover in Strathdearn). The BBC is offering a Switchover Help Scheme for those who are aged over 75; or live in a care home; or get certain disability benefits; or are registered blind or partially sighted.

More information will become available over the next few months, and you can phone free for information meantime at 0800 40 85 900 or visit the website www.helpscheme.co.uk

Strathdearn Community Council

www.tomatin.org.uk

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