

THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TWINKLE & THE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - TO A TEAM AGAIN!

On Saturday 29th November at 7pm the village was cold and crisp and even when the annual Christmas lights display was switched on by Coral Rough of Haig Street, the youngest child in the School. Once again there was a good crowd of villagers to count down to the switch on. George Sinclair, in the continuing absence of a Minister, spoke of the strange and wonderful things that often happen at Christmas and asked everybody to remember why we celebrate Christmas each year. Afterwards, in the Seafield Hall, a choir of young Youth Club members sang a selection of carols and Christmas songs. Shirley and "Mambo" McLean with neighbour Tracy Stevenson were declared **Citizen of the Year 2008** and the John Addison Trophy was presented by last year's winners, the K'nocker Editorial team. The lights looked splendid.

VILLAGE NEWS & AROUND:

Congratulations to Moira Findlay who lives in King Edward Terrace and has graduated with a Bachelor of Music with Education honours degree from Aberdeen University. Moira is now thoroughly enjoying a teaching post at Dyce Academy. Also seen recently, on display in Buckie Library, the M.Litt dissertation by Sarah Reid on "Alex Green, North-East Whistle Player: His music and identity" – a very interesting read.

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840366
Kerry, Susan, Claire & Joanne

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Remarkable local weather: First first snow fell in October! Snow flurries, carried on strong NW winds, hit Portknockie around midday on Tuesday 28th October with temperatures dropping to about 3° C. For a while the village looked like one of those snow domes that you shake to stir up a snow-flake storm. Further inland, on the higher ground, the snow was deep enough to block roads and create dangerous driving conditions on the A96. Is this odd weather

another instance of global climate change? However, it may not mean a hard winter to come because the Met Office long range forecast indicates that this winter will experience above average temperatures, although not as mild as last year.

The Claire Devlin's Dolphin memorial seat has reappeared in its position overlooking Cullen Bay. It is now painted in a tasteful green that blends well with the surrounding cliff top vegetation.

Autumn has yielded a surprise population boost for the village. Christmas 2007 and the New Year 2008 must have been a particularly fertile time in Portknockie. Was it the weather or power cuts! We welcome the following new-born K'nockers:

August:

James born to James and Fran, Wood Place on the 24th

Carley Jo born to Marc and Joanne, Bridge St. on the 27th

Jay Edward born to Eddie and Judith, Geddes Ave on the 27th

Keris Mia born to Darrin and Elaine, Admiralty Street on the 29th

Memphis Rachel born to Ross and Rachel, Station Road on the 30th

September:

Alex Amanda Rhona born to Kenny and Rebecca, Geddes Ave on the 8th

Lois Ann born to Douglas and Ann, Craigview Road on the 13th

Kyle Neil born to Neil and Amanda, Harbour Place on the 30th

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WORLD-WIDE WEB LINKS:

Margaret Bazaud (née Bruce ex 12 Bridge Street) has sent a thank-you card and a local recipe from Agen in south west France. Margaret says that,

thanks to the K'nocker, she has received news from Charlie Slater and Margaret Downie, both childhood friends but she has not heard from Sheila Rhyness. She is also delighted to have received news from Karen Rose. She goes on to wish all our readers a Happy Christmas, a "guid Hogmanay" and good health throughout 2009.

The recipe is for St Andrew's Day in the southwest of France. **Editor:** it is a little late for this year's 30th November but it sounds good enough for any day.

Daube (stew) de la Saint André

Ingredients for 8 people:

2kg 500g (about 5lb) stewing meat cut in cubes
Rind of bacon
6 thick slices of streaky bacon cut in pieces
10 shallots
2 sliced carrots
2 sliced onions
6 pieces of garlic
Salt, pepper and a bouquet garni or dried herbs
Strong red wine to cover

Method: Put the rind in a casserole dish then place in layers of meat, seasoning, garlic and pieces of bacon. Finish with the carrots, the onion and the bouquet garni or dried herbs. Cover with the red wine and the rest of the rind and cook slowly. In a pressure cooker it would be for about an hour and a half.

The tradition here was to place the dish in the corner of the hearth in the embers before retiring for the night and at midday it was the celebration of La Daube de St André. She adds that she has learnt from some elderly ladies here that they soak the meat in wine for a day before preparing the dish.

Isa Gardiner née Mair of Cullen has written in describing a recent visit to Margaret Bazaud and her husband, Gerrard, in September. She was made most welcome to their lovely old town house in Agen, SW France. They have a son, Phillipe who is married with one daughter and lives in Montreal, Canada and a daughter, Christine, who is working in China.

Margaret has just returned from a trip to China and in a letter to Isa describes some of the terrible poverty which exists alongside the beautiful, expensive hotels for tourists. Isa says she is looking forward to seeing Margaret and Gerrard next year and discloses that it was they who first introduced her to the K'nocker!

David Pirie has written in from Aberdeen to thank Vera Findlay (summer issue) for responding to his memories about John Innes and adding a bit more to

the story. He suggests it would be lovely if someone who has any of John Innes' poems written down would get them into the pages of the K'nocker.

Editor: does anyone have any of these poems and the permission to reproduce them? If so, send them in.

NEW PEOPLE TO MEET AND GREET:

Welcome to Anne and Tony Barnes, sister and brother-in-law of John and Celia Going in Seafield Street. The couple have moved from Portsmouth to 3 Falconer Terrace with their dogs, cats and a chinchilla

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VILLAGE IN BLOOM SUMMER 2009

Portknockie was not entered in "Village in Bloom" competitions this year. Do any of you think that this was a sorry state of affairs and that this decision should be re-considered for the 2009 summer? Next year Scotland, including Portknockie, is hoping to welcome many more visitors as part of the Home-coming celebrations. Do we expect the existing small band of volunteers to create a display comparable to what was achieved this year? Or are there any itchy green fingers amongst our community, inspired by the Beechgrove Garden programme makers, who feel they could take the village to new heights of floral display next summer? If there are folk keen to see a change do not feel that you are treading on the toes of the present group of volunteers – they would be exceedingly pleased to welcome fresh ideas and additional willing hands.

If you are out there eager to go, you should really be considering the winter months as planning time and the opportunity to prepare the ground and overhaul the various display features. The ideal bulb planting time has already passed but a sack of daffodil bulbs has been planted in the two trains, at the Beach feature, in the box at the corner of the school and King Edward Terrace and around the Ship's Wheel.

Where else in the village would floral features be welcomed and what form should they take? Register your interest now!

It is to be hoped that more residents will plan to set out window boxes, hanging baskets and pots during the summer growing season following the excellent example set this year. It would also be helpful to have more positive feedback over the future for the Remembrance Garden behind the Chemist shop. This year a volunteer from Pulteney Street took over the garden, cut back the excessive growth and tidied up many of the individual plots. This followed some criticism of the untidiness of the area. The Garden was established for individual families to remember someone or something dear to them but it is not clear just how many of the plots are still being regularly maintained. Would plot keepers confirm on the register in the Chemist shop over the next few months whether they wish to continue looking after their allocated plot. So long as nobody is upset we will take over the general maintenance of this area.

At its November meeting the Community Association group agreed a preliminary winter tidying up programme. The hanging baskets at the Ship's Wheel will not be replaced next summer as the basket support pole is badly rusted. It was suggested that any barrels still in use next summer could be planted with permanent plants so as to provide an all year display. The group was pleased to acknowledge Mrs Alice McLeod's offer to maintain the circle in Haig Street and new member, Mrs Anne Barnes' offer to take over and re-plant the empty cross-shaped box in the Park that was first set out by Kirk members.

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90th REMEMBRANCE DAY IN PORTKNOCKIE

A good gathering of over sixty residents took part in this year's Remembrance Day anniversary on Sunday 9th November led by local, retired Minister Rev Neil Gow. Wreaths were laid by John Fowlie (Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire), Cllr Ron Shepherd (The

Moray Council), George McKenzie (Royal British Legion) and Alan Beresford (Portknockie Community Council).

It was noticeable again that very few of the younger generation in the village were in attendance for this annual homage at the War Memorial. Two lads who cycled through during the two minute silence looked quite puzzled by finding a group of people with heads bowed in respect. This year there has been a lot of publicity in the media about the 90th anniversary of Remembrance but, perhaps, families are not doing enough to pass down their memories of those who gave their lives in the many world conflicts since 1914-18. There have been suggestions that the 11th of the eleventh month should be designated a UK national day so as to embrace many more in the Remembrance ceremony and the values it celebrates. Or does the answer lie in parents and grand-parents talking more openly to their young ones about their family stories and memories and schools using these unique voices and experiences to help pupils get a more informed grasp and understanding of how things were and how so many lives were affected forever by these world conflicts?

MEMORIES a poem sent in by Charlie Slater:

With dark green blinds and winter drapes
The windows were covered so no light escapes.
Then the gas mantle was set ablaze
This was, of course, back in war time days.

Around the hearth the family would gather
Mother, the children and sometimes the Father.
Jig-saw puzzles entertained both girls and boys
Because, after all, there were no dolls or toys.

Even a wireless was a luxury item to get,
So many handy men would build a crystal set.
With a coil of wire and "the whisker of a cat"
They'd find out what stage the war was at.

Occasionally overhead we'd hear the dreaded sound
Which warned us the enemy planes were around.
So then we would go to that special location
Which if we were bombed would be our salvation.

In the winter months while covered in snow
A silver moon would usually glow
And kids would go out to sledge and play
World War 2 was far, far away.

The target of the bombers was the industrial city
So Glasgow got bombed which was a great pity
Because of the tremors the bombing created
As far north as Portknockie, windows vibrated.

The War finally ended in 1945
And industry and commerce started to thrive
No longer did we queue with coupons in hand
And the talk of on the street was “Isn’t life grand?”

Now 63 years later on “Armistice Day”
We live our life in a different way.
Let us say thanks to those who died at the front
So that we can live the sort of life that we want.

Lest we Forget.

Editor: In his poem, which links well with the previous feature, Charlie reminds us why we should all give our thanks on Remembrance Day.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS:

The Council comprises: **Chairman:** Alan Beresford (840534/07790023983), **Secretary:** Karen Campbell, **Vice Chair:** Helen Sammon (841794) **Treasurer:** Gladys McKenzie (840542, **Press Secretary:** Pearl Murray (841087) with Lil Urquhart, Sam Muir, Cathleen Harper and Angela Mair.

The Community Council is backing the idea of a programme of Homecoming events in the village next summer. So far interest has been expressed in a Heritage project, a festival of local bands in the McLeod Park, an outdoor sculpture to be created along the Back lane from Patrol Road to the Harbour and the possibility of a “Cooking up a Skink” contest. Another potentially interesting idea would be an exchange and display of photos with K’nockers living overseas in say Canada or Australia. Village groups and individuals are urged to consider what other activities might be reviewed over the winter months for forming a summer season programme in 2009.

Our elected Moray councillors have been asked by the PCC to arrange a clean up of the cemetery and repairs to the poor road surfaces in Geddes Avenue and by the village hall. £100 has been donated towards the cost of the new sign for the Portknockie Nursery.

Other on-going issues under discussion include continuing concerns about rumours of possible closure of Muirton Ward in Seafield Hospital – the latest news is a re-assurance that NHS Grampian has no intention of closing this important local resource for dementia sufferer; the progress on the proposal to organise nurse-led clinics in the village and the further delays over the move of the Portknockie Library to the village school. A request is to be made

to the Police for 20mph speed restrictions to be imposed on the main road through the village.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWS:

This village group, formed in 2000 and recognised as a Scottish Charity (No SCO30090), has the job of looking after our village hall, The McBoyle Hall. The members currently are: Jim Urquhart (**Chair**), Bob Croucher (**Secretary**), Celia Going (**Treasurer**) with Lil Urquhart (**Bookings**), John Myles, John Bell, John Going, Gladys McKenzie, Harry Hawkes, Cathleen Harper and, new member, Anne Barnes.

Lil Urquhart is managing bookings for the village hall and supervising the volunteers carrying out the cleaning while Jim Urquhart manages a plan of maintenance for the McBoyle Hall. The twin doors into the Hall need to be changed to open outwards to meet health and safety requirements and a step is needed down from the rear emergency fire doors. The plans to paint the outside of the Hall were put back by the poor weather this autumn. The Hall electric convector heating arrangements are not 21st century green and this year we have faced some very high electricity bills. All Hall users are asked to economise wherever possible on their use of heating and, perhaps we need to have a re-think about a cheaper system for space heating. Does anyone have the enthusiasm to help us reduce our carbon footprint by proposing a workable project which would upgrade the McBoyle Hall heating system? Some village halls across Scotland are turning to options such as solar panels and wind turbines – should we be considering such a step?

Fund raising has been boosted by the re-introduction of Bingo sessions in the Seafield Inn on a Wednesday evening. The twice-monthly sessions have been well-supported and participants clearly enjoy the venue and the sandwiches! Bingo will restart next year in January. The “100 Club” membership remains disappointingly down on previous years so there are subscriptions still available to take up. Please contact any of the PCA committee to give yourself the thrill of winning the monthly prize. Remember the more of you that sign up for the 100 Club, the bigger the prize draw can become. The monthly winners are posted on bills at the Chemist and Newspaper shops.

The Fireworks evening in the park on Saturday 8th November was a safe and cheap way to enjoy the annual Guy Fawkes celebration. Jim Urquhart and John Going put on a seamless show of bangs and sky bursts and there were teas and sausage rolls to warm up with afterwards. Two buckets for donations raised

£80.10 and a button for village funds! The weather was fine and about a hundred or so folk turned out to enjoy the spectacle.

This year's Christmas tree lighting took place in the Millennium Garden on Saturday 29th November at 7pm. Despite the cold weather a very good crowd turned up to watch the ceremony. The lights were switched on by Coral Rough, the youngest pupil at the school. Young members of the Youth Club sang Christmas carols in the Seafield Hall and the silver collection was for the benefit of the village youth group. This year's Christmas Lights set up was very ably sorted by a gang organised by Jim Urquhart and including George Innes, Neil Jackson, Fraser Milton, John Going, Tony Barnes, David Field and John Myles. As is the custom the tree was kindly provided by Seafield Estate.

In a move that could initiate more inter-community links the PCA has been invited to liaise with Cullen Tourist Group over future programmes of events and activities. This should reduce the risk of clashing events in neighbouring villages and could lead to making joint use of resources like websites and the display of posters and information leaflets.

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MORAY CITIZENS' PANEL:

Moray Community Planning Partnership has published the results of the most recent survey seeking views on the theme of 'Building Stronger Communities'. Responses indicated that the two most important things for building a strong, local community were to have friends and neighbours close by and to have a variety of facilities, activities and services including village halls, clubs and societies available to local residents. These help to build strong community relationships. This raises several questions - do we make good use of local activities

and services? Are the local services and facilities here the right ones for you? What changes would you like to see if you feel facilities are wanting in Portknockie? Are you prepared to get involved take steps to bring about the community resources you feel would be good for the village?

On the issue of getting involved about half of the respondents to the survey indicated that they get involved in occasional consultations or community decision making. Would you agree that this is sufficient or should more people take up the opportunities for getting involved in local decision-making? A useful website for checking out what is hot in local decision-making in Moray and Scotland is www.yourmoray.org.uk

Moray Citizens' Panel has been asked to comment on the three year action plan (2009-12) proposed by the Grampian Fire & Rescue Service. The main aims of the action plan include reducing risk and loss of life, communicating more effectively, working more efficiently through improved communications, developing staff potential, promoting diversity and equality and protecting the environment. The Cullen fire district has one of the lowest fire & rescue incident rates of the whole of the Grampian region. One innovative aspect of the plan will be a proposal to promote wider public access to fire stations with a view to encourage greater community use of the facilities where this is of mutual benefit. The plans also include the intention to relocate the service's headquarters.

The Moray Community Planning Partnership is also currently conducting a survey through the Citizens' Panel to throw light on how well community groups work together with public agencies to understand and act on the problems that the community faces. This survey also seeks views on the potential priorities for action in Moray on a range of topics covering, the Economy, Employment, Education and Young People, Health, Social Issues, Housing/homelessness Transport and the Environment.

96 YEARS AGO: PORTKNOCKIE, CULLEN AND THE FITBA STUSHIE – a story which first appeared in the Banffshire Advertiser sent in by our Cullen correspondent.

Portknockie lads prosecuted: in the Banff Sheriff Court, James Falconer, merchant, William Falconer, fisher lad (both The Anchorage); Peter Alexander Grant, painter, Lilac Cottage; George Grant, apprentice chemist, No 111; Alexander Lobban, apprentice chemist, Denside; Joseph Addison,

apprentice draper, Summerton House; Alexander James Innes, fisher lad, No 89; Alexander Pirie, fisher lad, No 225; James Falconer, fisher lad, No 410 and Joseph Innes, fisher lad, No 176 – all of Portknockie were charged with having on the 4th December 1912, without the consent of the Town Council, the Royal Burgh of Cullen, and although requested to desist there from by the Links Overseer (William Brown) played, or engaged in a game other than golf, namely football, on the Links of Cullen, at parts thereof opposite or near the putting greens of the 7th and 8th holes of the Cullen golf course, being places other than those fixed by the said Town Council for the playing of football on said Links, contrary to the by-laws made by the Council, particularly section 10 thereof. Only five lads appeared, three were away at the sea and the fourth, being in poor circumstances, had started to walk to Banff and was not expected to be present in time! Mr James Archibald, Buckie who was accompanied by Provost Addison, Portknockie, appeared for all the accused, and intimated a plea of not guilty.

After much legal debate and the evidence of two witnesses the Sheriff found the lads guilty as charged and imposed a fine of 5 shillings on each of them, with the alternative of three days imprisonment. There was considerable local interest in this dispute and there was considerable resentment in Portknockie at the drastic action taken by the Cullen Council. No damage had been done to the course and it seemed that the Cullen Council was trying to ensure that no Portknockers should ever dare to amuse themselves on this ancient playing area.

Editor: did this rumble on or was that the end of the matter?

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

Loch of Strathbeg

In the last K'nocker I wrote about our blackbird with the white tail feather and that his disappearance had made us wonder if he'd come to a sticky end. I can happily say that "Flash" is still with us, as Carl saw him back in our garden a few weeks ago looking very fine and dapper. He has only graced us with his presence once, so maybe he gets better class raisins somewhere else! Other birds that are sticking around though are coal tits. I first noticed them at the beginning of October and was very pleased to see them as they are not often seen round about. Their preference is conifer woods and they eat insects as

well as seeds so they happily come to the nut feeders. I have seen them at feeders in friends' gardens that have them. They are quite twitchy and flit to and from the feeders in the blink of an eye. Great tits are another visitor to the feeders but not in such numbers as the coal tits which are our smallest member of the tit family. They are quite similar to the blue tit but they have a black head and white cheeks. Great tits are much bigger and have a bold black stripe down their belly with the females' stripe being a lot thinner. A much rarer tit is the crested which I have only seen on three occasions. They are easily recognized with their black and white checkered crest. In Scotland they are only found in the central highlands particularly in Strathspey but I also saw one in the hills of Glenmoriston by Loch Ness. They are a lot more common in Europe and there seems to be a lot of suitable habitat here that isn't colonised.

Our goldfinch numbers are right down compared to the summer. I was filling the niger seed feeders every other day but now it's only about every other week. As I write (23rd November) we are experiencing a snap of Arctic weather which has brought us a little bit of snow but it is very, very cold and I am feeding my poor little birds twice a day with scraps as well as the feeders. As well as hanging out fat balls, I put some of them in the food mixer with other scraps for the ground feeding birds. This morning I was watching a whole relay of birds flying down for the scraps. First a coal tit, then a blue tit and then a beautiful plump robin popped in, quickly followed by the coal tit again and a great tit, then two dunnocks and on it went! I watched the coal tit take its scrap up on to a branch and hold the food between its toes as it pecked away.

I have heard that this is a particularly good year for seeing waxwings, which visit from their breeding grounds in the Arctic. It isn't really understood why some years we don't see any, and others, such as this year is a bonanza. They feed mainly on red rowan berries so are commonly seen in supermarket car parks where these trees are often thickly planted. So, if you see a chunky buff coloured bird with a crest and a black bib and eye stripe feeding on your berries it will be a waxwing. The name though comes from the red waxy like feathers at the tip of its wings.

My mum in Moray View is a keen feeder of garden birds and she told me that she had a strange bird visiting one day that she couldn't identify. She described it to me and when I showed her a picture in a book of what I thought it was she said it was definitely a snow bunting which is another bird that visits from the Arctic. There are a few known to nest

here though in high mountains such as the Cairngorms. They are usually seen in quite large flocks in the winter but I have seen a single bird before noticeably on Cullen beach a few years ago when I was walking the dog. In their summer breeding plumage the male birds are a striking black and white but in the winter they pale down to brown and duller white with a rosy chest patch.

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A few weeks ago we took a trip over to Loch of Strathbeg, which is an RSPB reserve near Crimond. The loch is the largest dune loch in Britain and is a fantastic place to visit as it has a very diverse habitat being surrounded by dunes and marshes. We were mostly hoping to see the spectacle of the pink-footed geese that arrive here by the thousand each autumn from Iceland and Greenland but we saw lots of other exciting birds too. There was a kestrel perched on a wire right outside the window of the visitors' centre which we watched for a while as it hovered repeatedly before settling on the wire again. Later on at dusk when we returned to watch the geese come in, the kestrel was giving us another display of its skills just outside the window. We were wondering if it was the same one when to our amazement another kestrel flew in to join the first and they both hovered in unison. It was like something you would see on a wild life program, but it was right there. Brilliant! We also saw on two occasions a female hen harrier. Hen harriers are moorland birds of prey that glide effortlessly at low levels to hunt. They will take quite large birds such as ducks and also small mammals like rabbits. The male bird is a ghostly figure in grayish white but the female typically is dull brown but with a white rump which makes her easy to recognize.

Along with the geese though there were lots of whooper swans which come in from the arctic tundra each year plus lots of waders including greenshanks, black-tailed godwits and lapwings. As dusk was setting in the warden was getting ready to lock up the visitors' centre from where we were hoping to see the

geese. There had been a few small groups returning to roost but nothing really spectacular. Just as we came out the door we heard what was, obviously, a great number of birds returning to roost. We dashed back in quickly to see them landing through the viewing window. Once you are outside, the loch isn't easily visible. If we had left a minute earlier we would have missed them! What a day. It was great.

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WHAT ABOUT THIS FOR AN IDEA? This is a feature that any reader can use to put forward a suggestion to make Portknockie an even better place. Give your best ideas to the Editorial Team. Improving the Three Creeks shore

A Haig Street resident has suggested that whins (gorse bushes) be planted on the Three Creeks shore at the foot of the Patrol Road cliffs. This area used to be a popular play area for Portknockie youngsters - there was even a football pitch in regular use. Now it is very rare to see anyone using this area despite its central position and its past importance in the heritage of the village (boat building). Parts of the area are poorly drained and the descent approach is not an easy one but it might be a good place to plant shrubs and attract more birdlife. At present it does tend to accumulate a lot of the paper and plastic bag litter that has blown from the village streets on southerly winds. What do folk think? Could a working group come together to carry out the cleaning and planting?

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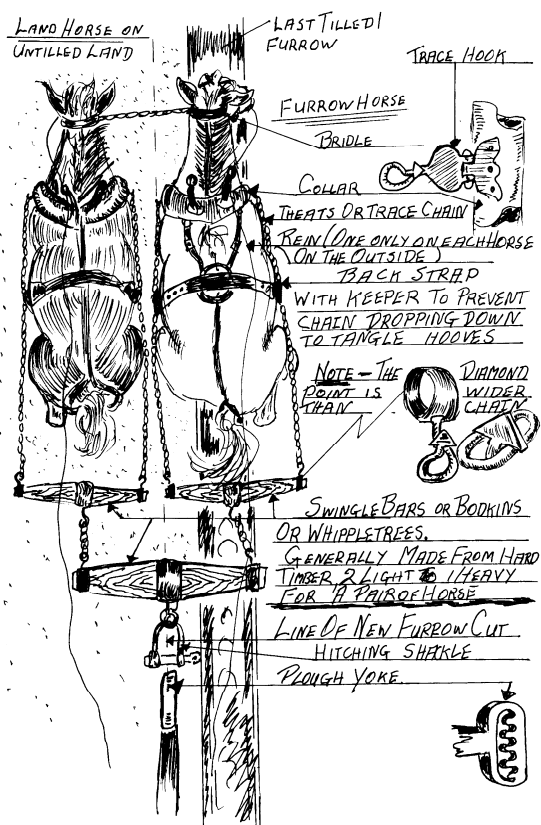
Contact: Sharon McLean at 7 Blantyre Place or phone: 01466 780605 or the mobile phone: 0796 7137470

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"Charlie the Smithy" – Extract 4 Different horses – different shoes.

For the first three years of my apprenticeship horse shoeing was a regular occurrence, averaging maybe 10 horses a week. Though they were all Clydesdale and draught horses, there is a variety of shoe styles to suit the type of work the horse performed.

For example, a team of two horses pulled a single furrow plough, so one horse had to walk in the previously-tilled furrow (usually on the right side). The horse on the left was walked on the untilled land, so they were known as the 'Furrow horse' and the 'Land horse'. The shoes dictated how the horse walked, so the Smith had to make the shoes accordingly, as the Furrow horse was required to walk 'pigeon-toed' so that his hooves landed in a straight line in the newly-formed furrow. The Land horse was shod to walk 'splay footed' — that is, each hoof was spread out so as to land on a fresh piece of soil for good traction.

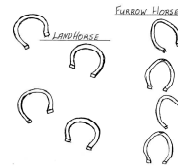


To make the horse walk the correct way took quite a while. The shoe shape was gradually changed each

time the horse was shod until the right result was achieved. This way of walking then became 'permanent' for the horse and was very hard to change once established.

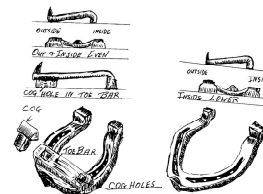
To get the 'pigeon-toed' effect the shoe was usually made more pointed than round, so a horse with a more triangular hoof (some horses are born with 'pointed' hooves, others have more rounded hooves) would be chosen to become the furrow horse.

The outside heel on the shoe would be made higher than the inside



heel; the 'clip' was forged a little off-centre, towards the inside. The 'clip' is the little triangle on the front of a horse's shoe which comes up in front of the hoof to prevent the hoof slipping forward off the shoe (as a toe cap does for humans).

For the Land horse, virtually the opposite is the case. The shoe is made as wide and straight across the front as possible, and the heels are the same height. Where the farmer was ploughing fairly wet and soggy land, he would ask the blacksmith to put a bar across the front of the shoe. This bar was usually a piece of 20mm square stock which was forge-welded to the shoe after the shoe had been forged. The Smith had to be aware that a bar was to be fitted as the heels had to be made higher to compensate for this extra height at the front.



Then there was the

City or Town horse for the carriers who hauled the goods from the railway goods yards to the stores, or who delivered coal round the streets to the households. I would liken them to today's couriers. Their horses were usually shod in a similar manner to the Land horse with the bar across the front but, in the winter months, a square hole was punched through the bar and the shoe at the ends of the bar. This hole was to fit in a cog, a case-hardened spike, to stop the horse slipping in snow and ice. Many a time a Clydesdale had to pull a passenger bus out of a snow drift where another motor vehicle couldn't.

Another type of draught horse, though of a lighter scale, was what we knew as the 'Garran', a cross between a draught horse and a thoroughbred which was shod the same as the city or town horse, but with lighter material. The 'Garran' was the choice of the milk delivery man and the vegetable vendors as it could generally travel faster between the farm and the town (and would eat less of course). This type of horse was very popular with the 'Romanys' and most pictures of the Romany Gipsy and caravan will show one or two of them hitched to the outfit.

Many people think that the blacksmith has a great job being in front of a big warm fire in the cold winter months and out in the fresh country air during the summer months — but I can assure you that it isn't quite like that.

During my first year I think I wanted to resign every night I went home. I started in the February, virtually the middle of winter in the northern hemisphere (**Ed.** a reminder for Charlie's Australian readers!) so it meant I was walking through either hail, snow or rain for one and a half miles (3km) to get to work. When I got there, I was confronted with some farmer with a pair of horses to be shod — so it was a case of get your coat off and get stuck in. Whether 10 minutes or one hour early, you started work as soon as you entered the door (and it was gratis, not overtime). If you were late, that was a totally different story and you were never allowed to forget it.

It always seemed that on a cold winter's day you had a job where you couldn't move around to generate body heat, especially when we became agricultural engineers. You would be working out in the middle of a paddock or in a big, draughty barn on some machine. If it was a beautiful summer's day with glorious sunshine when all the skylarks and other songbirds were in full chorus, we would be inside forging something big and heavy which needed lots of heat and hammering.

I think this is referred to as Murphy's Law, and in the early days I was sure Murphy was a blacksmith, hence the reason for my wanting to resign every day at the beginning.

From:

"Charlie the Smithy – How to forge and cheat legally" by Charles Slater, Chapter 18. Quix Mill Publishing Australia 2002 ISBN 0 9580780 0 9

All illustrations by Charlie Slater.

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(Buckie)	831555
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Dr Grays, Elgin: 01343	543131
Aberdeen RI: 0845	4566000
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Inverness	01667	464000

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Northlink	0845 6000 449
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Trains:

National Rail Enquiries 0845 748950

Taxis: (Portknockie) 840875**Portknockie Post Office** 840201**Portknockie School** 840244**Portknockie Library** 841149**PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGES:****PC Kevin McPherson, Buckie Area Community Beat Officer writes some seasonal guidance.**

As Christmas approaches with its seasonally cold weather, I would remind drivers of the need to take extra care while driving in poor weather conditions. It is better to arrive late than to be involved in an accident. So don't risk driving if conditions are too bad. Everyone will understand. By checking the quality of your car's tyres (including the correct air pressures) and other basics such as antifreeze in your screen wash, you can lower the risk of becoming involved in a road accident.

If you are seeking an update on road traffic conditions within the Grampian region avoid using the Grampian Police Service Centre. Instead call the Roads Weather Line on 0870 444 5444. The Weather Line is updated regularly by the GPSC so staff at Weather Line will always have the most up to date local roads information. Alternatively, you can use radio and television broadcasts, but if you have access to the internet I recommend www.trafficscotland.org which provides real time information about severe weather warnings, accidents, road works, journey times and directions.

I should also like to point out that at this time of the year housebreaking and thefts are often carried out by opportunists taking advantage of open doors and windows. Many houses will be containing Christmas shopping and presents, please do not give thieves a chance to spoil your festive season. When you leave the house check your doors and windows are secure and set up timer switches with lights and radios to give the impression that someone is a

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Wishing all my customers a merry Christmas & a prosperous New Year

The police rely on information and co-operation from the public, without which we cannot perform our duties to local communities so, in the words of the posters you have undoubtedly seen in various shops and other buildings, **See it, Report it.** Also keep an eye out for the ongoing visits of the Grampian Police mobile surgeries in Portknockie and other villages. Anyone who has an issue or query is invited to come along to the Square (where the mobile police office gets parked) and have an informal chat. I can also be contacted on **0845 600 5 700**. I look forward to seeing or hearing from you!"

Be safe and have a Happy Christmas, PC Kevin McPherson

Do you want to reduce the instances of coughs, colds and other infections in your homes? This could happen if everyone would wash their hands with soap and water more often. Swab tests carried out in major British cities have shown that around a third of all those checked have dirty hands. Hand hygiene is not a main priority for many of us yet hands, which touch door handles, light switches, taps, remote controls and telephones can harbour around 150 species of bacteria, some of which cause colds, and diarrhoea and spread the MRSA epidemics in hospitals. When you visit anyone in hospital always ensure that you wash your hands or use the gel dispensers in the wards before you make any contact with the patient.

Soap and water is the most effective method of hand washing. The recommended time for a thorough hand wash is 20 seconds and coughs and sneezes should be directed into elbows or hankies not hands. Most of the 120 million cases of common cold contracted each year in the UK are caused by viruses spread by hands. Keep washing!

HAME COOKING by SWRI members:**Mushroom stuffing for Turkey****Ingredients:**

2oz (50g) melted butter
6oz (175g) white breadcrumbs
3oz (75g) chopped bacon
4oz (100g) mushrooms
1 chopped onion

A pinch of salt and pepper and some chopped parsley
1 beaten egg

Method:

Melt the butter in a pan over gentle heat. Put the chopped onion, chopped bacon, chopped mushrooms and the breadcrumbs into a mixing bowl and mix with the melted butter. Add finely chopped parsley and the seasoning then mix in the beaten egg. Do not make the mixture too wet. Use this mixture to stuff the neck of the turkey.

Brandy Butter

Ingredients for the filling:

3 oz (75g) unsalted butter
3 oz (75g) caster sugar
Grated rind of half an orange
2-3 tablespoons of brandy

Method:

Cream the butter until soft and pale in colour. Beat in the sugar and the orange rind. Gradually beat in the brandy until the mixture is frothy. Chill the mixture in the fridge for 2-3 hours until solid. It is delicious spooned over Christmas pudding.

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“ONE FIRTH VIEW” – our regular contributor Margaret Dawson has been unwell for a couple of months. On behalf of all the readers, we send our best wishes for her prompt and complete recovery.

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POETS' CORNER: (from the Davie Mair Collection)

CONTENT

Anither year has rowed awa'
An wrappit roun' the world's ba'
Wha wha it's ravelled threeds wad draw
Nane – be content

Ist up the hills o' fame ye've run
Hae ye the wheel o' fortune spun
Are ye better o't when done
Or mair content?

Wasna the end ye socht ower high
Didna the gowd gae slidderin' by
An' left ye nocht but doleful cry
Wi'nae – content

Though 'reft o' a' yer hert's desire
Wi' nocht tae soothe the rackin' fire
O' slichted love – o' death or ire
Scaddin' content

Gin ye've a cross be it e'er sae sma'
Oh, dinna wi' its burden fa'
Naw tho' yer backs pressed tae the wa'
Grip hard – content

Its bands ne'er pause, aye hippen on
Till knotted roon' yer he'rt hath grown
The sweetest flo'er sent frae abune
God gi'en – content

An e'er another year creeps on
Lock by your vanities an sin
Mind, ne'er a mite o' grace ye'll win
Wi'oot content

Think weel o' a' ye hae already
An' no for power or place be greedy
Jist wait an' pray an' unca speedy
Wi'a' content

Will come the wishes ye ha'e wanted
Like draps o' dew, sae wee; yet granted
An' fu' o' faith yer hert that panted
Wi'nae content

Well tak' the crumbs, sae kindly sent
An' thank to be for mercies sent

Or seek for ocht a'been it's bent
Save gweed – content.

(Untitled)

We sit alone tonight in alien places
Who have gone out afar to roam
And dream of those dear absent faces
We knew amid the hills of home.

In evening treasured hours our fancies seek
The scenes our boyhood used to know
Among the red moorland and purple peak
Where heather and the bluebells grow.

For time and space have never charged our blood
And still we're Scottish to the core
And to land of mountain, and the flood
Our hearts are bound for evermore.

Ah if we're granted once again
To see that northern sky of grey
And feel upon the cheek the mist and rain
Sweep down from some whin-covered brae.

Perchance to walk again the dear old town
As oft we did so long ago
To see the towering castle frowning down
And feel the briny east winds blow.

In alien lands we sit alone tonight
With dreams that bring regret untold
For theirs the curse of the Ishmaelite
Who barter their birthright for gold.

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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 Editorial Team sends Christmas
and New Year 2009 greetings** to all our readers with
a special thank you to all the volunteers who deliver
the village newspaper over the year. When you see
them about why not thank them yourself!

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.

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

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

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.

Margret Wood: Firthview, Westfield Drive and
Station Court.

Isobel Worrel: Seafield Street.

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.

During 2009 the K'nocker will be published
quarterly in March, 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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Because of the Credit Crunch and other inflationary measures we are keeping the charge for 2009 at four copies delivered for £4. Please place your order with Margret Wood in the Library before the **1st March 2009**. In case you should forget, it might be a good idea to pay NOW! Single copies will still be available for purchase from the Library or the Chemist Shop. Where postal delivery is involved please check with Margret for current P&P charges.

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Christmas & a prosperous New Year*

WHO KNOWS?

In autumn this year Norman and Christine Greig, from Coupar Angus, came on a visit to Portknockie. They brought with them a handsome silver trophy cup which they had come across in a box of odds and ends at a car boot sale in Coupar Angus. They left the cup in the care of Val and Terry in the Seafield Inn.

The cup stands 9" high and is 6¼" across at the widest points of its ornate, curved handles. A finely-engraved inscription on the front of the cup reads:

THE COLIN CUP
THE SUILVEN TROPHY
Presented to
1ST PORTKNOCKIE
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For
Spiritual Achievement

On the back of the cup is what looks at first glance like a list of thirteen winners of the trophy but turns out to be a puzzling confusion of dates and names:

1980-81 Colin McPherson, Rathven
1980 A D Macdonald, Glenlivet
1980-81 Colin McPherson, Rathven
1980 A D Macdonald, Glenlivet
(This last date and name are repeated another nine times)

Also on the back, in random positions, are four sets of letters of different sizes and in different fonts: 'HE', 'E', 'J&B', 'Sc'.

It seems as if the cup was intended to be a prestigious trophy but then came to be used for someone to practise his engraving skills.

Does anyone know the origin of the cup and why it should surface in a box of odds in a Couper Angus car boot sale? Please contact Harry Hawkes on 01542-840718 or email hrhyic@yahoo.co.uk

WHAT'S ON IN THE PORT?

Portknockie Seniors' Group: The Christmas Party will be held in the Marine Hotel, Buckie on Tuesday 16th December. The bus will be leaving the village at X pm. For the New Year 2009 the programme will feature: January 20th, the Scotch Night with the Merry Minstrels; February 17th Gan-a-Boot Fowk; on March 17th the Ythan Fiddlers; April features the AGM and Donnachaidh on the 21st. All these meetings start at 7pm. The Morning Tea will be held on Tuesday 26th May and the Annual Bus Run will take place on the 9th June.

The Harbour News - HD Reid, Harbour master: Now that winter is here, a number of the boats are out of the water – 8 boats lifted out on one day, the most boats to be lifted out at one time! Crane-out had to be cancelled on the Saturday because of the gales but, thankfully all went fine on the Sunday. Boats that were moored on the North side are either out or on the other pontoons.

A large chunk of the breakwater has been broken off with so much heavy swell this autumn. I hope that it can be repaired before any more ends up at the bottom of the sea. It will have to be calmer weather before any repairs can be carried out.

April is the month proposed for boats to be craned back in to the harbour and Macduff Cranes is the preferred company. Roll on Springtime!

CHEMIST'S CORNER

Hi there,

It is Christmas time already and there is much to plan for over the festive season. Just a wee reminder to have a look at your medication needs before the holidays start and check that you have enough to hand. If you are due to need medicines before the

25th December you need to order by Monday 22nd December.

We will be open until 5pm on Wednesday 24th December in case you need any last minute Christmas gifts. We have an extensive range of bath time gift sets and warm winter woollies on offer (while stocks last!).

If the cold does manage to strike you over the holidays come and see us for some relief. When there is a pharmacist on duty we are able to supply certain over-the-counter medicines for a wide range of minor ailments free of charge to customers who do not pay for NHS prescriptions with no need to see a doctor first.

If, however, you need help out with our opening hours please phone NHS 24 on 08454 24 24 24 and follow the advice given.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sarah, Claire & Sandra.

Portknockie Nursery: We were delighted to appoint our new manager, Mrs Margaret Eunson, on Monday 27th October. Mrs Eunson moved to the area over the summer from the Highlands where she worked as a manager in a private setting.

The children are looking forward to their Christmas Party and are practicing hard for their Christmas Concert.

We like to invite visitors to the group throughout the year. Does anyone in the village have a hobby or pastime that would be of interest to the children? If so please get in touch with us on 841825 if you would like to come into the group and share your interest with the children.

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Bowling Club Notes: The indoor bowling season is now in full swing. We meet (usually) on Monday and Thursday evenings at 6.30pm in the McBoyle Hall and we have been enjoying good attendances. Old and new members will be very welcome and there are always spare bowls to be had – while flat shoes are needed, slippers will do fine.

The winter league programme has started and, at the time of writing, we have played Strathlene (a heavy defeat), Buckpool (a good win) and Macduff (an even better win). However, while keenly contested, league games are always sociable and enjoyable.

Last February we arranged a 1960s Gig in the McBoyle Hall which was a very good night out and was a great help to our Club funds. So in 2009 we will hold another! Again Dave Nash will provide the entertainment. Tickets will go on sale nearer the event, look out for bills in the shops.

Neighbourhood Watch is simply looking out for one another – all for one and one for all. In Portknockie many residents do that as a matter of course. In the New Year you will have received the third of the combined Neighbourhood Watch, Community Council and Grampian Police leaflets which have been delivered throughout the village. While many of the residents of the village are now members of Neighbourhood Watch, there is still room for plenty more to sign up. If you would like to join (no charge) or simply find obtain more information about the scheme please phone the Co-ordinator, John Myles on 840000.

The Police non-emergency calls remains at **0845 600 5 700** but, as an alternative, the Control Centre can be accessed at servicecentre@grampian.pnn.police.uk

JMK

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

Wishing all our clients a merry Christmas & a prosperous New Year

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

Library News: The library is still in Park Street so come along and visit or better still take out some books! There are many 'Talking Books' which some people like to listen to when in the car or ironing or as relaxation from watching TV. New maps showing Portknockie streets at various dates are available to be examined in the library – please ask when you come in to see these maps.

Portknockie Nursery children visited the library in October and Portknockie Primary classes visited in November – good to see the young enjoying their local library. Parents are most welcome too!

'Merry Xmas and a' the best for the New Year from Margaret Wood.

Fishing News: Once again tie-up time for the fishing boats comes closer – it has been a year of ups and downs for all fishermen due to quotas, days at sea, leasing fish and last, but not least, the stormy weather. We would like to wish all skippers and crew a Prosperous New Year especially Portknockie boats – Deeside, Moray Endeavour, Regent Bird, Scotia, Suilven, Transcend and Zenith.

**Terry, Val & Lucy
at the
Seafield Inn
wish all their customers
A Merry Christmas
and
A peaceful New Year**

Church of Scotland Sunday School: Children aged 3 and above are welcome to come along and enjoy a programme of Bible stories, crafts, games and quizzes. For further information phone Val on 841240.

Portknockie Baby and Toddler Group: We are looking for people who would be interested in joining our baby and toddler group which meets on Thursday mornings from 9.45 to 11.45am in the McBoyle Hall. It is an excellent opportunity for parents to get out and meet other people and for babies and toddlers to have fun playing with our collection of large toys and other activities.

The Committee wishes all young parents in the village a happy Christmas and a good New Year to come. For more information about what is being offered by this group contact Emma Walker on 842736 or Joanne Wood on 842895.

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Seafield WRI: President Margaret Greig welcomed old and new members to the first meeting of the season in September when our guest speaker was Christine Ralph from the 'Gamrie Goat'. She gave a talk on her business and the making of goats' milk soaps and their benefits for problem skins.

In October our guest speaker was Mr Adam Robertson who gave us a brief account of the history of the RNLI. He also told us some interesting and very sad stories of the volunteers who do this difficult but rewarding job. Our guest speaker in November was Dale Kordas from Portsoy who gave us a talk and a demonstration on Pyrographics. This is the art of burning pictures or patterns on to wood, such as chopping boards, yo-yo's, bowls etc.

Members had a chance to try various crafts – painting and sewing skills at a Taste and Try day held in Keith on the 8th November by the WRI Federation. Their funds were boosted by £1 413 after a very successful day. Tuesday 11th November saw some of our members at Portgordon WRI where we had a most enjoyable evening of entertainment by Forglen WRI. This was followed by a lovely spread. Saturday 15th November saw us off to Grange for a Cookery Demonstration – lots of goodies for Christmas. All the food was raffled and some of our members were lucky to be amongst the winners. We are looking forward to Christmas Lunch at Christies of Fochabers in December.

In the New Year the January meeting on the 22nd will feature entertainment by The Local Vocals and our Competition will be a knitted Hat for a premature baby. In February we have our annual Dinner. The venue is still to be decided.



Portknockie Primary School News

Environmental Award

You may remember admiring the school's colourful wildflower bed over the summer just gone – it was also mentioned in the last edition of the *Knocker*. We were so pleased with it that we entered the Moray Environmental Awards and were delighted to be awarded a *Your Moray 2008* plaque at the awards ceremony on Monday 24 November. The plaque is on display in the school corridor.

Calcutta Cup Visit

We were privileged to be able to view the Calcutta Cup at first hand when members of Scottish Rugby visited the school with Active Schools' coordinator, Hein Mijzen.

Children and adults were suitably impressed and all learned something about the origins and significance of the cup to rugby.

Christmas is Coming.....

....much too quickly. This is a short term and December is upon us already, with lots to do before Christmas.

Aladdin

As an end of term Christmas treat, all the children will be taking a trip to Eden Court to see a matinee performance of the pantomime *Aladdin* Thursday 18 December. Many thanks to the school Parent Council for subsidising ticket costs and paying for the buses.

Christmas Hampers

The Parent Council is once again organising the school's annual Christmas Hamper raffle. This will be drawn at the school's Christmas Concert on the evening of Wednesday 17 December. Donations of items to put in the hampers will be very gratefully received and can be put in a box in the reception area of the school. Look out for raffle tickets which will be on sale around the village.

Christmas Concert

The school will be performing an evening of Christmas music on Wednesday, 17 December, 6.30-8 pm. There will be refreshments to follow, but we ask everyone to bring a cup (that includes children). We also ask each family to bring a plate with some food – preferably festive - to share. We would be delighted to welcome members of the wider community to our concert, too. There will be a dress rehearsal of the concert at 11 am on the same day to which we invite senior citizens of the community.

There will be a bucket at the door for donations to school funds.

Christmas Service

Captain Ann Cordell of the Salvation Army will be leading the school in its Christmas service at 11 am on Friday, 19 December. All welcome.

Blytheswood Appeal

Many thanks to all who supported our Blytheswood Christmas Shoe box appeal. We managed to send off 22 boxes in all.

Curriculum: some highlights

- Global Dance workshop for whole school, and performance for parents.
- P1/2 classroom tooth brushing has started.
- Basketball coaching for P6/7 children, and basketball tournament on Saturday 6 December.
- First aid in the home – all three classes, input by Banff and Buchan College.
- £150 donation of books for the library – competition won by Kristy Sutherland, P5.
- Enterprise is the Business day in Elgin for P6/7 pupils.
- Classroom visits by fire and police officers.
- Calcutta Cup visit.
- All classes visit Portknockie Library.
- P7 pupils visit Buckie Community High School Library.
- P7 guidance teacher and S1 pupils visit P7 pupils.
- Junior Road Safety Officers appointed and given first training session.
- St Andrew's Day performances by piper Scott Eunson and Highland dancers Kim Riddoch and Kirsty Eunson, all Buckie Community High School pupils.

Extra Curricular Activities

- Cross-country, two lunchtimes per week.
- Netball, Tuesdays 3.30-4.30 pm.
- Choir, Wednesday lunchtime/ Mondays 2.50-3.20 pm.
- Ceramics, Wednesdays, 3.30-4.30 pm.

Thank you...

....to the Parent Council for supporting the school with the following new items:

- tracksuits for senior children to wear at sporting events.
- floor bean bags for both classrooms.
- reading books.
- construction kit for the infant class.
- craft materials.
- fruit sticker albums.

The Parent Council has also agreed to pay for buses to transport children to events throughout the year. This has become very costly and it is important that our children are able to access what is on offer elsewhere.

The Parent Council fulfils an important role in raising money to provide things which the school could not otherwise afford, so please continue to support their fundraising efforts which help provide those extras for all our children.

Best wishes for the festive season from staff and pupils at Portknockie Primary School.

Shona Idle, Head Teacher.

RESOLUTIONS TO PONDER FOR 2009

1. Pay your £4 subscription promptly at the Library to receive four issues of The K'nocker delivered during the coming year.
2. Think about how you and your family might get involved with "2009, the Year of the Homecoming". There will be ideas for national, regional and local activities but they all need people to take an interest, put themselves forward and help make exciting possibilities happen.
3. Look forward to using the village Library more especially once the move into the School has taken place.

4. Continue to support local fundraising efforts for such things as the Parent Council plans for the school, the upkeep of the McBoyle Hall and the work to keep Portknockie more beautiful in bloom.
5. Consider putting forward ideas for change in the village. Have you any suggestions for making Portknockie a better place to live and work in? Could we be doing more to attract visitors to the village during the summer season? If so what and how?
6. For those with access to the Internet, don't forget to use the Forum facility on www.portkockiewebsite.co.uk it allows you to share ideas and swap information around the village, the UK and the whole world.

A tribute to George and Ethel Slater lately of 1 Hill Street by Ishbel Beresford.

The good wishes of the Portknockie people were with George and Ethel Slater on Monday, October 6th 2008 as they flew away to stay in South Africa. Their daughter, Caroline Anne and her husband, Michael, have renovated a cottage in their garden for them. George is a Portknockie loon who married his Welsh sweetheart in 1947. They retired to the Port after spending their working life in Swansea. We are all interested to hear how they are enjoying their new life in South Africa.