

VILLAGE NEWS & AROUND:

"Sorry darling I got held up at the office"

This might ring true for someone commuting from work in Elgin or Aberdeen. Getting home from one of the rigs can be more of a difficulty with helicopters grounded or support vessels delayed. But what if your husband works in Brazil! Several of the villagers are commuting now to far off places in the search for work and fortune. Who travels the furthest in this quest?

Website news – Neil Hedley has updated the village website, "Portknockie.com. It now contains a link to the new website of Geoff Roberts, which showcases some of his art for sale. Look at www.geoffroberts.org

With the completion of the white picket fence on **Flagstaff Hill** overlooking the harbour the first part of this improvement scheme for Portknockie has been achieved. Still to come the seating, an observation point and the all-important flagstaff.

Have you taken a walk lately to Wembley Gate? You would be walking along the old railway line towards the turn for the Cullen Bay Hotel. The question this raises is how did this spot get this name?

Gorse bush in full yellow glory in winter! See it by the first cave after Jenny's Well. It shone in the sun on Sunday 23rd November in the frost!

The Bowling Club has agreed to waive charges for the 2004 season for any villagers using the tennis courts. This generous offer was agreed at the Club AGM on the proposal that busy courts look much better than deserted one. Now is the time to be thinking about looking for your old racquet, getting someone to buy you one for Christmas and limbering up with the latest training video. Let's hope this offer re-vitalizes the tennis game in Portknockie.

We will remember them. On Sunday 9th November two poppy wreaths were laid at the War Memorial by Margret Wood and Bob Croucher as our tribute to Portknockie's war dead. Our Minister, Graham Austin led some twenty-five villagers in a short Remembrance Day Service. For a moment a glorious rainbow could be seen over the war memorial as we remembered those from the village who fell.

On reflection, it seemed to some of those present that it was a small tribute from a village the size of Portknockie. Nor were there many of the younger generation in evidence although in other Moray towns and villages school children did turn out to acknowledge that our freedom today

has come from the sacrifice and legacy of earlier generations.

What do folk think about this? Next year should more of Portknockie gather to pay tribute to the war dead of the village? Is there an opportunity for the youngsters in the village to take a more active part in the ceremony? In the last year or so there seems to be a resurgence of observance of the two minute silence on the 11th November and Keith residents are protesting about the failure of authorities to close the main A96 trunk road to traffic for the act of remembrance.

Congratulations to Nicola Mair who has graduated from Moray College with HNC in Administration and Information Management. **A**

Big Well Done to Amy Donaldson, Robyn Downie, Mark McCrone, Katie McGovan, Katie Ramsay, Eilidh Ritchie, Caroline Shearer, Jade Shelwin, Rachel Shepherd and Hailey Urquhart who all passed their Cycle Proficiency Course at Portknockie School this term.

Winds of Change. How do you feel about the plans by AMEC Wind Energy to build a wind farm with 31 large wind turbines at Aultmore Forest some 8km south of Portknockie? The Scheme will take two years to construct and the company is confident that it has carried out a very rigorous environmental impact assessment and there should not be any substantial grounds for objection. Because of the Bin Hill we shall not suffer any visual intrusion from the giant 300 feet high turbines that will generate the power but they will be visible from Cullen, Findochty, Buckie and from as far away as Elgin.

AMEC has a track record of building wind farms across the north of England since 1993. This new scheme will be established on poor quality Forestry Commission woodland due south of the Bin Hill. It should provide enough electricity for a population the size of Moray. The scheme is designed to last for 25 years.

Aultmore Forest is considered an excellent wind farm location because suitably powerful winds blow in the area, the local land-owner is co-operative and it is in an area that has been designated by Moray Council as a preferred site for wind farms. It is also considered better to develop an already man-made landscape as opposed to using more valuable natural moorland. There is a suitable electricity grid connection nearby, there should be minimal adverse ecological impact on plants, birds and other forest animals and there are a number of opportunities nearby for habitat enhancement by the developer. At the end of its life the site can easily be returned to improved woodland.

Wind energy from turbines is a non-polluting form of renewable energy generation. Both the UK Government and the Scottish Executive are committed to increasing the proportion of our electricity generated from renewable resources. There are a number of wind farm projects being proposed both for Moray and Aberdeenshire. Electricity from wind power turbines will replace the output of coal or gas fired power stations and thus are intended to help reduce pollution by so-called "greenhouse gases" - held to be partly responsible for global warming.

It seems likely that the turbine components will be brought to the area via Buckie Docks. A total of 722 hectares within the Aultmore Forest has been designated as the wind farm development area. These Wind Farm proposals are out now for public consultation and planning approval. Your Community Council is required to send in any comments by December 12th. Pass on your views to any of the Community Councillors.

SUSAN'S KUI N KURL
LADIES & GENTS HAIR STYLIST
Susan, Kerry, & Claire



840366

The girls would like to wish all their friends and customers a Merry Xmas & best wishes for 2004.

The Portknockie School Support group has launched a newsletter to keep us all informed of developments at our school. This welcome publicity should raise the profile of our school and gives support to the following sentiments that were publicised recently by a resident:

Portknockie Primary School

Emerging from the maelstrom, the seasoned fisherman is concerned primarily about survival. Later he will recount his story detailing proportions of the gale, for now, he is content to be alive!

Life has a peculiar habit of throwing us into a vortex of unavoidable circumstances. Quite often we wonder how we will emerge ... mostly we do. In retrospect, we tend to forget events and cling to the fact that we have 'made it'. Instinctively every individual strives to stay, as our village motto declares "Aye Afloat".

As a relative newcomer to the village I am impressed by the strength of purpose and resolve which I evidence in Portknockie. Our immensely successful "Village in Bloom" project

is one of the many examples of an ability to form alliances and pull together in order to raise the profile of our small town.

Dare I remind fellow villagers that one very important element of our community has been sidelined? Ironically our school shares our village motto yet we tend (myself included) to view it as an unknown entity. Perhaps, our children are too young to attend school or have moved on to the next phase! Nevertheless, Portknockie Primary and its staff are fully committed to the education, individuality and happiness of young people in our locality. Can we ensure in the coming year that our school is given the necessary support to weather inevitable storms and remain - yes **Aye Afloat**".

CHEERIO PORTKNOCKIE –A message from Mr Charles Sivewright, the outgoing Head Teacher of Portknockie Primary School.

“You will be aware by now that it is my intention to leave my post at Portknockie School on December 3rd 2003 after some nineteen and half years here and nearly thirty three years teaching. This decision has not been taken lightly and although it has caused me to change my mind on several occasions, it is now definite. I am looking for other challenges so if you know anyone who is looking for an ex “heidie”, well used and slightly the worse for wear, then please let me know.

I would just like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all parents, friends and backers of the school, both past and present, for the tremendous support I have enjoyed in my time here, it really was appreciated and made some difficult times that little bit easier. Your children have, for the most part, been a delight and I feel proud when I think of the trust placed in me. People’s memories of school life are mixed but I do hope those pupils who have passed through this school in the last twenty or so years have mostly fond thoughts of their time here as indeed I have.

I have seen many changes in my time here, some for the better and some not; some I had control over and some I had not; some I agreed with and some I did not; but changes I have certainly experienced. It seems education was never meant to stand still and rightly so if that change is for the good.

Other things I have felt really lucky with here have been the staff, both teaching and non-teaching and the community support. I have been so fortunate in working with some really

“gweed folk” who I always felt were on the side of our pupils and the school.

As I take my leave I do not have regrets, although with hindsight I may have done some things differently. To those of you who did not agree with things I did I can only say that my decisions were always made for what I perceived to be good reasons; to those who did agree I offer my appreciation.

I wish you, your children, the school and Portknockie every good fortune and happiness in the future and I do not doubt that you will be **Aye Afloat.**”

HOLIDAY EXPERIENCES:

Following the request in the last issue for holiday stories, **Margaret and Robert Dawson of Firth View have passed on “A holiday with a difference.** Who would have thought that our short holiday in the Haute Garonne area of SW France would lead to an evening of Scottish Country dancing with an exuberant group of French more used to the local **Occitan** dancing (a mixture of Breton high-stepping with flicking feet)! It began decorously enough but soon developed into a real test of 'Franglais' with great hilarity when we could not work out who was dancing as a man. There seems always to be more ladies than men in Scottish Country dancing, even in France! The "Highland Rambler" will never be quite the same when we dance it in Buckie and there certainly will not be the kissing when the ramble is successfully completed!!

The next day we all met for a nine mile ramble with folk on horseback, cyclists and we foot soldiers. We finished the trek at the Mairie (the Town Hall) and we all shared the "bring and share" food and wine! Much solace was shown, perhaps tongue in cheek, at the roasting given by the French to the Scottish Rugby Team but we took it all in part - it's only a game! (Ed. a week or so later and the boot would have been on the other foot - courtesy of Jonny Wilkinson!).

On a more serious note, we travelled to the 13th century **Monsegur**, one of the most significant Cathar strongholds in this part of France. The castle is at an altitude of 1 207 metres built on the highest point of a rocky spur and it is puff-making! Those early Christians must have been fit but then they were trying to escape from the stranglehold of the powerful church and just wanted to be left alone to live a simple life.

This was our first visit to this most interesting region of France and we thoroughly enjoyed the

good fun, fellowship and food and the breathtaking views over part of the Pyrenean range from the top of Monsegur. A word of warning, however, the British get everywhere and quite a number have bought properties in the region. The latest incomer there being a lady from Elgin!

VILLAGE IN BLOOM 2003

The Community Council was delighted by the outstanding efforts that led to Portknockie gaining the shield as the **Best-kept Large Village in Moray for 2003.** It has asked the Village in Bloom group to work towards making it three times a winner next year. The plan then for 2005 is to make a fresh, concerted attempt to gain success in "Beautiful Scotland in Bloom.

Some **25 kg of daffodil bulbs** were planted this autumn along the old railway cutting to create a bonny show next Spring.

Gerry Connelly is maintaining many cuttings for next year's floral show over winter in several greenhouses offered up for loan by generous residents. Now is the time to come up with fresh ideas for the village's 2004 display. Look around the village and suggest places for clearing and general improvement.

There are a host of tasteful notelets, bookmarks, Christmas Cards, postcards, writing paper, aprons, fridge magnets, calendars and recipe books featuring Portknockie available from Mrs Ritchie at 8, Victoria Street, all useful as small seasonal gifts. The profits will go towards "Village in Bloom". See samples in the window of the "Potting Shed" behind the Youth Centre.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS:

The village **skateboarding** scheme in the park remains on hold. Our experience last year in trying to create our own local skating facility was very frustrating but, at least, we now understand all the problems that have to be overcome in setting up such a resource. It now needs a fresh approach and a determined group of volunteers to take on the challenge. You will be aware that a keen group of youngsters in Buckie is still engaged in fund raising to make their skateboarding dream come true.

Moray Council has replaced the rusty and broken railings on the road down to the harbour. The Council has promised to paint and prepare our paddling pool in the harbour for next season earlier in March or April. This summer the grand weather brought out the young customers well before the pool was ready for use.

It seems that your Community Council and The Moray Council have been thinking along similar lines regarding **the future of the harbour**. The Moray Council has indicated that it will be seeking European funding of £148 500 for improvements to local harbours intended to encourage increased use of them as recreational centres. Earmarked for this funding bid are the harbours at Cullen, Portknockie and Hopeman.

We have already put forward some ideas that are in line with such a development. These need to be taken up now by residents and considered in detail. Those with present interest in the harbour area and those keen that Portknockie should grow as a tourist and visitor destination ought to be coming together to review and propose the possibilities for development and change. Please pass on your views to Community Councillors or have your say in this publication.

In the autumn issue of the K'nocker some starter ideas were offered to get folk thinking about how the harbour might be developed:

- ❑ A Visitors' Centre with information, toilet and washing facilities for use by residents and day trippers after swimming and for visiting yacht crews. The building might also have use in the winter months for small group activities that promote local social recreation and cohesion. It could contain local heritage displays and, perhaps be the offices for printing this village newspaper.
- ❑ Improved diving and sea fishing facilities.
- ❑ Opportunities for local boat trips.
- ❑ A picnic area and improved paddling pool.
- ❑ A retail outlet for drinks, snacks, ices etc.
- ❑ A restaurant, perhaps in a converted boat.
- ❑ Landscaping and stabilization of the cliffs and re-instatement of the Flagstaff.
- ❑ A village bus service - an occasional circular route to and from the harbour.

Two of the four dog mess bins in the village were shattered at the end of October when fireworks were let off inside them. A ten seconds thrill that cost the tax payers several hundred pounds! Both these bins are now back in proper use. It is expected that an additional bin will be located at the junction of Addison Street and Admiralty Street. In the Spring, Moray Council will be appointing **four Community Wardens**, who will use the new legislation with on-the-spot fines for owners who do not pick up what their dogs leave behind. Sadly, it seems we also need to educate the bairns about this issue. There have been several instances of the young ones taking the plastic bags from the special bins and bursting them on

footpaths! Whatever next! This is hazardous to their health and a pretty disgusting kind of prank.

The **waste paper and cardboard** container lorry parks at the junction of Mid Street and Pulteney Street outside the old Bank building between 10.30 and 12 noon every other Saturday. The upcoming dates are December 6th and 20th, January February and March

Thinking ahead
HOLLY WREATHS
By Donna

Prices from £10-£15
Buttonholes etc also available
Order early by phoning 841129

Laura Bruce has joined the Community Council as our second student member and attends monthly meetings along with Jonathan Milton our other student member.

LOSS OF LIFE ON BANFFSHIRE COAST as reported on Tuesday 1st December 1857 in the Banffshire Journal (provided by Alec Campbell).

A violent storm in the Moray Firth resulted in 42 local fishermen losing their lives. East of Portknockie few boats had put to sea on this day or had returned safely but, when the gale broke, the parish of Rathven suffered serious losses. 14 boats with nine men in each had put out to the fishing grounds from Portknockie on November 24th and set their lines near the middle of the Firth some 25-30 miles offshore. The storm broke as the men were drawing in their lines obliging them to abandon the morning's fishing and run for the shore.

The wives and families in Portknockie watched on with horror as the boats, the masts being the only visible sign, fought with the waves and the spray. A great many of the families set off for Portessie when it became clear that the boats were fighting to come ashore at Craigenroan. In fact, no fewer than seven of the Portknockie boats did manage to land there along with a number of boats from Buckie and Findochty.

The "Vigilant", skippered by George Pirie (Dodle), was not so fortunate and foundered off Scar Nose with the loss of the crew. Further west The "Tenpence", skippered by James Mair (Shavie) was lost off Portsoy. Of the fourteen boats that set out from Portknockie seven took shelter within the shore at Craigenroan, one landed at Redhythe, a salmon bothie midway between Cullen and Portsoy, where a Barbara Home helped the crew struggle ashore, two landed at Portsoy, two made it to Macduff and

two were lost. Eighteen men in the prime of life, only one over 40, and twelve husbands and fathers were lost in this one storm.

In Buckie the outcome of this gale was scarcely less disastrous than at Portknockie with two boats lost with fifteen lives. Portgordon lost one boat with a crew of nine.

ZULU BOAT INFORMATION: On 21st November 2003, the Northern Scot published a letter from Mike Horton, Burton on Trent asking for information about a Zulu boat called the "Queen Victoria", built in Buckie in 1900. Here is the information on local Zulus built by George Innes at the Creeks, Portknockie provided by Davie Mair (boat is a Zulu type unless described)

BF556 "Favourite" 1883 for A Thomson, Buckie
BF1325 "Helen Grant" 1885 for George & WA Mair (Pim), Portknockie
BF418 "Friendship" 1886 for John & George Innes, Cullen
BF534 (Lugger) 1888 for George Mair (Shanker), Portknockie
BF417 "Choral Union" 1890 for James Hay (Scourie), Cullen
BF1177 "Euphemia" (Lugger) 1891 for George Mair (Geordie Shanker), Portknockie
BF1197 "Comfort" 1891 for John Wood then George Wood/Dodie Caulkie wrecked Stronsay
BF1356 "Glace" 1892 for Arthur & James Mair (Dear), Portknockie
BF1564 "Cornucopia" 1892 for John Slater (Jock Mash), Portknockie
BF1656 "Mashona" 1893 for FW Shearer, George Wood (Royal), R Grant, Portknockie
BF1672 "Eclipse" 1893 for W&D Pirie (Buxer), Portknockie
BF1705 "New Active (Scaffie) 1894 for J Innes, Portknockie
BF1722 "Violet" 1894 for GW & A Donaldson, Portknockie
VF1769 "Mignonette" 1894 for George Mair (Shavie), Portknockie
BF1773 "Annie Gardiner" (Scaffie) 1894 for John Wood (Grocer), Portknockie
BF1774 "Family's Pride" (Scaffie) 1894 for Alex Pirie, Portknockie
BF1777 "Annie Mather" 1894 for W Murray, Buckie
BF1787 "Sickle" 1894 for William Mair (Shy), Portknockie
BF1820 "Clan MacDonald" 1895 for Henry MacDonald, Portsoy
BF "Uganda" 1895 for A Innes – sunk in collision with PD87 "Boy Willie" off Peterhead
BF 1857 "Choice" (Scaffie) 1895 for W Farquhar, Portgordon
BF "Bountiful" 1896 for A Slater, Portknockie

BF 1911 "Trustful" 1896 for George Mair, Portknockie
BF1952 "Evangeline" 1896 for David Wood (King), Portknockie – lost at Stronsay
BF 2008 "Surprise" 1897 for A Clark, Buckie
BF 2043 "Fertility" 1898 for George Mair (Doddie Dear), Portknockie
BF2044 "Ezel" 1898 George Wood (Royal), Portknockie
BF 2064 "Gratitude" (Scaffie) 1898 for David Mair (Shanker), Portknockie
BF2073 "Kingfisher" 1898 for John Pirie (Jock Buxer), Portknockie
BF88 "Rhodesia" 1899 for WG Wood, Portknockie
BF117 "Youthful" 1899 for J Wood (Royal), Portknockie
BF181 "Consolation" 1899 for J Wood, Portknockie
BF173 "Jeannie" (Scaffie) 1899 for James Falconer (Falky), Portknockie
BF317 "Spider" 1900 for W Wood & A Mair, Portknockie
INS192 "Cawdor Castle" 1900 for Alex M Wallace, Nairn
BF149 "Gowan" 1900 for J Mair (Bobbin), Portknockie
BF582 "Sunashine" 1901 for A Slater, Portknockie
BF745 "Ephratah" 1902 for J Slater (Mash), Portknockie
BF746 "Piries" 1902 for Wm Pirie, Portknockie
BF814 "Topic" 1902 for Wm Wood (Doo) & W Slater, Portknockie
BF856 "Constance" 1902 for James Runcie, Cullen
BF985 "Sardius" 1902 for John Slater, Portknockie
BF1040 "Dexterity" 1903 for George Mair, Portknockie
BF1217 "Bounteous" 1903 for David J Mair, Portknockie
BF1235 "Virtue" 1903 for John Falconer (Johnny Falky), Portknockie
BF1404 "Royal Burgh"
BF1409 "Expedient" 1903 for W Runcie (Saddler), Cullen
BF1451 "Two Brothers" (Scaffie) 1903 for John Wood, Portknockie
BF1593 "Mary Mair" 1904
BF204 "Glide" 1906 for J Pirie (Coull/Tyler), Portknockie

"WILD ABOUT PORTKNOCKIE" - a series of local nature notes by Mary Thorpe

I have heard that there is a belief held by some folk that gulls are the spirits of fishermen lost at sea. A few years ago we made friends with a lady who had lost her man at sea many years ago and who held this belief. She had a gull visiting

her daily and she fed this bird on command. Unfortunately our friend died a couple of years ago and, on the very day that she died, I got the shock of my life when I went into the kitchen and there stood this gull looking at me through the window. I must admit that I am one of those people who do not like to encourage gulls near to houses mainly because of the noise and the mess of them, so I am embarrassed to admit that we now have "George" visiting us every day for a scrap of bread. He appears on our neighbour's garage roof, which is just a couple of feet from our kitchen window and he stands with his feet over the edge of the roof and peers into our window. It is quite comical to see it. He comes most days and just stares us out until we open the window and throw him a scrap. Then he is off doing whatever gulls do until the next day. (He visits the pigs! Ed.) I still get annoyed at all the gulls around the houses but I do have a soft spot for George. George is a Herring gull, our most common sort of gull and he is very handsome when in his best breeding colours. His wings are a beautiful soft, slate grey with black tips and his body is lovely and white. He has pink legs and a yellow bill with a bright scarlet spot on the lower bit. Handsome yes but very, very loud when he throws his head back and lets rip!

Whilst on the subject of birds visiting gardens, I must tell you about my Mum's waifs and strays. She gets all the usual sparrows, blackbirds etc. but there are also some real characters. There are "Blackbird & Robin" that come as a pair to the kitchen window for scraps. At first it was just the blackbird that came and he would 'pink' until she opened the window and fed him. Well the robin must have watched this and now, when he hears the 'pinking' of the blackbird, he appears from nowhere to feed alongside him! She also has a poorly looking jackdaw with a very droopy wing. She spotted him one day and felt sorry for him so now he comes to the front window when she calls and has a few scraps.

CATHERINE'S CERAMICS
A Merry Christmas to all my
ladies and a happy painting New
Year
8 Victoria Street
Portknockie
01542-840554

Walking Brin, our dog, down by the harbour the other day I noticed a group of nine Turnstones feeding along the shoreline. They are really well camouflaged when seen from above. At first I thought there were four birds then, as each one moved, I finally counted nine. They did not seem worried about me watching them and I was

very close. They did not even seem to mind Brin peering over the edge at them. I watched then for a few minutes and they were systematically moving along the water's edge turning over some quite big stones bearing in mind their size. Then they were off skimming over the water with a high-pitched peeping.

This hot summer has been particularly good for the roses hence we had a really good crop of hips. The Rosa Rugosa that we grow around our car parking space has been thronging with Greenfinches for the last two months. The wild dog roses have also produced a good crop of hips. I am very tempted to take some myself and make them into wine but I think I would feel a bit guilty taking food from the birds. There was a beautiful show at the end of August and in to September along the old railway cutting of rosebay willow herb. Also the harebells were particularly gorgeous this year. There are even a few still on show as I write this in November.

Well, we know that summer is at an end when the skeins of geese start to arrive for the winter from their breeding grounds in Greenland, although some do also breed here. I saw the first lot arrive on the 7th October. There is also a distinct lack of our summer visiting swallows, house martins and swifts. I actually saw a single swallow flying about the village on the 9th October, which is very late to still be here. There seemed to be a lot more swifts this year than usual. They are a joy to watch scything through the sky at great speed and calling their high-pitched squeal. I find it hard to believe that this beautiful bird lives on the wing only landing to feed the babies at the nest. Their legs are very weak but their claws are very strong to grip the edge of the nest. They sleep, feed and even breed high up in the air. I am embarrassed to say that I have not yet discovered where they are nesting, so can anyone help me with this bit of missing information?

I have an apology to make for a mistake in my last article. I incorrectly called the Preachers Cave "Duane's Den". I had been persuaded by the fact that the name is neatly painted on the wall of the cave. However, I had a phone call from a lady in Cullen who told me that it was actually an act of vandalism by a young man many years ago who was trying to impress a friend. Might it then not be an idea to paint over the offending name?

The dolphins have put on some good shows for us all this year. We had friends visiting in the summer for about the third time and I think they were beginning to doubt the very existence of dolphins off Portknockie. They had not seen any

at all and it was not for the lack of looking. Eventually, on a lovely late spring evening we were out for a last walk before their departure the next day and there, just out from the harbour, were fifteen or twenty dolphins and they were leaping and displaying at their best. Our friends were speechless. They had never seen anything like it before.

In the last K'nocker it was reported that Ragwort, also known as Tansy was growing locally. I thought that they were two separate plants and on checking a few books it would seem that I was right. However checking another book it had them down as the same plant so it seems we are both correct!

There is also another pest plant growing in numbers around the village wherever there is fresh water and that is the Indian Balsam. This plant is originally from the Himalayas and was grown as a garden plant. Unfortunately, when it goes to seed and anything brushes the seedpods they literally explode and scatter seed over great distances. It grows so thickly alongside water that it just about chokes out our native species. You might have noticed it growing down by Jenny's Well and all along the Den burn to the golf course. This plant also has a very strange and not very pleasant cloying type of perfume in late summer before it goes to seed. I would pull out all of these plants if I thought I could beat them but I think I would be fighting a losing battle. I have heard that people in other areas where they are established do pull them up to let native plants get a hold again.

POETS' CORNER

Portknockie Young Loons o' Yesteryear – From the Davie Mair poem collection and written by James G Geddes in January 1995.

Div ye mine lang ago fin ee wis a young loon
Ee cam either fae Up or Doon the Toon
The Linlinks or the Creebies wis yer ain grun
Far ee biggit yer rafties and hid lots o' fun.

In the summer ye dookit just wearin yer drawers
Ye catch't little bandies tae stick intae jars
Ye haiket for pillars in a' the rook neuks
Ye hait aff their nippers for baitin yer heuks.

Georgie Kingie had a chipper and billaird saloon
Up in Church Street at the top ine o' the toon
He selt ye a Woodbine for only a maik
It hung oot o' yer moo fin ye wis makin a break.

Ye'd coloured widden taps, an a wheep made o'
string
Ye wheepit them up and fair made them ding

Baggies o' marbles hingin doon at yer hip
Glassies and Chaulkers that wir liable tae chip.

At the ine o' the summer, fin the breezes were fair
Ye lay back in the stooks wi' a kite in the air
Made oot o' broon paper wi' a net for a tail
Ye chawed on a neep as ye lay watchin' it sail.

In the summer, widden boaties wir sailt on the dam
An ye slid on its ice fin the frosty days cam
Ye played at three flaps at yer ain ine o' the toon
On crisp winter's nichts, fin thir wis a full moon.

Bit noo it's computers, or a flash mountain bike
Wet suits and snorkels or a stereo and mike
Nae simple things like we hid in oor day
The youngsters nooadays jist dinna ken hoo tae play.

THE PORTKNOCKIE DIRECTORY

Police: Emergency	999
Non-emergency	0845 600 5 700*
Doctors: (Cullen)	840272
(Buckie)	831555
Seafield Hospital:	832081
Dr Grays, Elgin: 01343	543131
Aberdeen RI: 01224	681818
Dentist: (Buckie)	831163
Chemist: (Portknockie)	840268
Optician: (Buckie)	832239
Plumber (Portknockie)	840052
Electrician: (Portknockie)	840066
Harbour Garage	840099
Hydro-Electric: (24hrs) 0800	300999
Scottish Gas: (24 hrs) 0800	111999
Scottish Water Emergency: 0845600 8855	
BT: (fault reporting) 0800 800	151
Coastguard: (24 hrs) 01224	592334
Environmental Incidents: 0800	807060
Moray Council: 01343	543451
Out of hours	08457 565656
Buckie Access Point	837200
Uplift service (after 10am) 01343	557318
Patientline -NHS advice 0500	202070
NHS24 - Health Advice 0845	242424
Crimestoppers 0800	555 111
Neighbourhood Watch (J.Myles)	840 000

Travel Information telephone numbers:

Bus & Coach:

Bluebird (Macduff) 01261	833533
First Aberdeen Ltd. 01224	650065
National Coaches 0990	808080

Airports:

Aberdeen	01224	722331
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Inverness 01667 464000

Seaport: (Aberdeen)

Northlink 0845 6000 449

Trains:

National Rail Enquiries 0845 748950

Taxis: (Portknockie) 840875

Portknockie Post Office 840201

Portknockie School 840244

Portknockie Library 841149

The K'nocker (Bob Croucher) 841291

***The new non-emergency Grampian Police number for general assistance or information. This is to a 24/7 call centre. The operators will pass you on to the local police if it is felt to be appropriate. Always dial the 999 number if:**

- Violence is being used or threatened
- There is a danger of violence
- A crime is in progress
- A road accident with injuries has occurred
- A non-injury road accident has occurred and there is serious traffic congestion

HELLO, IT'S THE FUN QUEEN AGAIN!

The question she is asking this time is how well do you know Portknockie? Answers to Pearl at 14 Addison Street.

1. Who is the Chairperson of Portknockie Community Council?
2. Who is the Minister of the Church of Scotland?
3. Name 3 members of the Seniors' Club Committee.
4. Which Committee is responsible for the running of the McBoyle Hall?
5. Which street used to be known as Jubilee Terrace?
6. If you were in the Chemist's shop which street would you be in?
7. Who buried the time capsule in the Millennium Garden?
8. What is the name of the new owner of the Hill Street newsagents?
9. Where does the SOMY2GO Youth Club meet?
10. Which biblical character has moored his boat out side the School?

The winners of the summer quiz were Sybil Falconer, 13 Pulteney Street and Mr & Mrs Eddie Anderson, 31 Haig Street. Their next year's subscription to the K'nocker is free!

James and Anne at Hill Street Newsagents. Wish all customers festive greetings and thank them for their welcome support. They hope this will continue on through the coming New Year. J&A Johnston Ltd. 01542-841059

PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGES:

Two free services to help when you face repair or improvement jobs in the home that you cannot cope with on your own and you have no one else to call upon for assistance.

Moray Care & Repair free advice with repairs and improvements for owner-occupiers or private tenants who are over 60 or have a disability. We can assist by discussing what repairs are required, obtaining quotes for reputable contractors, ensuring the work is completed to an acceptable standard and helping you to arrange finance. **Contact:** Phone 01343 548660 or write to Room 46, Chandlers Court, Chandlers Rise, Elgin IV30 4GF. This service is funded by The Moray Council and Communities Scotland.

The Handyperson Service (Moray) is a repair and assistance service by committed volunteers to help the elderly, disabled and disadvantaged members of the community maintain a better quality of life in their own homes. This service is now being expanded to include our area.

What can we offer? If an item in the house needs to be replaced or fitted, the client supplies the goods and the volunteer handy person supplies the free labour. A job is something that takes perhaps an hour or so, but several tasks can be undertaken during one visit. Some examples include: wiring a plug, replacing an awkward light bulb or smoke alarm battery, hanging curtains, fitting a tap washer or shifting a heavy piece of furniture. These are small everyday chores that can present problems to the less able where a helping pair of hands would be most appreciated.

What we don't do! This is not a service to replace the help of local trade's people, neither is it a service able to tackle major works! Nor is it a service to replace the support that should be provided by a local family or relevant authority.

Who can benefit? Elderly, disabled and disadvantaged people who face tasks that they can no longer do for themselves and who do not have family or friends to call upon for assistance. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may use this service.

Who will do this work? This service depends on volunteers to carry out the work. They will be people who have practical skills, perhaps DIY enthusiasts. They may be retired tradesmen with

the time and commitment to assist those less able than themselves. Volunteers will have been police checked and they are issued with identification cards, which will be presented at every visit to your home.

How to access the service: You can do it yourself or you can ask your Home Help, Carer, GP Practice or a friend to make contact on your behalf. **Contact: Write to** David Townsend at the Community Care Project, 15 High Street, Elgin IV30 1EQ or **phone** 01434 543490. David would like to hear from anyone who feels they may possess the qualities that would enable them to join our group of volunteers. Please call him for an informal chat.

A message from Scottish Water - "**Bag it and bin it. Don't flush it!**" The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are human waste and toilet roll. Never flush: Medicines, syringes and needles - these should go to the chemist or the nearest Needle Bank. Sanitary items such as towels, tampons, panty liners, disposable nappies and baby wipes, cotton wool, incontinence pads, colostomy bags or used bandages, condoms and femidoms - these should all be well-wrapped and then binned Razors, toothbrushes and contact lens should be placed in a solid container and then put in the bin. 300 million of these items are flushed down Scotland's toilets each year. Yet the typical waste water drain past your house is only 4 inches wide and can easily become blocked.

Moray Young Carers – A young carer is under 18 and helping regularly to look after someone with a long-term illness, a condition or disability. Do you do this for someone? Do you know of anyone doing this in Portknockie? It would be helpful to know just how many young carers we have in the village. They can get support with this tough responsibility. The Young Carers' Co-ordinator for Moray is Fiona Gill and she can be contacted at The Moray Carers Project, 227 High Street, Elgin IV30 1DJ, by phone on 01343-540990 or by e-mail fiona.gill@moray.carers.net Moray Young Carers can offer young carers advice and information, a break from their caring, some fun and activities and a sympathetic listening ear

PARKVIEW HOLIDAY HOME, Portknockie
STB 3 Stars. 2 Bedrooms, sleeps 5 persons,
fully equipped.
Telephone Doreen Miller on 01542-841117

AFRICAN EXPERIENCE by Laura Bruce

I recently participated in a Brathay Expedition to Tanzania, East Africa. As many of you know, several fundraising events took place prior to the trip. This event would not have been possible

without the support of the local community, many thanks to all who participated. Departing from Manchester on the 19th July, the expedition lasted twenty-four days in total.

As we stepped off the plane into the dry, humid African night and crammed into a minibus, nothing could have prepared us for the welcome we were about to receive. On arrival at our host accommodation, Mawenzi Secondary School, Moshi, we were greeted by hundreds of the Mawenzi pupils who sang and danced in unison. We were engulfed in crowds of hugs, all smiling and shouting "You are welcome". The atmosphere was overwhelming. We stayed at Mawenzi for five days during which we carried out several activities. Besides meeting the Dept. Mayor, the Head of Education and the Chief Inspector of Moshi and the surrounding district, we attended many classes. Through the day we taught the pupils a wide variety of subjects ranging from first aid, computing and English to Karate and various sports. In exchange they gave us evening Kswahili language lessons which were extremely useful when shopping at the local market. Quite often you would walk down the street like the 'Pied Piper' with twenty or so salesmen following you, each shouting out what they had to offer. They would usually try to soften you by saying things like "special price for you my sista!" Occasionally, it worked! Besides shopping and attending classes, we painted classrooms, cleared running tracks and basketball grounds and mended football nets. Hopefully this will make a small difference. We managed to spend plenty of time with the students, bonding friendships and exchanging ideas about our different cultures.

On the Saturday of that week we climbed to Miriacamba hut, the first camp on Mount Meru, our 'practice' mountain. On the way up we passed wild giraffe, buffalo and wildebeest, an amazing sight. The next day we climbed above cloud to Saddle hut, the second and final camp. Each night we slept in freezing log cabins, fully equipped with 'out-toilets', otherwise recognised as wooden boxes with a hole in the ground - something which we were to class as a luxury a week later! After a well-earned rest day back at Mawenzi Secondary, we embarked on the biggest challenge of my life - A climb to the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro. It took us five and a half days to reach the summit.

Technically, although we chose one of the more difficult routes, Mount Meru was tougher but the **altitude of 5 895 m (over 19 000 feet)** proved to be the main challenge. With the altitude came burning heat in the daytime and sub-zero temperatures at night. We packed together in our

tents for warmth. It was easy to forget the altitude and pick up the walking pace but, within seconds, you were out of breath. The final push at 12 midnight was unforgettable. As we climbed one foot in front of the other in the silent darkness, the water in our bottles froze. All in all five team members, four of them our Tanzanian participants, turned back midway, leaving me the only female team member. We all suffered from severe headache, exhaustion, sore feet and legs but no one was seriously ill. When we reached the snow-capped peak at 6.30am and sunrise all our efforts were rewarded. I will never forget the overwhelming feeling of relief and happiness as we all hugged and congratulated each other on this huge physical and mental achievement. It also proved for some to be very emotional as well.

The one and half day descent was trivial! We had a much needed rest day back at the school where we had the chance to wash ourselves and our clothes before setting off again on a three day **safari**. On our journey around Lake Manyara and the magnificent Ngorogoro Crater (30 km across) we encountered elephants, giraffes, lions, cheetahs, wildebeest, hyena, impala, zebra as well as flamingo and various other rare and beautiful bird species. Our accommodation on the safari was basic guesthouse similar to our school dormitories, but with the inclusion of a table and chair in addition to our beds and much appreciated mosquito nets.

Before we returned home to Britain we were invited to spend a day with the students in their homes. I was allocated to a Muslim family, who stayed in Moshi. My host, Fatuma, took me to visit her relatives and cooked us a traditional Tanzanian meal.

This home visit gave me a real cultural experience and I learnt that not all Africans are as poor as they may seem. There is poverty in Tanzania but next to the underprivileged there are people living in huge houses with outdoor swimming pools, TVs and CD players. The people do not want sympathy, they are happy and proud of what they have, even if it is not much. The most important thing I learned from this expedition is never to take things for granted. It is not until you have to go without that you realise how precious simple things are.

(Ed What a splendid achievement, it makes climbing the Bin seem somewhat ordinary!)

HAME COOKING: As no one has sent me any recipes for this issue here is a dish you can serve to the birds in your garden

Crumble Pastry Maggots: Ingredients: 85 g flour, 30 g of lard, butter or high-fat margarine, no maggots! **Method:** Put the flour in a bowl and mix in the lard with the tips of your fingers. Rub the dry mixture into little crumbly rolls that look like maggots. Sprinkle these on the ground among bushes and flowerbeds or serve on your bird table. A dish fit for robins, tits and blackcaps at the table and wrens, wagtails and dunnocks on the ground.

Yogurt Loaf - Sybil Connelly has come up with a real recipe! **Ingredients:** A small carton of any flavour yogurt, use the carton to measure out one of cooking oil, two of caster sugar and three of self-raising flour plus two eggs. **Method:** put the yogurt and sugar into a mixing bowl and mix together with a fork. In another bowl put the oil and the eggs and beat. Then add the oil and eggs mixture alternatively with the flour to the yogurt and sugar mixture. Pout the end result into a 2lb loaf tin which has been lined with greaseproof paper. Cook for 1 hour at 350° and for the last 15 minutes in the oven cover with greaseproof paper. Leave the loaf plain or ice the top.

A KIN MIN FAN memories by Willie Mair stimulated a follow up from David Pirie ("Darlin") living now in Aberdeen.

The next time I prick my hands pruning my roses I will remember that good old Portknockie word "jouber". Willie Mair's diet of the Thirties brought back memories of families sitting round a table enjoying a meal and a more settled way of life where bairns went home from school for their dinner.

Every picture tells a story and the most telling thing about Willie's dinner for four is the price. Sixpence at the butcher's speaks volumes for the profit margins of the day shared by the various shopkeepers. There were four butchers, three bakers and about nine grocers all vying for a sixpenny sale. Bakers had severe competition from vans from outside the town and shops selling bakery products. Willie's friend, Alky Baker, has a horse van going round the doors with Harry Gray as the vanman. Fobby Urquhart, Woodside Dairy, Cruats and Bob Stables delivered milk daily to your doorstep. Fobbie twice a day in warm weather! If you still needed milk Lizie Burns sold it from her house any time of the day.

Tatties were about the only thing bought in bulk. Champions were sold by the bushel from the many tattie carts that sold a penny worth of vegies. New tatties came on sale after Peter Fair.

I will have to put down my pen now as I can smell the neeps and tattie soup is just about

ready. Unfortunately I will not be having that great Portknockie feed of Alky Darlins famed potted Heid and new tatties for my tea. Excuse me while I drool.

THE PAPERSHOP HISTORY

Jean Forbes Hicks from Church Street recalls working part time in the Paper Shop several years back when it was being run by Gordon & Ellen Harper. She says they were a lovely couple to work for, both kind and good natured. Gordon was always making people laugh.

One lady came into the shop and said "Have you anything to stop my cough please Gordon?" He promptly reached below the counter and produced a bottle of castor oil. After the customer protested, he said "But if you took this, you will be too feared to cough!" Lovely memories, lovely people!

PORTKNOCKIE TIPS - a new feature.

An opportunity for anyone to pass on help that might be useful to other folk.

Questions to ask about your medicines:

- What does this medicine do?
- How long will I need to use it?
- How and when should I take it?
- Should I avoid any other medicines, drinks, foods or activities when I am taking this medicine? For example drive.
- What are the possible risks and side-effects and what should I do if they happen to me?

Source: National Patient Safety Agency

If you have a useful tip, and it is publishable, why not pass it on to the Editor for inclusion in the next issue of The K'nocker?

SHEAR DEZIGN Hair by Lisa

Lisa, Jackie, Gillian and Sammy wish all our customers the season's greetings.

Phone 841711 for an appointment

WHAT'S ON IN THE PORT:

Portknockie Bowling and Tennis Club: The winter carpet season in the McBoyle Hall is now well under way and while, after playing on the bowling green, it tends to take a little time to get

used to bowling on a short carpet with a big stick in the middle, it is nice to be warm and out of the elements. The Club plays in the Banffshire Coastal League and, with three fixtures now played, we have a few points gained. Not a great deal mind you but the games have been very enjoyable and there is still plenty of time! In addition, various open competitions in neighbouring clubs have started and members have been taking part with some success.

In an effort to repair the perimeter of the bowling green much work has been going on. The old railway sleepers, which provided the edging to the actual green had rotted considerably. They will likely have been in place since the green was constructed in the mid-Thirties. They have now been removed along with very many shovelfuls of rubble and earth. The ditch has been widened and concrete blocks have been laid. These are being fixed with boards and covered with turf so hopefully, by the time spring arrives, everything will be back in pristine condition for the new bowling season.

Portknockie Toddlers' Group:

Church of Scotland Sunday School

Church of Christ Sunday

Seafield WRI: On the **11th December** we are holding a Beetle Drive, we have invited Rathven WRI and the competition is making a mince pie. On **January 22nd** Bill Copeland will give a talk on keeping bees and making honey with a bit of the Doric thrown in. The competition is four muffins. Our annual party will be on **February 26th**. On **March 25th** Janet Murray will give a talk with slides on Canada. On **April 22nd** Kathleen Carter is our guest from Portgordon.

SOMY2GO,

For all your computer needs
(Web designs – Custom Built PC's – PC
Upgrades – Trouble Shooting)
Contact Neil Hedley on:- 07815
891230

Portknockie Amenities: The "Boxing Nite Bash" takes place in the McBoyle Hall from 9.00pm until late. Ticket entry and pay at the door - £5 only for the over 18s. The AGM will be in January 2004 and we shall be looking for new committee members. Standby volunteers!

Hogmanay Hoolie – all the family are invited to the McBoyle Hall on the 31st December from 9.00pm to well after the bells. There will be a midnight fireworks display. Bring your own food and drink. Entrance is £3 each and any under 16s must be accompanied by an adult.

**"If you ever blow a fuse
George Innes is the man to use
And if you are ever in the dark
He's the man to get you back your spark!"**

**For all home electrical problems you can
contact George on 840066 or 3 Bridge Street**

Gardening Club: Not yet meeting for lack of any interest!

Meals on Wheels – Portknockie meal deliveries are being handled by a small group of volunteers from the village – however, a further volunteer or two would be extremely helpful. While this would provide a bigger pool of helpers, it would also make it easier to swap duty days around when need be. A car is required and this involves uplifting the meals normally from the school in Findochty and delivering on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday lunchtime of a given week. It does not take too long and petrol expenses are refunded. If you can help in this worthwhile task or even if you would like more information please get in touch with the local organiser, Mrs Margaret Main, 3 Netherton Terrace, Findochty, telephone 01542-832229. It would be very much appreciated.

Your K'nocker needs you and you need your Knocker! Over half the houses in Portknockie receive this newspaper and a number of copies go beyond the village to "K'nockers" world-wide. **Your new subscription** falls due before the next issue comes out at the end of March. Please place your order with Margret Wood in the Library before then and you can enjoy **4 copies delivered for £3**. Single copies are on sale in the Library or at the Chemist's for £1 each. See Margret Wood for postal copies for which we have to charge an extra £1.50 to cover p&p for the four issues. Remember you can always download a copy from Neil Hedley & John Smith's website at:
www.portknockiewebsite.co.uk

HAIR STUDIO
New Street
Portknockie
Ladies & Gents Hairdresser

**For an appointment with Amy or Deborah
phone 841028.
Gents walk in on Saturdays 10-12 noon. No
appointment necessary.
Special offer for December – Streaks £25**

PORTKNOCKIE SCHOOL NEWS
**Our holiday dates for the rest of the year are
as follows:**
Christmas break: Friday 19th December

School back: Monday 5th January 2004
Mid Term: Friday 13th February to Monday
16th February
Easter break: Friday 26th March
School back: Monday 12th April
Mat Day Holiday: Monday 3rd May
In Service: Thursday 20th May to Friday 21st
May
Buckie Holiday: Monday 14th June
Summer holiday: Friday 1st July
School back: Tuesday 17th August

Christmas 2003 Events: Tuesday 9th
December is the Christmas Lunch in the School
Canteen. Tuesday 16th **December** P1-P4 will be
holding their party. Wednesday 17th **December**
is the party day for P5-P7. On Thursday 18th
December we hold our Christmas Service at the
Church. The Christmas holiday begins on Friday
19th **December**.

XMAS PRESENTS:
**Cheeseboards, Hors-d'Oeuvres sets, Clocks,
Pot-Pourri holders, & Stocking fillers: Pens,
Pencils, Key rings.**
WOODTURNING
By
John Bell, Schoolhouse
841065

Next issue out at the end of March 2004 -