

STRATHDEARN NEWSLETTER

May 2017

Volume 17 No 2

STRATHDEARN FUN DAY

It's only a few weeks now until Saturday 3rd June, the day of our community Fun Day.

11am - 3pm. FREE ENTRY.

Stall holders can come along and set up any time from 8am as long as you are ready for 11am. From 3pm until 6pm we will be taking down the stalls etc.

If anyone would like to help out please contact me. It would be helpful if stall holders can let me know if they have or can access a gazebo and table for the day. Also if anyone has gazebos that they are willing to loan out for the day it would be much appreciated, please contact me with details.

We would like for this to be a successful event so that it may be repeated. All monies raised will go towards the fundraising efforts for the new hall, so please give generously as it is staying in your community.

Steve MacLennan
email taxisteve1@hotmail.com
mobile 07525186965 home 01808 511706

Strathdearn Community Council

publishes the "Strathdearn Newsletter" quarterly, delivering it free to every home in Strathdearn. The Newsletter is sponsored by Tomatin Distillery and Mr & Mrs George McLeod.

This is a community newsletter, and the views and opinions expressed in contributions submitted by members of the community are not necessarily those of Strathdearn Community Council, nor of the Editor.

No items are written by the Editor unless expressly indicated.

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Business adverts £10 per quarter page Next deadline: Wednesday 26th July 2017

POLICE CONTACT Any concerns about Law and Order, information on vandalism, requests for advice, or any other police related matter should be passed on to our community policewoman: Catherine McGibbon, Community Beats, Burnet Road, Inverness. email catherine.mcgibbon@scotland.pnn.police.uk
To telephone, for matters not urgent enough to require 999 ... **please call 101** and you will be put through

LOCAL NURSING SERVICES

Strathdearn nursing services are covered by the Inverness East Community Nursing Team.

The Nursing Team's telephone number is 01463 230850

The NHS24 telephone number is 111

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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

SWI

7.30pm Strathdearn Hall
Contact: Mrs Margaret Robertson 511243

3rd Monday of Month

Gardening Club

7.30pm Strathdearn Hall,
Contact: Mrs May Buckle 511448

2nd Tuesday of Month

Community Council

7.30pm Strathdearn Hall
All welcome

Every Wednesday

Community Coffee Morning

10.30-11.30am Strathdearn Hall
All welcome, £1

Every Wednesday

Walking Group

2pm meet at Strathdearn Hall car park
Contact: Kathy Bonniface 511740

Every Thursday

11.30am – 1.30pm Tomatin Shop

POST OFFICE

Every Thursday (term time)

Toddlers' Group

10am-noon, Strathdearn Hall
Contact: Helena Ekerot 07958 47735.

Every Thursday

Art Class

1.30– 3.30pm Strathdearn Hall,
Contact: Mrs Betty Watson 511271
Mrs Pam Hardwick 511766

Monthly, usually on a Thursday

Natural History Club

Some indoor, some outdoor, events.
Days vary, so look out for posters.
Contact: David Bonniface 511740
or Carol James 531220

Strathdearn Hall

For booking or access into the Strathdearn Hall or Sports Facility in Tomatin please ring the Hallkeeper **Steve Culeen 01808 511321** or email s.culeen@hotmail.co.uk (please note there is a dot in the name)

The Public Toilets are open until October..

The Sports Facility is free for local youngsters (under-18's) to play ball games. Evening/regular groups of adults will be charged. Available for ball games and tennis. No cycles, animals or food & drink allowed on the pitch. No blades or studs. **Open 9am-9pm.**

Sports Facility Light tokens free to under-18's only, available from Debbie Mackay 511466, Lewis Macleod 511354 or Gavin Edward 511427.

Hire rates (local)

Findhorn Room	£9 p/hour
Funtack Room	£6 p/hour
Clune Room	£5 p/hour
Sports Facility	£11 p/hour

Findhorn /Funtack Rooms together: £14 p/hour

Double rates for non-locals
(ie outside Strathdearn district)

STRATHDEARN MUSIC SESSION

Strathdearn music session will meet again at 8pm on Tuesday 30th May in Strathdearn Village Hall, Findhorn room.

Musicians, singers of all ages and abilities welcome. Come along and play us a tune in a friendly and supportive atmosphere or just come along and listen.

Under 16's accompanied by an adult. Bring your own flask! Donations welcome to cover the cost of hall hire.

Roy and I will also be hosting an Open Mic tent at the Tomatin Fun Day on the 3rd June between 11am and 1:30 pm. Come along and plug in and play, be a Country, Rock, Reggae, blues star for a day!...

...Lee-Anne from the shop!

Congratulations to Tony and Marion Gerlings' younger daughter, **Charlotte**, and her fiancé **Peter** on their engagement.

And to Jonathan Reid and his bride Bridget, who were married in the Cairngorms on a fine day but with snow around!

Sadly, Mrs Madge Fraser's brother, **Mr Pat Macdonald of Inverarnie**, died in April. Our thoughts are with his family and friends. He was a great friend to many.

We were also saddened by the death of **Mrs Chris West** in March, at her home. She had been well looked after by Mike and Matthew, and the MacMillan and community nurses. Chris was the Hall Manager for many years, as well as the Treasurer of the Hall Committee. She will be much missed by her family and many friends to whom we wish to express our condolences.

We were very sad to hear that Mrs Agnes Bisset, aged 90, died on the 27th February at her home in Alford. Agnes was very kind and friendly and so was her husband Arthur. They lived at the distillery for many years and we all have very fond memories of them both and their son Michael.

Sadly, the powers that be are trying to shut Dalarossie Church, although the local congregation are trying to persuade them otherwise! We had a lovely Service on Easter Morning. It was so lovely to have such a large congregation (of young and old) that the Church was full! The flowers in the Church were lovely and Easter Eggs were handed out to the young (and some not so young!) after the Service when people continued to chat, and catch up, outside.

We would like to welcome all the new families who have come to live in the Tomatin area, including Jack and Wendy Watson and their three children, Cuillin, River and baby Viva at Soilsean Wood. There are two new scholars at Strathdearn Primary.

The Bryden family have moved into their new home above Juniper Drive and we hope they will be happy there.

We are also thinking of those who are, or have been, in Hospital, or attending clinics, or otherwise laid up, remembering especially Doug and Liz Campbell's daughter, Linda; Mrs Mackintosh of Mackintosh's daughter, Louisa; Mrs Betty Christie and Mrs Jenny Mulheron.

A pair of swallows were seen by Mrs Ann Glynne-Percy on 18th April, and I saw a flock of golden plover on the same day in the Balvraid fields. It was so lovely to see so many birds returning after the winter!

Announcements

Kay and Gordon Pearson of Birkenshaw, Soilsean are delighted to announce the arrival of Brodie Giles Pearson on 25th March 2017, a wee brother for Struan.

TOMATIN & MOY SWRI

By the time you read this the final meeting of the 2016/17 session will have happened. It was the AGM followed by a good chat while enjoying tasting each other's favourite food.

The last season's talks covered a wide range of topics from St. Kilda to the future of Tomatin Churches, and the British Legion to earning a living from craft work. Members have been entertained by, learned a lot from and enjoyed these talks.

Why not come and join them when the new session starts on Monday 4th September? The subject of the talk will be displayed on posters in the community at the end of August.

Carol James, Vice President

One year on!

Strathdearn Daycare Centre update

Strathdearn Daycare which provides affordable childcare to the Strathdearn area for nursery and school aged children has now been up and running for a year. Strathdearn Daycare Committee (SDC) who are responsible for the financial viability of the centre are very pleased with its initial success and anticipate further increase in the number of children using the service going into its second year.

Utilisation

Since starting in April 2016 the numbers of children using the service have steadily increased. Currently the percentage of paid sessions are averaging at 57% (100% means the centre breaks even). The second session (for nursery and school children) from 3.15pm-6pm is doing particularly well often reaching 80%. While the earlier session (for nursery children only) is less utilised the numbers have doubled over the course of the year.

Finance and Funding

To assist the centre in its setup and running for first two years it received funding from the Strathdearn Charitable Trust as well as money from the discretionary ward fund. This has hugely helped the centre to cover its set up and running costs such as CALA fees, staff wages, buying resources, public liability insurance among other expenses. However more funding is needed. While it is estimated that numbers will continue to increase it is not easy to estimate what this increase will be. It has been estimated that in order to secure the financial viability of the centre going forward we need to raise funds of up to £17,000 a year. To address this shortfall, SDC along with the help of parents are now starting a major fundraising initiative which will ensure that our fantastic daycare centre will continue to thrive and help families who would otherwise struggle to find affordable and flexible childcare living in a rural area.

Staff

On a day to day basis the centre has been a huge success. The two main members of staff, Claire Ford and Sarah Macdougall along with their manager Julia McNeil, have seamlessly integrated themselves into the school and our community. The parents, teachers and above all the children love them!

The great outdoors

One area which the daycare centre focuses its attention on is outdoor activities, using the wonderful outdoors that we are privileged to have right on our doorstep. The children are often outside playing, making dens and getting involved in other adventures outside.

Well done Strathdearn Daycare staff!
Helena Ekerot, Strathdearn Daycare Committee Secretary

Starting after the Easter Holidays a weekly pre-school sports coaching class in the AstroTurf. This class is open to residents of the Strathdearn Primary catchment area and will teach fundamental movement skills like throwing, catching, kicking, jumping and running whilst having fun. The first term will start on Friday 28th April - Friday 30th June 2017 when the school breaks for the summer (10 week block). Term two will be Friday 18th August – Friday 6th October 2017 (8 weeks).

Thanks to funding from Strathdearn Community Charitable Trust this will be at a subsidised cost of £1 per child per session. If you have a two and a half year old up to school age and are interested in a place please get in touch with Mhairi MacSween on 07849 533869 or email mhairi@activeness.org.

Mhairi is a Scottish Athletics qualified coach with disclosure and is fully insured. The 45 minute class is planned to run every Friday at 1.45pm. Places are limited to 12 children. However, if required there will be an additional class at 1pm for the younger children.

Please register an interest no later than the Friday 14th April 2017.

*(I assume late bookings for the autumn are still possible?
Ed)*

TODDLER GROUP

After attending the Strathdearn Toddler group for three years, the last year as Chair, I have now handed over to the new chair Susan Watt and Helen Garmston continues on as Secretary. The toddler group still meets every Thursday during term time in the Strathdearn hall from 10am to 12pm and always welcome visitors or new members. Please contact Susan on susanclwatt@hotmail.com for more information.

Toddlers won't be on this Thursday the 4th May but will return on the 11th May. On the 11th Jean Monroe, an Early Years Practitioner, will be joining us at the hall from 11am-midday to do baby and toddler weighing. On Monday 8th May the toddler group is having a "stay and play" visit from 9.30-10.30am at the Strathdearn Primary nursery so that the children can familiarise themselves with the environment and play with the other nursery children.

Other activities go on throughout the year such as a summer outing and fun messy play sessions provided by Cala (Care and Learning Alliance).

Mhairi MacSween

A **Tomatin Litter Pick** is planned for 10am, Saturday 20th May, meeting at the village hall.

For any questions, people can contact the community council or Malcolm MacSween - email malcolm@millcroftguesthouse.co.uk tel: 07714 221 771, or find him on Facebook.

ART IN STRATHDEARN

20th Anniversary Year

The club meets every Thursday in the hall from 2pm to 4pm and we welcome new members. Are you interested in trying out new painting and craft techniques or wish you had the time to practice in your favourite medium?

Each year we hold several day long workshops with different tutors to challenge and encourage members –for example this year we have created pieces in collage and paint with Jonathan Shearer and spent a day portrait drawing in charcoal with William Mather.

Two craft workshops are planned for later this year-basket making and driftwood sculpture.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP-£10 WEEKLY FEE-£2

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
BETTY WATSON 511271 & PAM
HARDWICK 511766

TOMATIN VILLAGE SHOP

After a quiet winter period, things are now starting to pick up again at Tomatin Village Shop. We have enjoyed a busy Easter and the lighter nights and brighter days are starting to bring in more trade.

We continue to have deliveries from Harry Gow every Monday, Thursday and Saturday for fresh bread, rolls and dream rings! We continue to stock a range of sausages, burgers, mince, sliced cooked meat, pies etc from 2 local butchers, Grants Of Speyside and A&I Quality Butchers. We also stock Caithness Free Range Eggs along with a large selection of general grocery items. I am continually trialling and adding new stock items so please pop along and visit regularly to see what we have to offer. You can also follow us on Facebook for updates and information, find us at Tomatin Village Shop.

Thanks to all the staff whose hard work keeps the shop running smoothly and thanks to all our customers for your support...it helps keep our Community Shop open!

Lee-Anne.

MACDONALD OUTDOOR MAINTENANCE

**For any garden or property
maintenance**

call Ruairidh on

07947 707408

Email r.macmaintenance@hotmail.com

Natural History Club

Programme:

On June 19th we will be joining the Gardening Club at Iarr tigh, Dalarossie to explore the garden of Carol James and to look at local wildlife. There will be telescopes and binoculars to use. Look out for event details on the website or posters closer to the date.

We hope to start the Autumn season on September 29th with a slideshow of local historical sites from Anne Glynne-Percy's wonderful collection, together with recent photographs taken by the Club.

October 27th : We hope to present a keeper's view of wildlife in the Strath.

November 23rd : Carol James will be showing slides of the breath-taking wildlife and scenery of Madagascar.

Throughout the year we will be continuing our documentation and photography of local archaeological sites of which we have so many. We will also have excursions to other venues such as the Grant Arms Grantown to enjoy talks by well known speakers.

Everyone is welcome to take part in our activities. We look forward to seeing you.

Church of Scotland
Parish of Moy, Dalarossie and Tomatin
Interim Moderator: Rev Morven Archer
T: 01463 237840

Since the closure of Tomatin Church, we now meet in the Strathdearn Hall every Sunday at 10.30am, except for the Services which are held at Dalarossie on the first and third Sundays of the month from March – November, inclusive.

We have Tea after the Services in the Hall at Tomatin, and on the Second Sunday of the month, invite donations for the Highland Foodbank.

Any of the following items will be much appreciated:- Breakfast Cereal / Pasta or Rice / Tinned Potatoes / Oatcakes or Crackers / Tinned Vegetables / Tinned Tomatoes / Tinned Fruit / Long Life Fruit Juice / Tinned Ham or Corned Beef / Tinned Soup / Tinned Tuna or Salmon / Tinned Mince or Stew / UHT Milk / Tinned Custard or Rice / Teabags or Coffee / Sugar. Further information from Vivian on 01808 511255.

Afternoon Tea:

Join us at the Strathdearn Hall for a chat over freshly made sandwiches and delicious scones and cakes between 3 and 4 pm on the second Monday of each month. Further information from Vivian on 01808 511355.

The Guild:

Meets at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month between September and April, inclusive, usually in the Strathdearn Hall unless stated otherwise. New members welcome. Further information from May 01808 511448.

Messy Church:

We also have Messy Church, usually on the last Sunday of each month, in the Strathdearn Hall from 4pm – 6pm. We have some fun with crafts to begin with, and then have a Bible storytelling time with a hymn and prayer. Then we have tea together (proper meal, that is, not just a cup of tea, although we usually have one of these after our meal as well!)

All are welcome. Adults and teenagers as well as children - you don't have to have a child to come along and it doesn't matter whether you go to Church or not. Messy Church comes under the 'fresh expressions' of Church, and it's Church for people who think a traditional church service isn't really for them – although many of us who go are involved in traditional church too! It's for everyone really!

Children have to bring an adult with them – they usually enjoy it too! Parents/grandparents/carers don't have to do anything (unless they want to try some craft work etc!) You can just chill out with a coffee if you want.

No charge, but donations welcomed.

Further information from Vivian 01808 5112355 or Liz 01808 511353 and we'd love to see you there.

SERVICES from 7th May to 6th August:

MAY:

7 th	Dalarossie Church at 10.30am	
14 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service
21 st	Dalarossie Church at 10.30am	
28 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service

JUNE:

4 th	DALAROSSIE CHURCH at 10.30am	
11 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service
18 th	DALAROSSIE CHURCH at 10.30am	
25 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service

JULY:

2 nd	DALAROSSIE CHURCH at 10.30am	
9 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service
16 th	DALAROSSIE CHURCH at 10.30am	
23 rd	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service
30 th	Strathdearn Hall at 10.30am	Tea after the Service

AUGUST:

6 th	DALAROSSIE CHURCH at 10.30am	
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All warmly welcome at any or all of our Services and Activities

DALAROSSIE CHURCH

Dalarossie Church, along with Dunlichity Church in our sister parish of Daviot & Dunlichity in Strathnairn, is under threat of closure.

Both congregations (Moy, Dalarossie & Tomatin and Daviot & Dunlichity) were cited, or summoned to appear at the Inverness Presbytery meeting on 7th March when a Motion was put to the Presbytery that both these churches be closed, and the congregations united into one new Parish. After a lengthy debate, the Presbytery agreed to defer further consideration until after the Local Church Reviews both congregations are due to have this Autumn.

The Kirk Session of Moy, Dalarossie & Tomatin will continue to argue the case that Dalarossie be spared from closure. One idea under consideration (which we hope will make the Church more viable) is the development of a mini Visitor Centre in the Vestry of Dalarossie Church to obviously showcase the religious aspects of Dalarossie Church (the site was founded by St Fergus in the 8th Century); but which would also include historical, archaeological, natural history and cultural aspects relating to Strathdearn, including social history, advice on local walks, etc. Talks have taken place with the Strathdearn Natural History Club, and Strathdearn Community Developments have also shown interest. We hope to continue these talks, and are grateful to both organisations for their interest.

We would also very much appreciate the support of the community, without which any project will undoubtedly fail. How can you help?

You can:

- Send your e-mail address (to vrodan@btinternet.com) asking to be kept informed of any developments (this does not commit you to anything, just records your interest in the future of Dalarossie, and ensures you will receive information about what's happening)
- No e-mail address? Phone 01808 511 355, or send a request for your name to be added to the circulation list about Dalarossie to 15 Old Mill Road, Tomatin IV13 7YW and the information will be posted to you.
- Don't wish to receive the e-mails etc, but still interested? Check the Strathdearn Facebook Page and the community website www.strathdearn.org
- Come to one of our Services at Dalarossie Church (first and third Sundays of the month from March – November inclusive at 10.30am).
- Worship at another Church on Sunday mornings? We're hoping to have at least a couple of evening Services over the summer – dates to be advised!
- Pray! If everyone who went to Dalarossie Church and all our friends from other denominations all prayed for the future of Dalarossie Church and the Dalarossie Project – what a difference that would make!
- Not particularly Church orientated but think it's important to preserve this lovely old historic building and/or find a home where the social history etc of the area can be shared? Come and visit the Visitor Centre once we get it up and running. It will be worth viewing! There really will be something for everyone if we manage to get this project off the ground!

Thanks for taking the time to read this and we would love to hear from you.

Vivian Roden Session Clerk, Moy, Dalarossie & Tomatin.

STEP IT UP HIGHLAND

As I look out of my window at the moment, it is snowing, and my daffodils are bravely, but pathetically, bowing their muted yellow heads under the weight. However, last week the sun shone on our Wednesday walk from Dalmigavie upstream along the River Findhorn. The sky was blue, the landscape was beautiful, and the icing on the cake was to see first a Peregrine Falcon and later a Kestrel, circling over the hill summit to the east. We all enjoy these extras on our walks, and it makes taking the exercise a real pleasure.

However, it is worth reminding ourselves that the exercise in its own right is very good for us – not only for our general health, but also for the health of our brain cells, as was revealed by some new research that I heard on the radio this morning. Step it Up Highland was set up to encourage more people to become more active in the Highlands, and there can be very few areas of Britain where taking outdoor exercise is more rewarding.

Our regular walkers all agree with this, but sadly, for a number of health reasons, our group is very small at the moment, and we would really welcome some new members. So please, if you think you would benefit from a regular weekly walk with a group of really friendly people, and some excellent refreshments afterwards, then do consider joining us. You would be most welcome! Just contact Kathy or David Boniface on 01808 511740 or Carol James on 531220.

We meet at Strathdearn Hall at 2.00pm on Wednesday afternoons.

Flower Show 2017

Saturday 2nd September

Here are the classes for this year's show.

Time to start preparing now!

Children's Sections (8 Yrs & under, 9 - 12 Yrs)

1. Animal made from fruit and/or vegetables
2. Egg Cup Flower Display
3. Garden in a Tray no bigger than 15" x 10"

Children's Challenge: To make a decorated hat

Children must state age on tickets.

Handicrafts

1. Exhibit of Patchwork and/or Quilting
2. Exhibit of Knitting
3. Exhibit of Embroidery, Cross Stitch, or Tapestry
4. Exhibit of Crochet
5. Any Craft (other than above)

Photography (mounted - see Notes on Exhibits)

1. Autumn
2. A pet or pets
3. Holiday or day out
4. Flowering shrub
5. Clouds
6. 3 Pictures on one sheet of A4 telling a story.

Floral Art

1. Arrangement with grasses (to be viewed all round)
2. Arrangement in a basket (max 18") (to be viewed all round)
3. Fiery flames
4. A button hole

Flower Section

1. 5 Sweet Peas - Mixed
2. 5 Sweet Peas - Same Colour
3. 3 Antirrhinums
4. 3 Carnations/Pinks
5. 3 Calendula (Marigold) Stems
6. 3 French Marigold Heads
7. 3 Pansy Heads - Same Colour (note pansy not viola)
8. 3 Pansy Heads - Different colours (ditto)
9. 1 Rose Stem - Single Bloom
10. 3 Rose Stems - Floribunda
11. 1 Rose Bloom - for scent
12. 3 Fuchsia Heads - same colour
13. 3 Fuchsia Heads - different colours
14. 1 Fuchsia - grown as standard
15. 1 Fuchsia - 7" pot or smaller
16. 1 Fuchsia - larger than 7" pot
17. 3 Begonia Heads
18. 3 Dahlia Stems
19. 1 Vase - 4 Herbaceous Perennial Stems same species and variety
20. 1 Vase - 4 Herbaceous Perennial Stems mixed species
21. 1 Vase - 4 Annual Stems same species and variety
22. 1 Vase - 4 Annual Stems mixed species
23. 1 Vase - 4 stems of flowering shrubs
24. 1 Pot Plant - Flower
25. 1 Pot Plant - Foliage
26. Planted Container

Baking & Produce Section

1. 1 Iced chocolate cake
2. 3 Viennese biscuits
3. 3 Pancakes
4. 3 Apple and cinnamon scones
5. 3 Oatcakes
6. 3 Chocolate chip muffins
7. 4 Squares whisky fudge
8. 1 Cake decorated for a celebration
9. 1 Jar Raspberry Jam
10. 1 Jar Strawberry Jam
11. 1 Jar Blackcurrant Jam
12. 1 Jar Marmalade
13. 1 Jar Jelly-any variety
14. 1 Jar Lemon Curd
15. 1 Jar Chutney - any variety
16. 1 Spelt bread loaf (6" round)
17. 6 Eggs

Art Section (any medium)

1. A toy
2. Rainy day
3. Holiday memories
4. Autumn
5. A building

Vegetable Section

1. 1 Cabbage
2. 1 Cauliflower
3. 3 Carrots
4. 3 Onions
5. 2 Leeks
6. 3 Potatoes - White
7. 3 Potatoes - Coloured
8. 3 Beetroot
9. 2 Turnips
10. 1 Lettuce
11. 3 Tomatoes
12. 2 Courgettes
13. 1 Pepper - any colour
14. Basket of 5 kinds of Vegetable (not decorated)
15. Any other Vegetable
16. Display of 5 different cut Culinary Herbs
17. Parsley grown in pot
18. 3 Beans - any variety.

Full schedules including rules, display requirements etc will be available soon in the Village Store, or from May Buckle and Carol James

From the archives:
MacDougall's Stores

It was with great regret throughout the local community that we saw the closing phase of the Tomatin Shop, which had been so ably managed by Mrs Jean Mackay for 39 years. She had worked tirelessly for nearly four decades to supply all needs and essentials, whatever the weather, and having to rise early to receive and sort newspapers, and milk delivery, not to mention all the paperwork that must go on in the background.

She is sorely missed and everyone wishes her well in her retirement – perhaps Jean may now have time to write items for the Newsletter. She must have a great fund of stories to tell about times good, and not so good, across the counter.

The Stores were named for John MacDougall (1833 – 1909) who began the enterprise with the backing of Mr Macbean of Tomatin. He and his family lived at Hazelbank, a fine stone-built house overlooking the Neacrath burn, and approached by an avenue of yew trees, which remain to this day. The house was burnt down during or after the first World War, and remained a ruin, apart from the western (laundry) end where Miss Elma Junor lived until the 1960s. She kept poultry – and kindly encouraged Diana to take an interest by giving her some laying pullets. What changes she would see around her old home. Now Hazelbank means many new homes, including those in the pine wood.

After MacDougall's time Mr Junor took over the Stores. He had a grocery shop in Inverness too, on Tomnahurich Street. I do not remember him, but do recall his successors, the Stewart Walkers. Their daughter Eileen used to play the organ in Church, and she married the young minister of that time, the Rev Angus Macdonald.

Mrs Gordon owned the Stores next – and also the petrol pump which was across the road where the Shop access is now. It was an old-fashioned affair, with a clock face dial to register the number of gallons supplied, and was worked by a hand pump which took a while. Mrs Gordon operated it, and customers in the Shop had to bide their time. By then (early 1950s) food rationing was almost at an end. No more juggling with 'points,' deciding whether to indulge in biscuits, or have something in a tin – do you remember Snoek? Working out the best value in sweeties was tricky – go for toffees to last longer, or marshmallows, more weighed less!

Dry goods were usually delivered in bulk, and the customer's requirements were weighed into a paper bag, then deft fingers twirled the top corners to make a secure 'poke,' no sellotape then, and plastic bags had yet to be invented.

My most vivid memory of the Shop as a child was the smell of paraffin from the lamps and Valor heaters. There were no fridges or chill cabinets because there was no Hydro electric, or maybe it was just single phase, enough for a bulb or kettle, but nothing very demanding. At that time the counter was on the right as you went in the door, and the premises were licensed. There used to be upright metal railings along the top of the low wall, from the letterbox, but they went for scrap for the War effort. During the War most customers walked or bicycled, and there was very little traffic so I could use my pony and trap, and sometimes saw the Misses Fraser from Dalarossie who drove a horse and gig.

In days gone by there was another shop, Doigs, by the Station Yard, and until the 1980s, a mobile grocer's van operated by Jock Shaw, and then another operated by Willie Munro, as well as butcher, baker and laundry vans, but all gave up when the rise in petrol price made the rounds not worthwhile – what is new! But we could still count on MacDougall's Stores.

We nearly lost even that in the early 1970s, when the Scottish Office decided to close it down for road safety reasons, about the time the new A9 was being made. The whole community made such a commotion and objections that the powers that were “went away to think again.” I still remember the village hall packed with protesters, even MP Russell Johnston was there to support us, and he mentioned the matter later in the House of Commons, so Tomatin's Shop has a few lines of local history in Hansard records.

I hope that many more items for the Newsletter about the Stores will be written, as there must be a host of gems of memories waiting to be shared. Mine are just random bits and pieces, which cannot give a full picture of a subject that has been at the heart of the community for so long.

Jean's dedication and kindly help was greatly appreciated by customers of all generations, not least her patience with the smallest ones swithering as to how to spend their pocket money on colourful temptations – some a far cry from the striped ba's, humbugs and liquorice bootlaces of forty years ago!

New premises may come into being, but nothing can replace the character and recollections about MacDougall's Stores.

Ann Glynn-Percy
(Written in 2008 and revised in 2017)

Strathdearn Community Council News

Email - strathdearncc@hotmail.com

Here are some of the issues raised and discussed during recent meetings:

Tomatin Fun Day/Gala

The Fun Day has been arranged for Saturday 3rd June between 11am and 4pm at the school. More information can be found on the Fun Day Facebook page and Strathdearn Website.

Law and order

Our new Community Beat Officer is PC Cathie McGibbon . Contact details can be found at the front of the newsletter. Other than traffic offences, criminality remains low in the area.

The public are asked to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour.

Applications to Strathdearn Community Charitable Trust

Following, are some of the applications that were submitted and recommended for approval.

A request for £526.50 from Art In Strathdearn to cover the cost of 3 full day workshops in 2017.

The club is open to all and always keen to welcome new members. Details can be found in the Newsletter and the Strathdearn website.

A request for £648 from Mhairi MacSween to set up a weekly pre-school sports coaching class in the AstroTurf teaching fundamental movement skills like throwing, catching, kicking, jumping and running whilst having fun. As well as being the foundation for more complex and specialised skills they learn valuable life and social skills. More information in the Newsletter.

A request for £1000 from Luke Williams to help with funds in his quest to improve as a triathlete. To do this he is continually training on all the elements involved- swim, cycle, run and transition. Over the last year Luke has been competing around the UK and is now a recognised member of the Scottish squad. The triathlon season starts in March and continues until October during this time Luke aims to become more recognised within Britain and place highly in National events.

A request for £3,500 from Tomatin United Football Club to help enable them to play football between April and September. The funds help them cover costs such as, referee fees, portaloos on match days, grass cutting and general maintenance, insurance etc.

Details of each application submitted to The Charitable Trust can be read in the monthly minutes.

Proposed Closure of Dalarossie

A plan is being discussed to close Dalarossie and Dunlichity (Tomatin Church is already closed) and link with Daviot. Reports are being prepared for the Presbytery, but the future of Dalarossie will not come before the presbytery again until the new year. Worship continues at Dalarossie on the first and third Sundays of the month until November.

Community Litter Pick

A litter pick is being arranged for Saturday 20th May at 10am, starting at the village hall.

If you would like something put on the agenda, please get in touch with a Community Councillor.

We are:- Vivian Roden (Chair) Tel 01808 511355; Edward Osborne (Vice Chair) Tel 01808 511482; Margaret Saunders (Treasurer) Tel 01808 511755; Lee-Anne Cornwall (Secretary) Tel 01808 511289; John Cameron-Mackintosh (Road Safety contact) Tel 01808 511239; Ann Glynne-Percy Tel 01808 511210; Steve MacLennan Tel 01808 511706; Malcolm MacSween Tel 01808 511730

TOMATIN DISTILLERY LAUNCH LIMITED EDITION SINGLE MALT SERIES

Scotch whisky distiller Tomatin has today, Friday 10th March, unveiled its hotly anticipated, limited-edition single malt series, Five Virtues.

Five Virtues draws its inspiration from the nature's elements – Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water - and comes uniquely packaged in cartons adorned with contemporary Scottish art, created by Eva Ullrich.

Comprised of five distinguished single malts, each with a limited run of 6,000 bottles, the range has been crafted with inspiration from each element. These include heavily charred oak, Bourbon barrels and, unusually for Tomatin, peated malt.

Each of the Five Virtues malts comes with its own distinct complexity and character:

Wood has been aged in French, American and Hungarian oak casks, while Fire is matured in heavily charred oak, simulating fresh vanilla flavours.

Earth exhibits rich and intense peaty flavours as a consequence of maturing in peat dried malted barley casks and Metal is expressed by the distillery's 12 beautiful copper stills. Completing the series, Water is distinguished by its naturally pure soft water from the Alt-na-Frith burn, which is drawn year round but employs a winterdistilled spirit to enrich the final flavour.

Jennifer Masson, Tomatin Marketing Manager, said, "As our brand grows we are increasingly inspired by global concepts and the Five Virtues series was born out of this inspiration. We wanted to release a creative limited edition series focussing on the effects of different cask maturations, while linking it to a wider concept. That is something that we have achieved with Five Virtues and we are incredibly proud to be launching the series onto the market this month."

The unique design concept for the packaging was brought about through a fruitful partnership with abstract artist, Eva Ullrich. Eva was tasked with visually representing the five elements and the complexities within the different distillations involved in the series.

Artist, Eva Ullrich, commented, "Having spent many years in Scotland and enjoying a nip of whisky myself meant this project was a pleasure to work on. I'm really excited to see my work on a medium that is more accessible to the public and for it to be appreciated by people who perhaps wouldn't usually engage with abstract painting."

Tomatin recently won Distiller Of The Year 2016 and Brand Innovator Of The Year

2017 at the Icons of Whisky Scotland Awards. Tomatin currently ranks in the Top 10 Single Malt brands in the USA and is one of the fastest growing in the UK.

The Wood and Fire expressions can be enjoyed now, from £49.99, while Earth, Metal and Water will be released later this year. For additional information please visit

www.tomatin.com/5virtues

TOMATIN DISTILLERY BOSS JOINS HOST OF CELEBRITIES AS HE IS NAMED KEEPER OF THE QUAICH

Tomatin Distillery has today, Thursday 6th April, revealed that one of its board directors, Stephen Bremner (41), has been inducted into the exclusive Scotch Whisky society, The Keepers of the Quaich. Stephen joins the likes of Prince Charles, Jackie Stewart, Ronald Reagan and Alex Salmond in his exclusive new role.

Stephen was raised in Inverness, where he now lives with his wife and children. He has worked with Tomatin for 13 years, joining as a Logistics Coordinator before progressing to his current position as Sales Director, where he is tasked with developing the businesses portfolio of brands around the world.

His induction took place earlier this week at the spectacular Blair Castle, the ancient home of the Earls and Dukes of Atholl, where 41 new Keepers and six Masters were welcomed at the bi-annual event. This years inductees come from 16 countries around the world, and have amassed 900 years of experience amongst them.

Founded to represent the Scotch Whisky industry worldwide, The Keepers promotes the goodwill of the industry and honours those who have made a recognisable contribution.

Stephen Bremner, Tomatin Sales Director, said, "Being invited into The Keepers of the Quaich is an incredible honour. Our CEO Bob Anderson was made a member back in 2015 and I'm hugely grateful to be joining him and to be part of the society's esteemed membership."

"This recognition is testament to the continued growth of Tomatin and the commitment of the wider team behind our fantastic distillery."

The ceremony, led by the Grand Master Mrs Sarah Troughton, and guest speaker Rory Bremner, sees members entertained at a banquet with the finest of Scottish hospitality.

Tomatin recently won Distiller Of The Year 2016 and Brand Innovator Of The Year 2017 at the Icons of Whisky Scotland Awards. Tomatin currently ranks in the Top 10 Single Malt brands in the USA and is one of the fastest growing in the UK.

The Bellyfilling Blues

I'm sick of food obsession
and the countless TV shows,
while millions suffer hunger
and wastage grows and grows.

There's now a posh new lingo
for grub in every kitchen,
aimed not at normal people
but snobs with food addiction.

Forget the pizza, pasta stuff
that fills Italian bellies,
just sit ye doon with great big spoon
to a plate of mince and tatties.

If all the chefs the whole world round
produced a wonder dish,
they could not match a dinner
that's made with yella fish.

Pigeons on the high street
gulls up on the roof
waiting for a peck at those folk
eating on the hoof.

An oldtime bothy question
asked "what's the worst for eating"?
easily won by a railwayman
who said rhubarb with salt herring.

D MacAskill

Tom nan Clach wind farm grid connection

The Section 37 planning application submitted to Highland Council in December 2016 for a grid connection from Tom nan Clach wind farm on the Dava Moor to the substation at Garbole has been withdrawn. The application was submitted by Nanclach, the Infinergy/Cawdor estate consortium developing Tom nan Clach wind farm. Scottish Hydro Electric-Transmission (SHE-T) had advised that a considerable length of the line would be underground passed Corrybrough estate, under the A9(T) and railway, the "old" A9 and the river. The line would then be overhead from near Dell Farm to the substation at Garbole.

The developer is apparently looking for an alternative route. This means that of the three wind farms upon which SHE-T justified construction of the substation at Garbole, only Glen Kyllachy remains with a contracted connection.

However, other wind farms are being approved south of Inverness – the latest being Aberarder. The Reporter upheld the appeal by RES after the South Planning Committee refused the application. He stated that there are already views of turbines from many of the viewpoints and adding 13 more huge turbines will simply look like an extension of Dunmaglass wind farm. Sadly this is yet another example of the philosophy that if the landscape has already suffered some degradation by wind turbines it's OK to trash it further.

Pat Wells

The Children of Donnachaidh

And so the clans were scattered
From land and sheiling torn
Their tartan was forbidden
And their culture held in scorn.

And then there was the quiet time
The years of dark despair
When the great great family of the clan
Seemed broken beyond repair.

Then somewhere in the distant past
A pipe was heard and then
The feet in dance began to stir
And tartan blazed again.

And all the stories of the past
With pride were now retold
Of how the clan was bound by love
Of the brave and of the bold.

And children listened and felt the blood
That stirred within their veins
And the clan that once seemed broken
Began to live again.

And now the spirit of the clan
Is felt in every clime
And heads are raised in every land
For now is the gathering time.

And here we meet in happiness
And often part in tears
For in the children of Donnachaidh
Flows love of a thousand years.

By Jock Reid

(contributed by Jimmy Duncan)

Update from Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

Construction works in and around your area – Safety is always our first priority at Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks and with this in mind, we ask that you please remain vigilant of signage or direction around works and do not enter our working areas. There are large items of plant on site and these have exclusion zones in excess of 100m.

Tom nan Clach wind farm - A request had been made to National Grid by the developer of Tom nan Clach wind farm to provide a grid connection to connect the wind farm to the transmission network. Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission) were contracted to provide a 132kV connection spanning from the consented wind farm substation to the new 132/275kV Tomatin substation. The wind farm developer has since opted to terminate their contract with National Grid and progress with an alternative grid connection, therefore SHE Transmission will not be progressing the Tom nan Clach project.

Tomatin substation - The enabling and access works commenced on site at the start of April. The existing track from Farr Wind Farm is currently being upgraded and these works will be ongoing throughout May with regular stone deliveries. The block of trees between the two existing tracks have been felled and this area will now be mulched to allow the new section of access track to be formed. The Ground Investigation works for this section are now complete and plant will begin leaving the site.

Overhead line - The Section 37 consent for the new overhead line remains with the Energy Consents Unit and the Scottish Government to approve, this is due to conclude in the coming months.

Introductions - We would like to introduce Alistair Muir as the Project Manager for the Tomatin Substation; Simon Robertson will oversee the full project as the Lead Project Manager. Neil Macdonald (Construction manager) is currently on site everyday and is available to address any queries or concerns.

Be the Difference - Since the launch of SSE's volunteering programme we have helped over 2,500 projects, with our big-hearted employees dedicating their time to projects that matter to the communities where we live and work. All colleagues are encouraged to "Be the Difference" by volunteering a day in the form of skills-based assistance, painting, DIY, gardening and even school visits. If you have a project in mind that you think we could help out with please contact project co-ordinator Leanne Glen on 0141 224 7661 or Leanne.glen@sse.com who will provide you with further information.

The Neil Mackenzie Trust

Thank you to everyone in Strathdearn who supported us in 2016. It was a successful year for The Neil Mackenzie Trust. We raised £4,000 on our Ceilidh Day at Farr Hall in April and received many generous donations. This is how some of the money has been spent:

- £3,000 went to the Varsity Outdoor Club, in Vancouver, towards The Neil Mackenzie Adventure Grant set up by them. It helped 5 members pursue adventures that otherwise would have been out of their reach. 3 came to Scotland and 2 went on an expedition in the Coast Range of British Columbia, Canada.
- £800 has been given out in Scotland, in skills grants for training courses for all ages, ranging from ski training, mountain leadership, mountain bike training, and paddle sports leadership.

Going forward we will be concentrating on individual non-competitive outdoor skills training for residents in Scotland to train in Scotland. Anyone interested in grants please visit the website www.theneilmackenzie.com or email theneilmackenzie@dr.com

There are a number of fundraising events taking place this year as part of Bell's Bothy Challenge. On Saturday 24th June, we are organising a family-friendly sponsored walk in Strathnairn, suitable for children (and adults!) of all ages. We have teamed up with Dunmaglass Estate and SSE, who have very kindly offered the use of their land for our event. The aim is to get as many people out to enjoy our surroundings, take some exercise, meet some new friends and of course raise some money for The Neil Mackenzie Trust at the same time.

For more information and a Registration form please contact Caroline Tucker on caz_mackenzie@hotmail.com, or download a form from the Trust website.

Thank you for your continuing support.

... And here is the news

Welcome to the new look SCD NEWS. As part of our obligation to consult and inform the community, Strathdearn Community Developments Co. will publish a detailed progress report in every Newsletter and if anything particularly urgent or newsworthy comes up in between, we will email or post additional updates to our members. These reports will also be published on the community website to form a permanent searchable record.

These are exciting times in Strathdearn. We are making good progress on many of the projects identified by the Cadispa survey - better medical services, a path through the village and improved broadband. Two other items on the list - a cafe and public toilets - will be incorporated into the new community hub which has been prioritised due to the condemning of our old hall. In addition, SCD has taken over running our local shop.

These changes will affect all of us for a long time to come so SCD needs to be confident it has your support. Two way communication is the key - you need to know what we're planning and we need to know what you think about it. We'll do our bit through SCD NEWS and the website and then it's up to you to make your voice heard and your opinions known.

You'll find out elsewhere in this bulletin how to get more involved, but you can start right now by considering as you read this first SCD NEWS how it can be improved. If you have any thoughts or suggestions regarding the style, layout or content, we'd like to hear them.

Introducing F.A.Q.

Who are MAKAR?
What happened to the path?
Why will the hub cost so much?

SCD admin staff have created a FAQ to answer these and other Frequently Asked Questions. You will find it in the SCD section of the community website under menu item "Local Info"

Community Hub/Big Lottery Application

A full strategic plan is now being worked upon by the Admin team for submission by the deadline of the 25th May 2017 for our Big Lottery fund application. The procurement procedure for the appointment of an independent Quantity Surveyor (QS) for the new hall build, has been completed, and a short list of applicants was reviewed. The Torrance Partnership have been selected as the QS to review project costs for the hall design prior to going out to tender for the new build and they will commence work immediately. The fee for Torrance Partnership to complete the first part of the cost review is paid for by the Big Lottery under our development funding application. In addition to the Big Lottery Application we are now progressing other fund raising avenues. An application to the Bank of Scotland Foundation Fund has been submitted specifically to cover the cost of the power source for the new hub complex.



Planning permission for the new hub may be viewed on line at:
<http://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OBFR1FIHHHV00>

DTAS Scottish Government Funding

An annual review has taken place with DTAS, for grant funding for the Administration team. Last financial year 2016/17 SCD received £43000 which included £3k for capital equipment and we are delighted that the grant objectives have been reviewed and objectives met. It is with great pleasure that the board can announce, that SCD will receive the grant funding for the Admin team for another year. This will be £40k for the year 2017/18. The recommendation from DTAS is that a third year of funding would be recommended, should it be needed.

Superfast Broadband

Our project to bring superfast broadband to Moy residents has been praised by BT and promoted on their website as a model for other rural communities which is fantastic news. Agreements have been signed with Openreach for three cabinets to be installed and BT have promised the work will be completed by Christmas. Nearly every home in the area registered for a Better Broadband voucher of £350, considerably reducing the cost to the community. Plans to investigate the viability of extending the scheme to other areas have been put on hold until BT complete promised upgrades of Tomatin and Glen Mazaran exchanges.



The Medical Group & Strathdearn Carers



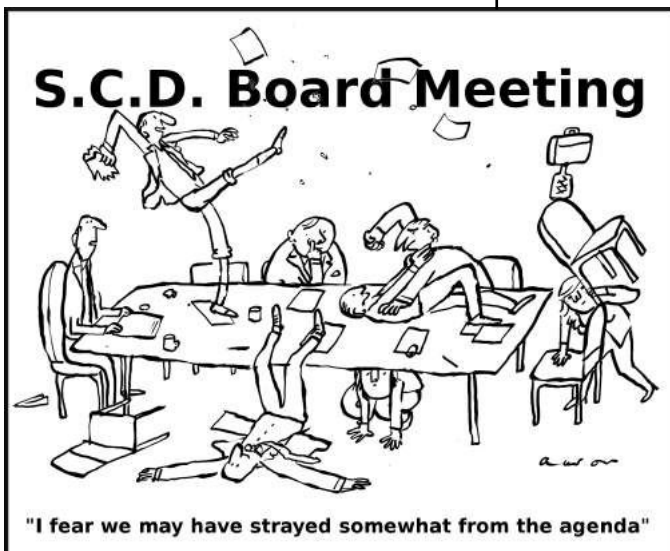
Highland Home Care now have a new manager, Angela MacDonald who will be SCD's main contact. We are delighted to say that Highland Home Care will be providing further training to the staff covering our area. Currently six Strathdearn residents are registered with numbers looking to rise in the future. This is a great service within the community which offers both a lifeline to our residents as well as providing local employment.

Paths Project

The SCD board continues to review the additional requirements imposed by the roads department to meet the conditions of planning. Local councillors have been encouraged to coordinate a meeting to see if we can reach a compromise and Mark Clough of Highland Council is consulting with engineers on options for a green verge (not kerbed) with occasional drain 'offlets' and alternative re surfacing (currently bitmac is specified) reducing the amount of retaining wall needed. However, if alternatives are found then it will probably mean applying for a formal variation to the conditions – more time and possibly more upfront cost if technical drawings are needed, but would result in a reduction in capital cost. We hope to have a response from Highland Council soon and will keep everyone updated.

Website

Don't forget to check Strathdearn Community Website for local news, useful information, SCD and Community Council documents, photo gallery, and much more.



Tomatin Shop

Lee Anne and her staff continue to work hard in the shop providing a much needed service within the village. They have completed their first stocktake since takeover and are constantly looking at ways to improve the current stock. Management accounts have now been issued and show that the shop traded at a loss over the winter months but every effort is being made to reverse these losses.



A new shop sign has been put up along with plans for a new rail and paint to freshen up the entrance to welcome in all customers. Please remember the shop is community owned and needs your support.

Communications

The community website has several new features. The online booking system is ready to use you can now check availability, book a room or sports facility, and pay for it by cheque, BACS or credit card. (You do not have to use the new system, you can continue to book and pay the same way you have always done). To attract more bookings from outside our area, we are working on an enhanced website description of the hall facilities together with a promotional leaflet. Take a stroll down memory lane - the redesigned photo gallery features pictures of Strathdearn people and places spanning over a century (more contributions welcome).

Glenkirk Woodland

An expression of community interest in Glenkirk was submitted to the Forestry Commission under the Community Asset Transfer programme. However, when the SCD Ltd board discussed possible acquisition at the board meeting of the 23 March 2017 it was decided to withdraw our interest.

The principle reasons being concerns over Glenkirk becoming a viable community asset given access issues and distance from the village. SCD Ltd also has major commitments with the shop and community hub projects, especially to win funding. A letter has been sent explaining this decision to the chair of the Community Council Mrs V Roden. It is important to note that the Board was keen to investigate further woodland opportunities in Strathdearn as part of a package of future projects.

New Appointment

We regret to announce we are losing a valuable member of the administration team, but delighted to announce we have found a great replacement.

The SCD board and team would like to thank Fiona Fraser for her most valuable contribution and wish her every success in the future. The White River Trading admin post was advertised, interviews held and we are delighted to welcome Joan MacQueen who will start the position in May. The post is funded by Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS).

SCD Membership

We encourage you to become a member of Strathdearn Community Developments Company. Benefits include the right to attend SCD meetings, stand for election as a company director and vote in elections. You can find an online membership form in the SCD section of the website, or you can request a printed form from the Company Secretary, Strathdearn Hall, IV13 7YN.

The next two SCD meetings are scheduled for May 25 and June 29. We meet in Strathdearn Hall at 7.30pm.

