

2008, A YEAR TO LOOK FORWARD TO OR JUST ANOTHER PASSING YEAR?

As the Christmas and Hogmanay celebrations approach and we finally turn the corner on dark nights and murky mornings, it is natural to feel more hopeful and optimistic about the future - the New Year of 2008. Blue sky thinking can lead us to be ambitious and visionary about our plans. What are YOUR hopes for next year?

What would we all like to see happening in Portknockie during the coming year? Scanning through the pages of this issue, it is clear that the Community Council would like to see villagers more committed to the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and vigilant about reporting anti-social behaviour. The Community Association is keen to make 2008 the year when we restore the McBoyle Hall to full working order and we all make greater use of this village resource. The Editor has invited readers to consider the idea of "Portknockieness", by perhaps, agreeing a day in the year when we all get together to celebrate the fact that we belong to Portknockie

Other threads that can be discerned in this issue urge us all to recycle more and adopt a greener lifestyle. To get more involved in the life of the village by acting on the concern that we should all be helping to build stronger and more supportive communities in Moray. Also folk need to make clear whether Portknockie should maintain, cut back or even abandon its commitment to Village in Bloom in 2008.

Finally, we are all reminded to support our school and help ensure that it provides an

excellent local education now and for the future generations.

NOT ONE, NOT TWO BUT A TEAM-2007 PORTKNOCKIE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR.

At 6.30pm on a fine, starlit 1st December evening the village Christmas lights display was switched on by 4 year old, Chelsea Slater from Addison Street. A Youth Club choir, beautifully led by soloist Louise Stephens, had started the proceedings before a good crowd of villagers. George Sinclair, deputising for the Minister, away in Rwanda, reminded folk of the importance of Christmas, not just the giving of presents but also good will to all people and the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Afterwards, in the Seafield Hall, the choir sang a selection of carols with music backing from Maddie and Alec Green. Sausage rolls were served. The collection was for the Youth club. To their great surprise and joy, the K'nocker Editorial team was voted Citizen of the Year 2008 with the shield presented by Midge Middleton.

VILLAGE NEWS & AROUND:

John Ross from Caloundra, Queensland, Australia: John has been e-mailing information about his mother, Alice Slater, better known as Poppie. The family T-name was "Mash". She was born in Portknockie and left for Australia with her parents and 5 of her 6 siblings when she was 14/15. The eldest brother, Johnnie went to London to work for the Midland Bank and never migrated with the rest of the family. Now 92 and 6 months, Alice has been recovering from a serious car accident injury and exchanging memories of the Port has been good for her, reports John. She recalls schooldays with friends Ann Bruce and Lillian Simpson. The Slater family lived for some time at "St Clair" in King Edward Terrace (the Slack). Alice also provides a link with Miriam Slater mentioned in the e-mail from Alison Durkin below - "Miriam's father was called George and he was the brother of my mum's grandfather, 'Jock Mash' and my mum's dad was called 'Sannie Mash'.

Alison Durkin née Mair has e-mailed from USA: "I am the daughter of Isabel Pirie and my Dad, Alister G Mair now lives in Inverurie. I have spent the last 26 years in USA and my two girls aged 23

and 21 have visited Portknockie many times. My paternal Nana was Miriam Helen Slater who lived at 29 High Street and my maternal Granny was Nellie, Helen Gardiner who lived at The Bield, Harbour Place. She has written to check if anyone knows a little rhyme that starts 'Chap chap, Willie Wattie, Fa's' at its deid, Peer catty meowie wi a sair heid!'" Anyone recognise these lines?

Kut 'n' Kurl
of
Portknockie
840366
Kerry, Susan, Claire & Joanne

Vera Findlay in Canada has forwarded an e-mail correcting a memory in Margaret Downie's correspondence in the last issue: The reference to Mr Mair, a teacher at Portknockie School should have read Mr Main (known as Mainie), the standard or Qualifying class teacher. He lived right across from Bill Fakkie's shoppie in the Square. Vera adds she was a chum to Margret Wood's mother, Wilma and she recalls spending many an evening knitting in Wilma's house in Patrol Place. She also writes of performing in Mrs Gordon's concerts at the Seafield Hall and refers to using the Kirk Hall - presumably what is now the Youth Centre in the old Burgh Chambers because Vera refers to there being a bank at the back - until 1997 the Bank of Scotland.

David Pirie has written from Aberdeen regarding Charlie Slater's news: "Charlie Slater is a bit younger than me; I will be 80 next year. I remember his traveling "Woolies" but I mind their mode of transport as being different. They had a three wheeled motorized van with a canvas covered rear and they sold knick-knacks, lucky charms and cheap jewelry - goodness knows how they made a living! They dressed very flamboyantly - he in loud check shirts and cowboy boots and she in gypsy attire.

The knife sharpener, I mind, was called Shears the Grind as that was his call as he walked the streets. He had a grind stone worked with a foot pedal which, when he was not working it, was enclosed in a wooden box on wheels that he pushed along.

I cannot remember organized football. We used to play fun football at the public parkie, it was along from the Bilers on very rough ground. One day the battle cruiser "Renown" anchored off the Port Hill and the crew came ashore for recreation and played a

match there. The Grand Fleet used to sail close in by Portknockie on its way to Invergordon and Scapa Flow every autumn. When the Grand Fleet was in Invergordon we used to hear them target practicing, the loud booms of the guns were part and parcel of the autumn evenings. I remember the Renown was anchored off Buckie and was open to the public; we were ferried out in fishing boats.

Fackie's garage at the gable end of his shop on Church Street was used as a fowl plucking shed when required.

Sunday afternoon walks in the summer time often found ourselves at Jinnie's Wally. I mind when the masonry was built around about it, before that you usually got your feet wet getting a drink as it was very marshie. The cave up from the Wally was sometimes lived in by Tinkies (travelling folk). I remember they rigged up a curtain of harn (hesian) bags and the smoke from their fire coming out. At that time there was a small cave on the west side of the Boar Crag where Tinkies used to live. A door was fixed at the entrance and it became a store for the golf club. The Preacher's Cave was used for a gambling card school, older lads played cards standing up around the kitty of coppers and tanners. I, who came from a religious household, was sure the card players were destined for the bad place. I was always led to believe that a pack of cards was called "the De'el's Buik". Alex Legge's cart sheds on Church Street was another place for gambling. Each year a religious service was held in the Preacher's Cave.

Willie Fisher's hairdressing establishment in Park Street is well-worth a mention in the list of shops in Portknockie. His shop had none of the fragrant aromas of modern unisex salons, more a pungent smell of Woodbine smoke. It was situated opposite the War Memorial, now a lock up garage. Willie held court here while working on half a dozen or more unemployed lads who spent a lot of their time there. There were usually more men in that little shop than in the debating chamber of the Holyrood Parliament! The shop has a cigarette vending machine bolted to the door and the interior was one room with a cupboard in the corner for the papers he sold. Willie lived in Cullen where he was a part time coast guard. He was a hard working man, his only tool was a hand clipper but, in those days, many fathers cut their children's hair themselves."

Editor: Glad to find David much better after the shingles attack he suffered during the summer.

Compliments to Portknockie success: Rachel Munro has graduated with BA Hons in Business Studies at Napier University, Edinburgh. Mrs Somchair Mair, Haig Street, who moved here from Thailand six years ago, was awarded full UK citizenship in October at a ceremony in Elgin.



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Merry Christmas, a Happy Hogmanay & Good Health to all readers far and near for the New Year from Margaret Bazaud neé Bruce (France). She e-mails: “I am grateful to my friends, the Roses for sending the K’nocker to me which has given me a chance contact with Margaret Downie and the Slater brothers, David & Charlie (the poet from down under). If Ishbel Beresford is the lady who worked in the sweetie shop across the road from our house in Bridge Street at the bus stop - I would like to be remembered to her.(**Editor:** yes, she is and delighted to be remembered.) I would also like to wish my cousin, Ann at the bakery at the top of the harbour (that is 7 Harbour Terrace) good health throughout the coming year.

The Portknockie Memories of the late Willie Slater was launched in book form in Cullen by the local Heritage Group on Saturday 3rd November. Willie Slater provided a number of his stories of earlier times in Portknockie for printing in early issues of the K’nocker. Now you can purchase the full set of his personal memories in a 74pp book available from the Cullen, Deskford & Portknockie Heritage Group and local shops priced at £4.95

A fierce north-westerly gale rocked Portknockie on Thursday 8th November. The wind howled all day and night and mighty waves crashed over the harbour. Slates were lost, wheelie bins flew and the last of the flowers, still blooming from the summer, were completely blasted. This gale moving south and built up a threatening storm surge along the North Sea coastline which, for a while, looked as if it was going to be a repeat of the deadly flooding of 1953.

Heavy rain fell on Wednesday 21st November through into Thursday and caused considerable flooding of the A942 especially by the Cemetery bend between the village and Findochty.

What was the Rose Garden idea (last issue)? Full details of this amazing plan for the village take up many column inches in 1935 and 1936 pages of the Buckie Advertiser. The Provost and others came up with a novel plan to put Portknockie on the map. It involved a grandiose scheme, costed at £6 000, to create a six acre rose garden in the village with an aquarium, a boating lake with under-water lighting, palatial tea rooms and a high class dance room. The elaborate proposals led to a great deal of vigorous and critical comment in the village and the scheme was never proceeded with. One cannot help wondering how Portknockie might have changed had the plans been brought to fruition –the Blackpool of the NE?

Remembrance Day this year took place at the 11th hour, on the 11th day of the 11th month. A keen wind was blowing but it stayed dry. A goodly crowd of over 50 of us gathered round the War Memorial to give thanks and to remember the sacrifice of relatives, pals and neighbours during the wars of the 20th and 21st centuries. Stuart McKenzie conducted the short Service of Remembrance and four wreaths were laid – by Patricia Seligman (Deputy Lord Lieutenant), Cllr Ron Shepherd (Moray Council), George McKenzie (British Legion) and Alan Beresford (Portknockie Community Council).

ELECTRIC STREET LIGHTS COME TO PORTKNOCKIE:

The Banffshire Advertiser reported on 27th May 1937 that “The question of lighting the Burgh with electricity was discussed with a representative of the Grampian Electricity Company, who said that the running costs would be £95 per annum for 47 seventy-five amp lamps, the current to be supplied through overhead lines. The Provost said that unless the company was prepared to put underground cables on the main street – Church Street without extra charge, the Council would not consider taking electricity. The representative agreed to get in touch with his company to see if it would put underground cables in Church Street.”

Cullen was converted to electricity in 1937 using new mercury vapour lamps but Buckie and Portknockie had to wait until 1947 before being connected to Grampian Electric. Sixty years later the cables in Church Street and around the harbour are still overhead!

At a Portknockie Town Council meeting in January 1936 a survey report of houses under the Overcrowding Act was submitted :(BA 23 January 1936) The number inspected was 378 and of these 17, or 4.5% were found to be overcrowded. Six of the houses built under the 1930 Act were deemed overcrowded. To overcome the overcrowding it would be necessary to build three 3-apartment houses and 13 4-apartment houses. The number of houses under the five year plan to be built by the end of 1938 was 8. An estimate amounting to £2 910 of the cost of erecting 8 houses on Jubilee Terrace (**Ed.** Now Craigview Road) was submitted, and it was agreed to borrow that amount.

(Both extracts from our Cullen researcher).

VILLAGE IN BLOOM 2008, WHAT TO DO?

The question has to be faced whether Portknockie should try to maintain such a high profile interest in Village in Bloom activity for next summer season.

Over the years, Portknockie's reputation has risen as a place to visit to see the summer flower display and many of the residents have been proud of the village's record of success in competition – three times “Best-kept large village in Moray”, for example. However, this environmental improvement to our community presents an on-going and ever rising cost which needs to be considered. Setting out the bedding plants in the tubs and hanging baskets around the village runs up a bill of around £3 000 each year. Unreasonable demands are made on a small group of volunteers who are left to set up the display and then manage it over the summer months. Other costs are involved in replacing containers, painting, peat, tools and putting right the consequences of damage to features.

An easy solution to the problems is not readily obvious. Previous attempts each spring to pull in more volunteers have not been very successful; reducing the coverage of the village display raises difficult decisions about fairness (what goes and what stays and who decides?) and what then becomes of the abandoned area – handing it back to the Council is no longer a likely option! Is it possible to imagine that neighbours or streets might band together to set up and maintain their bit of the village? It has happened at the two Circles and along Station Road. This summer an attempt was made to get the Church Street residents to water and weed the troughs with a couple of spectacular results but overall only a partial response was made.

However nothing daunted, some individual families have offered to take on particular floral features like Treasure Island, Bridge Street, the War Memorial and the area by the Haig Street circle. This kind of local neighbourhood participation should be workable but it will raise the issue of co-ordination if we are to continue entering Village in Bloom competitions. There may also be difficulty in finding individuals to take on other major features such as in front of the school, the Beach area, the Square, the Millennium Garden and the beds in the park! Members of the Community Association Committee feel that it is time to focus more of our fund raising efforts on making the village hall a viable community resource and this will mean less going on village in bloom activities. Dropping out of the Beautiful Scotland challenge seems very likely and maybe we should also take a rest from the Best-kept village in Moray competition. What do you the reader think?

This village discussion should take place over the next few months so that any new set of arrangements can be in place well before the summer season commences. An open meeting will be set up in January or February to explore available options but, perhaps we can all start sharing our thoughts on this matter now.

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COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS:

The Council comprises: **Chairman:** Alan Beresford (840534/07790023983), **Secretary:** Pearl Murray acting, **Vice Chair:** Helen Sammon (841794) **Treasurer:** Gladys McKenzie (840542), **Press Secretary:** Pearl Murray (841087) with Lil Urquhart, Sam Muir, Cathleen Harper with newly co-opted members Karen Campbell and Angela Mair. **Junior Councillors** – awaiting nomination.

In October all the households in the village were circulated with the “Crime Can't Flourish if Knockers Care” news letter. The newsletter, many delivered by members of the village Brownies, alerted residents to the value of the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and detailed how community vigilance can and

should be directed against what seems to be a rising incidence of anti-social behaviour in Portknockie. A few weeks later this initiative was boosted by a visit to the village of the new mobile police office launched by Grampian police in August 2007. This gave our residents an opportunity to discuss any concerns face to face with Buckie Community Beat Officer Kevin McPherson. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, John Myles reports that so far this initiative has seen a number of new members sign up for the village scheme.

The new adult evening classes at the school started in October. So far there are classes for keep fit and Tai Chi (27 enrolled for this class!); a quilt making group is expected to form and demand is there for a Yoga class but the problem here is finding an experienced teacher. These classes are giving folk something interesting to do in the evenings and helping to ensure that our school is better used and has a lasting future in the village.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWS:

At the AGM on 30th October a new Management Committee of 13 was formed. Jim Urquhart was elected as Chair to replace Pearl Murray who was stepping down. John Bell was elected as Vice Chair and Lil Urquhart will act as the Co-ordinator of fund raising activities with Bob Croucher as Secretary and Rachel Munro as Treasurer. Others on the working Committee now include Helen Field, John Going, Cathleen Harper, Harry Hawkes Gladys McKenzie, John Myles and Alison Skinner. Cllr Ron Shepherd presided over the election of the four Officers. The Secretary was asked to send a letter of appreciation to Mrs Murray for the years she has led the PCA as its Chair.

Following the resignation of Brenda Cowie as hall keeper new arrangements that rely on the goodwill of Committee members, are in place for booking the village hall. John Myles (contact 840000) will take bookings and be the main key holder and the rest of the PCA group will keep the McBoyle Hall clean. This use of volunteers to replace a paid hall keeper will save over a £1 000 a year to be ploughed back into maintenance. To work effectively it will require those parties booking the Hall to abide strictly to the Conditions of the let, in particular, to pick up and return the key, to leave the premises neat and tidy and to report any problems that need to be sorted. This is a community resource so the Committee expect that this arrangement can work in a satisfactory fashion.

Changes to the PCA Constitution were agreed at the AGM referring to the wording of the section dealing with the annual examination of the accounts to meet new requirement from the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator. It was also agreed to relax the requirement for Officers to automatically step down after three years in office.

100 Club Draw: August – Jill Wilson, Betty & George Simpson, Joan Reynolds. **September** - Jim Urquhart, Kerry Wood, Bob Croucher. **October** - Mrs Tallet, Lil Urquhart, Laura Cowie.

Checks of the McBoyle Hall have shown up a number of things that need to be put right and will involve not inconsiderable cost. An attempted break in at the rear of the Hall during the summer has meant that two new security standard doors are needed that will cost around £1 200. The wooden fascia boards need replacing with low maintenance PVC and this will bring a bill of £3 800 and there is about £1 000 of work needed to bring the fire alarm and security systems up to scratch. New member, John Going, made an immediate impact by swiftly replacing a broken door to the gent's lavatory and a missing toilet seat in the ladies'.

Portknockie did not enjoy a formal village firework show this year. However, PCA Chair, Jim Urquhart did attend the spectacular Portgordon fireworks show on Saturday 9th November where his participation in putting on the display earned him a pyrotechnic qualification. Next year we might see a fireworks extravaganza bursting in the sky over the McLeod Park!

In November the PCA made an application to the Press & Journal's Year of Giving Trust for a grant to assist with upgrading the McBoyle Hall for use in the 21st century. 2008 is being seen as a challenge year to encourage our community to make more use of its village hall. The grant matched by local fund raising will be used to upgrade the Hall's security and safety arrangements and the refresh its appearance.

Saturday December 1st saw the lighting of the Christmas tree, donated by Lord Seafield, in the Millennium Garden. Afterwards there were carols, refreshments and the announcement of the 2007 Citizen of the Year in the Seafield Hall. Proceeds from the collection went to Youth Club funds.

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MORAY CITIZEN'S PANEL:

The November 2007 survey seeks experiences and views on aspects of building stronger communities in Moray. The questionnaire tackles the concern that everyone living in Moray should have equal access to lifelong learning opportunities, housing and other key services regardless of age, gender or disability.

This survey starts with some questions relating to involvement in your community e.g. what do you think are the three most important things for building a strong community? (**Editor:** this would be a very good question for everyone in the village to chew over and share their thoughts!). There follows a series of questions on consultation and participation in local decision-making, seeking to establish whether there is enough consultation with local people by Moray service providers. One question checks awareness of local community groups such as area forums (our local one is the Buckie Forum), community councils, tenant forums and village hall committees (our local one is the Portknockie Community Association). A further question seeks to establish what difficulties prevent people in Moray from getting involved in local issues and decision making.

The second part of this survey examines awareness of local housing problems e.g. do you agree there are not enough affordable homes to buy or rent locally and do you feel that this is a situation that is worse in Moray than the rest of Scotland? This is followed by questions relating to Adult Learning which seek to establish whether there are enough opportunities and what sorts of problems prevent Moray people taking part in Adult Learning programmes. Is this, for example a problem for folk in this village?

There are questions on volunteering particularly with children and young people e.g. what benefits do you feel you get from volunteering? The final part of the questionnaire explores whether particular groups face barriers in accessing services and opportunities –

those with disabilities, those from ethnic minority groups and those people here from outside the UK. The last question asks which groups need most support in accessing services – older people, people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority groups, people from outside UK, school age children, young people, unemployed and other?

“WILD ABOUT PORTKNOCKIE” a series of local nature notes by Mary Thorpe:

BLONDE BLACKBIRD

Well, autumn hit us with a bit of a bang! We had our holiday at the end of September and enjoyed two weeks of glorious weather into the first week of October. This kept up pretty much until the storm of the 8th of November which, although it was forecast, was surprising in its strength. Just about everything in the garden wilted and gave up whereas up until then we still had hanging baskets and bedding plants in flower! There had been plenty signs of autumn with the shift in migratory birds. All our summer visitors had gone although I was surprised to see lots of swallows still on the Isle of Iona at the end of September when all our local birds had long gone. I had seen geese arriving since the middle of September and noticed a few extra blackbirds around including what I can only describe as a “blonde” blackbird. This bird is light brown with lovely blonde wings. At first I puzzled over this bird but knew it wasn't either thrush or fieldfare. It was definitely a blackbird. I happened to come across an article on odd plumages in birds and, having read it, came to the conclusion that this was known as flavism which gives a yellow appearance. I had heard of albinism which is complete lack of pigment but there is also melanism which is an excess of dark pigment and erythrism which is redder pigment. If all pigments are reduced it is known as leucism. I have seen partial albinism in blackbirds, sparrows and crows. There is a particularly scruffy little crow that I often see hopping about in Haig Street which has white wings. I once saw a completely white wren buzzing about in some undergrowth but this is my first yellow blackbird! I see it quite regularly but he is not as tame as the other blackbirds which come for their raisins.

I feed the birds in the garden all year with nuts, seeds and niger seed but I notice a dramatic drop in visiting goldfinches around September time. In fact I haven't bought any niger seed since August. I suppose that there is by this time more than enough naturally occurring seed for the finches which would account for this. In fact I have seen quite a few mixed flocks

of finches flying about over the farm land. This past week has brought a welcome return of these beautiful little birds though even if they do cost a small fortune to feed. I had been buying the niger seed from the Bauds pet supplies who were selling it for a pound a kilo but it went up to one pound eighty in a week! I suppose this was due to the terrible wet summer that we had.

On our holiday that I mentioned at the start we took ourselves off to the Isle of Mull for a few days. I had seen on Spring Watch last year that there are White Tailed Sea Eagles on the island and we really wanted to see them. We didn't manage to see any but were very fortunate to see at least three Golden Eagles. One, on its own soaring high above a mountain ridge just across from our B&B and a couple of days later we watched a pair soaring over the sea just off the coast. We got excited about this convinced that we were watching sea eagles but we were assured (by an expert) that the white tail is highly visible even at a distance and these definitely had no white. Oh well, maybe next time.

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PORTKNOCKIE’S “AYE AFLOAT” SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE COLLECTION UPDATE:

The “Aye Afloat” collection of Scottish Country Dances has been selling well with requests for copies coming in from as far afield as Japan. Royalties from sales are already benefiting the village with the setting up of a picnic table in the Slater Crescent circle. The table has a plaque in memory of the Mackie family. The book of the dances and the CD are available from Mrs C Ritchie (840554) and from W&F Johnston’s in Buckie. A copy is also available to loan from the Portknockie Library.

WHAT ABOUT THIS FOR AN IDEA? A new feature inviting readers to propose changes to the way things are in the village that might be acceptable to the most people. It could be a new service for residents, an improvement to the local environment or

a fun activity. Here is an example to consider from your Editor to set you thinking:

From 2008 we should celebrate “Portknockie Day”. We would agree a day or perhaps a weekend, to share the wonderful experience of being K’nockers. It would be an occasion for residents to get together in a social partnership to recall and retell the story of Portknockie. It would be an opportunity to pass on to the younger ones and any incomers the memories and experiences that have made the village what it is today. A community covenant celebration.

The event might be held at the beginning of the Tattie Holiday – which often enjoys good weather and it is before the dark nights set in. Maybe the school would organise a day of events which bring children and parents and grandparents together to rejoice in the village story? This would answer all the questions about Portknockie’s past, present and future and highlight why the village is as it is. Time could also be found to feast on the best of local food and drink with traditional recipes widely available. The event might end with an evening of Portknockie entertainment – Doric poems, music, songs and dancing. Maybe an occasion to wear once again the clothes of yester year! A day to fly the village flag! All this activity would be recorded and made available on CDs, DVDs and the village website. This big picture of Portknockie Day would provide very apt heritage material for the future. It would also focus our attention and highlight what we really ought to be ensuring is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

What could we expect from a day celebrating Portknockie? It would give us an opportunity to enjoy a good deal of social involvement and community togetherness. There would be a stirring of pride in the village and, perhaps a better understanding of how the village ticks. Because the event would need to be inclusive, there might be some disclosure of social shortcomings and things that need to be righted. This would be self-diagnosis and good for the soul of the community. Young and old would have engaged in a meaningful exchange of experiences and this could lead to spin off activities after the formal Day has ended. No one would need to ignore the Day or feel left out because everyone (all 1 200 of us) would have a right of invitation to participate. Our local business and village suppliers would be encouraged to find ways of celebrating their local connection with the village. Maybe the event would be a good time to identify a community service award for the best contribution to Portknockie?

What do you think?

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BUILDINGS OF PORTKNOCKIE: So far none of our readers has been in touch with Harry Hawkes to help with the proposed article on the McBoyle Hall. If anyone does have information about how this Hall was first established and financed or any other interesting stories to tell about its history - please contact him soon.

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WANTED: Does any reader have a copy of the book "Charlie the Smithie" published privately in Australia in 2002 by Charles Slater to loan or sell? If so, please contact Harry Hawkes, 18 Church Street, Portknockie (01542-840718) or e-mail hrhyic@yahoo.co.uk

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PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGES:

How green are you? Start with this list then draw up your own priorities to reduce your carbon footprint to help save the world:

- Buy locally produced food to cut food miles
- Collect rainwater in your garden
- Stop using plastic bags
- Only use long-life bulbs for lighting
- Don't leave appliances on standby
- Grow your own vegetables and fruit
- Walk or cycle or take public transport
- Turn down your heating
- Holiday within the UK
- Recycle all your waste

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- Opt out of the edited version of the electoral register which is on general sale and can be used by direct marketing companies. Tick the opt-out box on your voter registration form to be excluded.

HAME COOKING by SWRI members:

Canadian Roll:

Ingredients:

15-22 Digestive biscuits - crushed
 100g (4oz) of walnuts (optional)
 Small tin of condensed milk
 15 marshmallows cut small
 6 glace cherries cut small
 Few drops of vanilla essence
 Desiccated coconut for coating

Method: Crush the digestive biscuits in a bowl; add the marshmallows, cherries, milk and vanilla essence (with the walnuts – optional) and mix well. Roll the mixture in the desiccated coconut and place in the fridge to set. Then cut in slices and enjoy.

“ONE FIRTH VIEW” – by Margaret Dawson.

Vacations in the Sun or “The joys of Travel”

A vacation - or “annual leave” as some might call it – is a time to relax and enjoy the sunshine, sand and sea. Some people go skiing and combine sunshine with snow-capped mountains. Whatever the choice of vacation, the essential thing is to enjoy ourselves. Going away makes some of us buy new clothes for the holiday. We save our money only to spend it all in the short space of two or three weeks. Part of the fun is to stay up late, sleep all morning and sunbathe or ski all afternoon. We then return home tired and delight in telling everybody what a great time we had!

Because most of us go on holiday in search of dependable sunshine we have to experience the joys of travelling by air. First, the travel to the airport, then there is the scramble for parking and then the trek from the long-stay car park to the departure hall. Arriving there, we look up at the monitors to find out where we should check in. Having accomplished that task, then comes the security check. Okay, security checks are a very good thing and even more necessary now – I am just sore having had all the contents of my handbag displayed on a little table for all to see on more than one occasion. Security over – then you proceed to the gate just in time for the delay! You learn to expect this now – if only they would tell you how long it might be, so that you could happily go for a browse round the shops.

Finally we get on the aeroplane and take our seat, calmly waiting to be joined by a large person with personal hygiene problems, who invariably sits next to me! Once in a blue moon the seat beside you remains empty (never give up hope, this happened to me only recently). Eventually we reach our destination – sometimes we are unable to land because we have missed our slot – BUT a speedy couple of hours later polishes off the passport control, luggage carousel (**Ed**; where it is not uncommon to watch in vain for your luggage to arrive!) taxi queue and finally, you ARRIVE. Travel - Horrible. Arrive-Nice. Surely we are all agreed on it.

You return, to walk around our beautiful coastline, and think – was it all worth it? Probably yes - though the vacation is long gone, we still have the photos (in this digital age, permanently in the computer!), and souvenirs to remind us of the fun we had! Whatever the choice of vacation the essential thing is to enjoy ourselves BUT it is always great to be home.

<p>SHEAR DEZIGN Hair by Lisa Open Tuesday – Saturday with late night Thursdays.</p> <p>Phone 841711 for an appointment</p>
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SEASONAL OBSERVANCES FROM OUR MINISTER by Rev Graham Austin, Church of Scotland, Portknockie.

POETS' CORNER:

“A Warning” by Sheena Pirie:

Katie wis a bonny quine,
The best for miles aroon
Her figure wis jist perfect
Fae her taes up tae her croon.

The loons a’ buzzed about her
Like bees roon a honey pot.
An’ sometimes she wid date them,
But maistly she wid not.

For Katie wisna happy
Wi’ men o’ ordinary rank.
She wanted an Adonis
Wi’ money in the bank.

Noo, years have gone
An’ peer aul’ Kate
Is still upon the shelf.
Her Adonis didna’ come her wye.
An’ noo, it’s far ower late.

Her figure’s gone
She’s lost her looks.
So quines oot there tak’ heed
Ye quid land like peer aul’ Katie
Remember - beauty’s jist skin deep!

And two more poems from the Davie Mair
Collection:

Some fowk are aye grumblin’ and niver are content
Nae maiter how weel they may fare,
While others less fortunate niver lament
Tho’ sma’ be the portion they share.

Dame Fortune is fickle, some say she’s unkind
And knocks not at every man’s door.
But think on what’s gane and maybe ye’ll mind
O’ chances ye’ve spurned aft afore.

Gitten doon in the moo’ ‘ill no help you a lot
Gin things maybe gan a’ bit wrang.
A steep brae has ne’er made a willing horse quit
A stout heart just pushes alang.

If ye look in the morning on things at their best
And ne’er meet your troubles half way,
Contentment will bring you a night’s peaceful rest
Aifter a’ the hard work o’ the day.

When things seem upside down for you
And failures tak’ the lead;
When fate upsets what’er you do

And you cannot succeed;

Don’t hang your head and look forlorn
And wear the sackcloth gown;
For greater burdens have been borne,
So smile away that frown.

Why be cast down, if not enslaved
With what the world calls wealth;
For you have much if you’re allowed
The bounteous blessing, health.

The wealth and palaces of earth
Ne’er placed a lasting crown;
Bid sadness go, but welcome mirth
And smile away that frown.

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e-mail hrhyic@yahoo.co.uk

Adverts in the K’nocker: At present our policy is
not to charge for small, simple adverts useful to
readers so long as the person placing the advert is a
paid up subscribing member.

The K’nocker for friends and relatives abroad:
Remember you can always advise relatives and
friends to download a copy from Neil Hedley & John
Smith’s village website at:
www.portknockiewebsite.co.uk

The K’nocker delivery Team:

Alec Campbell – Haig Street, Moray View and
Seaview Place.

Monique Cavalier: New Street, Park Street and Reidhaven Street.

Bob Croucher: Blantyre Place, Cliff Terrace, Commercial Road, Dover Street, Gordon Street, Harbour Place, Harbour Terrace, Mid Street, Seaforth Street, Union Street and Victoria Street.

Harry Hawkes: Bridge Street, Church Street, Hill Street and Pulteney Street.

George Donaldson: Addison Street, Bruce Place, Craigview Road, Mairs Street, Samson Place, Samson Street and Stuart Place.

Shirley McLean: Falconer Terrace, Geddes Avenue, Logie Drive, Slater Crescent and Wood Place.

John Myles: Findlater Avenue and King Edward Ter.

Morag Reid: Admiralty Street and Seafield Terrace.

Karin & John Rose: High Street and Station Road.

Isobel Worrel: Seafield Street.

Margret Wood: Firthview, Westfield Drive and Station Court.

Grateful thanks to Sandra and her colleagues in the Chemist Shop who sell single copies to visitors and those who do take out the annual subscription.

In 2008 the K'nocker will be published in June, September and December. Copy, letters and adverts for each issue should be passed to the Editor, through the Library or the letterbox of 23 Harbour Place or by e-mail to rmcdram@onetel.com in the month before each quarterly publication. In fact, the earlier you send in articles the easier you make things for your editorial team!

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WHAT'S ON IN THE PORT:

Community Association: The Boxing Night Bash will be in the McBoyle Hall on Wednesday 26th December 2007 from 8pm till late with a licensed bar for drinks. Tickets sold in advance at £5 (over 18s only). The Hogmanay Hooley will be held in the McBoyle Hall on Monday 31st December from 8pm till late. Tickets will be sold at the door, bring your own drinks, family parties welcome.

Portknockie Seniors Group: The Christmas Party, featuring Glen Scott, will be held in the Marine Hotel on Tuesday 11th December. In New Year 2008 the programme will be: January 22nd Scotch Night with Myrtle Scott and Party, February 19th the Greenbrae Gaugers, March 18th the Speysiders, April 15th Ray Morton, this meeting will also be the AGM. There will be a Morning Tea fund raiser on May 24th and the summer bus run will be on June 10th. All meetings will start at 7pm.

Seafield Women's Rural Institute: Our guest speaker at the November 22nd meeting was Mr Ruparelia, the chemist from Portsoy, describing his charity bike run across part of N.India. His slides showed up marked contrasts between the rich and poor. One slide showed great numbers of sick and maimed waiting patiently for treatment, having travelled many miles to the hospital. The next slide was of a Maharajah's palace rich in jewels and decoration. It was a fascinating talk. The competition was a home-made calendar for 2008. Our December meeting will be lunch held in Christie's restaurant, Fochabers. There will be time for retail therapy after the lunch.

Bowling Club Notes: After a busy outdoor season, the indoor carpet bowls playing restarted in the McBoyle Hall at the beginning of October. It is nice to be back in the warm again and good crowds have been attending and enjoying HAT nights – normally at 7pm on Mondays and Thursdays. Outdoor competitions have commenced, as has the League programme – eleven clubs are participating this year and ,so far, we have played three matches against Buckpool, Macduff and Buckie. These matches were keenly fought but enjoyable: it is a pity we did not actually win any, but the teas were very pleasant and sociable occasions and our luck is bound to improve soon.

New members will be most welcome. Come along to the McBoyle Hall, slippers will do fine and spare bowls are always available.

Neighbourhood Watch is simply looking out for one another — one for all and all for one — although in a fairly close knit village like Portknockie that is what many residents do naturally. Should you wish to join or enquire about joining the local Scheme, please contact the Coordinator, John Myles on 840000.

There have been a few anti-social acts this year in the village. In an effort to encourage all residents to take a stand against this nuisance, a leaflet (produced by the Community Council, Grampian Police and Neighbourhood Watch) was recently distributed to all homes in Portknockie – thanks to the local Brownie Pack and all the other volunteers for their valued help

in this) encouraging residents to become members of Portknockie Neighbourhood Watch. The tear-off slips have been coming back and are being sorted: once this is done NW will be back in touch. In the longer term, funding of £150 has been kindly donated by Buckie Area Forum and will permit the production and distribution of bi-annual newsletters. If you did not receive one of the leaflets please phone or pick one up from the Library.

JMK

19 Cluny Square, Buckie
 AB56 1HA.
 Tel/Fax 01542 835665
 Mobile: 07900 931905
 Email: juliemckay@btconnect.com

Library Opening Hours: 5-8pm Tuesdays; 2-5pm & 6-8pm Thursdays; 10-12noon on Saturdays.
Library News:

Library News: Portknockie Library has been kept busy this last few months; a number of 14/15 year olds have access to the internet after their parents complete a Young Persons Computer Access form. A few residents are taking up the offer for a 2 hour training session with Eleanor Kidd area librarian at Buckie - £5 for the session at Portknockie Library – out of library hours – please feel free to give Eleanor a call at 01542 832121 or Margret at 841149 for further information.

The Festive opening hours are as follows:
 Open: Sat 22nd Dec 07 10am – 12am
 Closed: Tue 25th Dec 07 & Wed 26th
 Open: Thur 27th Dec 07 2pm – 5pm & 6pm – 8pm
 Open: Sat 29th Dec 07 10am – 12am
 Closed: Tue 1st & 2nd Jan 2008
 Open: Thur 3rd Jan 08 2pm – 5pm & 6pm – 8pm

I would like to thank everyone for their support to the library and wish everyone a Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

Fishing News: Fishing boats are working away weather permitting. There has been some good fishing of prawns and monk fish by a few boats with prices as usual up and down. A few Eastern Europeans and Filipinos are being crewed up by most skippers as local crew members are hard to find.

We wish all local skippers and crews ‘A’ the best for the New Year, Big Hauls and even Bigger Prices’.

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1st Portknockie Brownies meet every Monday in the school hall from 6-7pm. We are always looking for new members aged between 7-11 years. Since our last news we have had a swimming party, been on nature walks and helped distribute the Anti-social behaviour leaflets in the village. On 30th November we enjoyed Babes in the Wood at the Fisherman’s Hall, Buckie. We are holding a Christmas Hamper raffle with tickets available from the Chemist shop.

If there are any adults in the village who think they might enjoy an hour helping out don’t be shy, it is fun and all are welcome. Contact Brown Owl on 480841

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**Portknockie Primary School
 November 2007.**

Diary Dates

Christmas Show 11th Dec.07
 Christmas Lunch 12th Dec.07
 Christmas Parties P1/2 13th Dec pm.
 P3s P4s 14th Dec. pm

P5s P6s P7s 20th Dec. Evening
Christmas Service 19th Dec.07 pm
Shared Christmas Show P1/2 and Playgroup – date to be arranged (at time of print).
School Diary Dates for the New Year are available on the school eboard and the monthly school newsletter.

Eboard

portknockie.buckiehigh.site.eboard.com
Password is school

After School Clubs

Monday- Netball 3.20-4.20pm
Tuesday- Dancing 4.15-5.00pm
Wednesday- Ceramics 3.20-5.00pm

Lunchtime Clubs

Monday- Cross Country Running
12.30-1.00pm.

Learning and Teaching Development

The most significant development in learning and teaching at our school has been the introduction of Promethian Interactive Whiteboards. These are not only a replacement for the standard chalkboard but allow each lesson to be presented in such a way that it is visually stimulating. The boards are multi functional in that you can add sound, video clips and pictures from the internet. DVDs can also be played via the boards. Teaching staff have already undertaken significant training in navigation around the boards and how to make them work for us in the school. Our training is on- going and good fun. I hope to be able to arrange an evening in the New Year where parents and members of the wider community will be able to come along and participate in a demonstration/ use of the boards.

Class Topics - January- March 08

P1/2- Clothes

P3/4/5- Portrait of Great Britain

P5/6/7- Europe

If any member of the community is able to contribute to the topics please contact the school.

In October 2007 members of the local community came along to a Coffee Morning held by Class P5/6/7. The topic was World War II and the pupils interviewed people to find out about their lives at that time. It was a special morning in the school.



Finally On behalf of all the pupils and staff at Portknockie Primary School I would like to wish all parents and the wider community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Mrs Moira Cooper BSc PGCE SQH Head Teacher
01542 840244**

The Portknockie Book Club meets 2nd Wednesday in each month, new members welcome please contact Janet Creese on 840687 for details.